

## **WHO IS JESUS?**

***Jesus is our future who has already appeared:  
Learning to be fully alive, fully human***

*The 'future' has appeared already: what the Christian life moves towards is the pattern of a human life already lived.*

Rowan Williams

*Go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going ahead of you to Galilee*

Mark16:7

*God is a beckoning word.*

Gerard Hughes

Mark's gospel ends abruptly - with the women being told that the risen Jesus "is going ahead of you to Galilee: there you will see him, just as he told you". The irony of this is that throughout the gospel Jesus has again and again, after a miracle, told people to tell no-one - and each time they do. And yet here - after the Resurrection - even the women remain silent.

**What difference does it make if you get in touch with the Jesus who offers us a vision  
not just of God but of the whole of humanity  
a vision of what a fully alive, fully human being is like.**

Julian of Norwich says that "Love is God's meaning": Love is also our meaning. Love is not an ideal or a demand: Love is who we essentially are, made in God's image, made for love, where, in honouring our capacity for self-transcendence in giving ourselves away, we reach our full stature as human beings.

Mark is a gospel about failure - the disciples' failure....and ours. Yet it is also an encouraging gospel: we may fail - even again and again - yet Jesus is saying that God is committed to us. Clearly for Mark the resurrection is above all, not a doctrine to be believed but a mystery to be lived. And it is only through the places of weakness and vulnerability and failure that we will be able to hear and begin to live its truth.

Stay with your unknowing, your doubting, your failure and weakness - your poverty - and let the Risen Jesus touch you there. This is not something we can conjure up, or make happen: it is the miracle of grace.

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Philip Carter is a retired Anglican Priest. He was the inaugural president of the Australian Ecumenical Council for Spiritual Direction (AECSD). He ran the Julian Centre in Adelaide, an independent and ecumenical centre for spirituality, from 1997-2009.

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Bartimeaus is, according to Mark, what a true disciple of Jesus is. He knows he is addressed, even though he is an outsider: he listens to his deepest desire: he is willing to commit himself and take the next step: he throws off his cloak and lets go of anything and everything that gets in the way of following. We are not told: but if Mark is telling the truth about the disciples and us, then Bartimeaus will fail: for discipleship is not measured by our success at following but about Jesus' faithfulness in calling.

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