

5. What difference does it make?

April 4, 2010

The majority of people in America think that Easter has something to do with going to church because they have been doing this as a family tradition, coloring eggs, children's egg hunting, colorful rabbits, etc., but nothing much more.

What they don't know is that it is the celebration of the day that changed their eternal destination forever by the resurrection of Jesus Christ if they choose to accept His invitation.

At the same time, many people do not know that the entire truth of Christianity is literally hinged on Jesus Christ's resurrection. Many brilliant unbelievers have challenged to disprove the resurrection of Jesus historically, only to find themselves becoming the devout followers of Jesus Christ. A couple of good examples are Josh McDowell and Frank Morrison.

Frank Morrison wasn't the kind of man you'd find in church on Sunday morning. Yet he received a lot of respect from everyone in England due to his high education and intelligence. He was a skeptic philosophically, especially toward Christianity. Being a lawyer himself, Morrison chose to prove that the Bible, especially the Resurrection of Jesus Christ is nothing more than a myth and an old story. To disprove the historic Christian belief, he started to research for his upcoming book, "Who Moved the Stone?". By the time he finished the book, it turned out to be one of the best defenses of the bodily Resurrection of Christ. In the preface, Morrison recounts his intellectual struggle.

The book as it was originally planned was left high and dry, like those Thames barges where the great river goes out to meet the incoming sea. The writer discovered one day that not only could he no longer write the book as he had once conceived it, but that he would not if he could.

A. SO, YOUR POINT FOR THIS IS...?

There is something about truth nobody can disapprove – its existence. Whether people want to agree with the truth or not, the truth always exists and it is absolute. Many people insist that the truth can be relative until their so-called relative truth turns against their own benefit, then they furiously demand the absolute truth.

The truth of Christianity is:

- Every single human being from Adam and Eve is a sinner by birth and by choice.
- Jesus Christ who is God the Son and God Himself came down from heaven to die for our sins because no one else could do it for us. Anyone accepts Him as the Savior and Lord can live in heaven for eternity.
- He died on the cross as the ultimate sacrifice once and for all and was buried in a tomb.
- Three days later, He rose from the death bodily and ascended to heaven and sat on the right side of the Throne of God the Father.

Please allow me to repeat what I said before. The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the great central fact that everything in Christianity is linked. It was not a resuscitation of Jesus Christ, but a total resurrection. To be resurrected, Jesus had to overcome the death, the final enemy of mankind.

Jesus' death on the cross was the payment for our sins, but His resurrection was the receipt to confirm Jesus' sacrifice from God the Father. This isn't a myth, or legend or a nice idea that Christians are hanging onto. It occurred in history. This is the true change we can believe in. And Jesus is the true Messiah, not the one that was generated by the lame stream media.

Some of you may think, "What difference does it make? Even if He did, it doesn't make one bit of difference in my life; I still live here, I will still go to work tomorrow just as I always have. It doesn't make any difference in my attitudes, or my daily life, whether Jesus actually rose from the dead or not, preacher."

Correct, in this life span only. However, every human being's life span does not end with death. It only finishes the physical side, but not the spiritual side. It only opens the spiritual side in full capacity the moment after death.

B. IF JESUS DIDN'T RISE FROM THE DEAD...

1) If Jesus didn't rise from the dead, we would really have to eliminate the NT entirely.

Of course, the OT has to go, too, because it contains so many prophecies about Jesus as the Messiah.

2) If Jesus didn't rise from the dead, none of us have any hope beyond this physical life.

The grave is the end. This brief life is all that we have. The majority of people around the world live like there is no life beyond because they don't know or choose to ignore the Lord Jesus. If we don't have any hope beyond the grave; we are just kidding ourselves if we think there is anything else.

3) If Jesus didn't rise from the dead, we don't have any release from guilt and fear.

Forgiveness of sin is meaningless and impossible. We would be locked into our past, we cannot change or do anything about the future either.

4) If Jesus didn't rise from the dead, the whole business of Christianity is a joke, a big fraud.

All the Christians around the world would be living in fantasy like the people who believe in cults.

C. BUT WHAT IF JESUS DID RISE FROM THE DEAD?

But what if Jesus did rise from the dead?

