

Elvis Presley, dubbed "The King" by his fans, died on 16 August 1977. Yet even today, people claim to have seen him alive in all sorts of places. Few take these stories seriously but they appeal to us because Elvis's records meant something special to many people. How could a figure so full of life possibly be dead?

At this time of year, millions are celebrating because a man who was dead has been seen alive - not by a handful of strangers, who saw someone somewhere who looked a bit like Him, but by His closest friends, His family, His followers and, according to one commentator decades later, by 'above five hundred ... at once; of whom the greater part remain'). This was not the delusion of wishful-thinking minds. They'd all seen Him and you could go and ask them!

I am talking about Jesus, whose following came from something much more important than music. He'd promised to make men and women right with God, so that they could live lives to the full and have their sins forgiven. His followers, however, had watched in horror as He was executed in the most agonising way: crucifixion. They'd seen His body sealed in the tomb. They were not expecting to see Him again.

Yet, three days later, he astonished everyone by appearing in Jerusalem, eating and drinking with His friends, teaching his disciples and touching lives once more. When He died, He was taking the punishment we deserved for all our sin and selfishness - for the wrong things we have said and thought and done. God showed that He accepted this wonderful sacrifice by bringing Him back from the dead.

There are things that you can't forgive yourself for, but because Jesus died for you, God can.

Trust today "that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures"" and you will be saved and, like millions of others today, come to know the risen Lord Jesus Christ for yourself.

(1) 1 Corinthians 15:6 (2) 1 Corinthians 15:3-4.