



Fascinating and Staggering

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Jesus expounded the ways of a loving God and summarized the Ten Commandments with the words—love God and love others. He led a life of righteousness. He taught God's truth and healed all who came to him. We are told that only a portion of the miracles he performed were recorded. And these were recorded for our benefit, so we would believe that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God. And by believing, we would receive life in his name.

As Jesus stressed the ways of God rather than traditions set up by men, toes were stepped on and some became offended. As a result, he was rejected, slandered and despised by many. He was beaten and illegally tried and sentenced to a criminal's death. He had to bear seeing his mother and most faithful friends watch his life slip away, as they stood at the foot of his cross.

Those who had loved him had been mourning his death for three days, when they discovered him walking the streets once more. The power of God had restored life to his dead body. Remaining on the earth another forty days, he appeared to many. On one occasion over five hundred people saw him. Then, his closest friends watched him ascend into the sky and disappear in the clouds, as he returned to his heavenly Father and his first abode in heaven.

Fiction? No—reality, witnessed and documented by many in the pages of history. The beginning is fascinating, but the end is staggering. Jesus allowed himself to be captured and wrongly represented. He willingly hung on a cross to take the punishment of death for our sins upon himself. He became our hero, our Savior giving us this promise; we can receive the gift of forgiveness for our sins and life everlasting with God, when we believe in his death and resurrection, and accept the sacrifice he made for us.

A young boy went to God and asked for this gift of forgiveness and eternal life. Hearing of this event, an elderly woman approached the boy and asked him what he could have done at such a young age that would require forgiveness. He answered, "The Bible says I am to love God with all my heart, with all my soul and with all my mind, and I didn't do that."

A man's son was murdered. The one who did this terrible crime was found and put in prison. The father of the victim went to see his son's killer. The father said to him, "I forgive you." Even the judge showed him mercy, freeing him from prison. The father then said, "Now I will treat you as my own son and take care of you." Incredible, you may say. But this is exactly what God's love did for us! In reality, our sins killed Jesus. Yet God comes to us and offers us forgiveness, letting the blood of his Son be the payment for our sins, freeing us to live eternally in his presence. On top of that, he accepts us as his own children!

It was the Father's love that allowed Jesus to be sacrificed to provide a way to bring us back into relationship with him. It was Jesus' love for his heavenly Father and for us that caused him to endure so many atrocities. Now he lives again and is called the King of kings and the Lord of lords! Truly, it is a time to rejoice and be thankful.