1) If Jesus rose from the dead as the Bible says, He truly is who He claimed to be – God.

Some argue, "Jesus never has claimed that He is God." For that, I'd like to ask a question, "How much time do you have for me to show you from His four Gospels?" I will show you three sections from the Bible:

John 4:25-26 The woman said to Him, "I know that Messiah is coming" (who is called Christ). "When He comes, He will tell us all things." 26 Jesus said to her, "I who speak to you am He."

Mark 14:61-62 But He kept silent and answered nothing. Again the high priest asked Him, saying to Him, "Are You the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?" 62 Jesus said, "I am. And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven."

John 20:27-29 Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands. Put your hand into the wound in my side. Don't be faithless any longer. Believe!" 28 "My Lord and my God!" Thomas exclaimed. 29 Then Jesus told him, "You believe because you have seen me. Blessed are those who haven't seen me and believe anyway."

Though Jesus had never said, "I am God," directly, He put Himself in the position for others to realize that He was. Why did He not claim that He was God flat out? I believe that if He told everyone and showed them He was God, He was forcing people to believe in Him. He never forces anyone to believe in Him. He gives them a choice to accept the truth and to follow Him or reject the truth and not to follow Him.

Some insist, "Jesus was not God, but a good teacher." That comment is self-contradicting. Because if He was not God, but He claimed to be the one, He would be a liar and lunatic, not a good teacher.

2) If Jesus rose from the dead as the Bible says, the value of our lives will be determined by our relationship to His resurrection.

Hebrews 9:27 And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment

Everyone in human history will stand before the risen Lord Jesus someday. He is the Lord of the universe, whether people want Him or not. As long as we live in His universe, we must abide by His rules. Unless you can make your own universe without any of His help, we must live by His terms. You will not be able to find any loophole or technicality.

If your life is linked with this carnal world's ways; if you live for your carnal pleasures, worldly values and reject the invitation by Jesus, you will be judged according to your rejection. Hell is nothing less than truth known too late.

1 John 2:15-16 Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world--the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life--is not of the Father but is of the world.

3) If Jesus rose from the dead as the Bible says, He is alive and you believers of Jesus Christ can have true hope and peace even though you might be in the most difficult situation.

1 John 2:17 And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.

John 14:27 Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

There is no joy like a Christian's joy. It can blossom in the midst of tears and pains. There is no peace like the peace of God, which defies circumstances and passes all understanding, so that you can be peaceful. There is no love like the love of Christ, which forgives and heals and restores.

D. DIE WITH HIM, LIVE WITH HIM

2 Timothy 2:8-13 Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead according to my gospel, 9 for which I suffer trouble as an evildoer, even to the point of chains; but the word of God is not chained. 10 Therefore I endure all things for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. 11 This is a

faithful saying: For if we died with Him, We shall also live with Him. 12 If we endure, We shall also reign with Him. If we deny Him, He also will deny us. 13 If we are faithless, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself.

The Word of God cannot be chained, or destroyed. The Bible has been burned, banned, mocked, twisted and ignored, especially it happens all the more here in America lately. But the Word of God stands forever.

No government, no religious authorities, no skeptics, no agnostics, no atheists, no scientists, or no philosophers have been able to stop the work of the Word of God, because it contains God's truth.

According to the Word of God, when we put our faith in Jesus Christ and receive Him into our heart as the Savior and Lord, we get to have eternal life with Him in heaven. Unbelievers may insist, "The loving God will not send anyone to hell." That is an absolute truth. But He gives everyone a completely fair chance to choose Him that comes with eternal life in heaven or to reject Him that comes with eternal death in hell. In other words, people sentence themselves to hell.

If you have not receive Jesus Christ as your Savior and Lord until now, you need to do that now.

This time, I am going to talk to those who walked away from Jesus and went back to the carnal world because you wanted it. Jesus had never said, "Admire Me," but "Follow Me." To some of you, He might be the Savior of your soul, but He is not the Lord of your life. Because you still do the things you used to do before you became a Christian without obeying His commands from the Bible. I hope and pray that you choose to rededicate your life to Him and truly follow Him.