



St Marylebone  
Parish Church

**Easter 3 (The Second Sunday after Easter)**  
**Holy Communion**

**8.30am**

*Readings:*

*The First Epistle of St Peter 2.19*

*The Holy Gospel according to St John 10.11*

Alleluia! Christ is Risen!

One of the treasures of the Prayer Book is Cranmer's translation of medieval Latin Collects. Today's Collect (the prayer given for today and each day this week) is glorious.

It tells us Jesus is both. That is to say, this Collect helps to show us two essential things about Jesus for our everyday lives.

Let's pray it again.

*Almighty God, who hast given thine only Son to be unto us both a sacrifice for sin, and also an ensample of godly life: Give us grace that we may always most thankfully receive that his inestimable benefit, and also endeavour ourselves to follow the blessed steps of his most holy life; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

Jesus is one who has **done something** that changes our lives, and one who **shows us** something important for us. '*Almighty God, who hast given thine only Son to be unto us both a sacrifice for sin, and also an ensample of godly life.*'

It may not sound like much, but it is huge. Let's unpack it briefly this morning.

So, hidden within the '*only Son to be unto us both a sacrifice for sin*'

is the theological meat that Jesus is The Lamb of God. The atoning sacrifice. Suffering servant. Messiah. The true Temple. Fulfilment of the Law. The second Adam. The first fruits of the Resurrection promise.

All those things are hidden under that simple phrase.

Jesus' incarnation, ministry, death and life *have actually done something*. Jesus has changed the course of history: specifically death is not the end; the loneliness and separation at the heart of the human condition has been trumped by the invitation to everlasting Communion in God.

That is what He has **done**.

*'and [He is] also an ensample of godly life'*

Jesus is a teacher and friend through life. He shows us how to live.

So how does that affect my life and yours today?

Well, it's key for us to hold both together in our daily relationship with Jesus.

Jesus is not just a nice teacher: a god-ly social worker. He is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The one whom angels adore. And He's also our brother and teacher.

So many of us are trapped in only one side of this picture.

God is grand but distant, or he is close but rather anemic.

He is neither. As we grow and invest in our lifelong relationship with God, we need to deepen and enliven the truth and reality of our relationship within the great sweep of the Christian truth. Discover the real God, living and true, and make Him our daily life.

One little story to finish, which helps me keep trying to get the balance right.

A few years ago an uncle of mine died. I wrote to his daughter, my cousin, when I heard. She wrote back of her sadness and grief – honest and real. But she ended her little note by saying: 'But how good it is that we know, that when we die it is not death that greets us, but Jesus'.

Christ is Risen. Alleluia!