

Resurrection Day
No One Dies For A Question Mark

How many of you would die for a question mark? i.e. something that is unsure, something about which you still have lots of questions, something which for you is still in doubt but others see it as a life and death concern.

Would you die for that?

“NO ONE DIES FOR A QUESTION MARK”

I'm not sure of the original context of that statement, but when I heard it on March 8, I knew that it applied to Jesus and the Resurrection.

Jesus died because he was clear about who He was and why He came. The religious leaders knew it, even if the disciples didn't gain real clarity until after the Resurrection.

The early church believers didn't leave question marks about who Jesus was or about the Resurrection, and many of them died because of it.

The Apostle Paul was clear. He left no question marks about the Resurrection, and he was jailed, stoned, beaten, and finally killed for preaching the Resurrection.

Acts 23:6 But Paul, perceiving that one group were Sadducees and the other Pharisees, began crying out in the Council, 'Brothers, I am a Pharisee, a son of Pharisees; I am on trial for the hope and resurrection of the dead!'

Believers over the past 2000 years, who have been clear, have also faced various levels of persecution because their faith was anchored in the Resurrection. They left no question marks.

What about the church today? What about US?

We may not have to die for the resurrection, but are we willing to LIVE for IT?

The clarity of Paul is expressed in these verses of 1 Corinthians 15

1 Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, in which also you stand, 2 by which also you are saved, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain.

3 For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4 and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, 5 and that He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. 6 After that He appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time, most of whom remain until now, but some have fallen asleep; 7 then He appeared to James, then to all the apostles; 8 and last of all, as to one untimely born, He appeared to me also.

It's Easter time again, which means all sorts of things in the broader cultural and religious context.

If you grew up in the church, then you probably had certain traditions with your family and in your church. There are certain songs, foods, activities that might go along with Easter.

There are certain greetings such as “He is Risen, or Christ is Risen”, and there is a response, “He is Risen Indeed.”

In most western Protestant traditions that is a greeting used primarily on Easter morning. In some of the Greek Orthodox traditions that greeting and response are used for 40 days

Another tradition of the secular West is the appearance of magazine articles raising questions about the person, life, and resurrection of Christ.
As if on cue, this story came out on Feb 15, 2024, at the beginning of Lent...

[Jesus' https://www.breitbart.com/faith/2024/02/17/easter-nears-some-atheists-insist-there-was-no-jesus/](https://www.breitbart.com/faith/2024/02/17/easter-nears-some-atheists-insist-there-was-no-jesus/)
<https://aeon.co/essays/why-the-son-of-god-story-is-built-on-mythology-not-history>

The arguments given are based on a pre-supposition that the NT GOSPELS are unreliable, that miracles don't happen, and that the early Christian authors and audience were uninformed or illiterate.

YET, they somehow managed to take an ancient Sumerian myth that survived into the Greek and Roman periods and fashion it over a period of decades into a belief system that would rock the Roman Empire from the bottom up. In the process, many people would be willing to die for a Question Mark, i.e. something that supposedly had no real basis in history.

Another part of the secular argument is that the spiritual landscape was filled with traveling rabbis, preachers, and religious leaders who sparked controversy. Jesus must have been an amalgam of all of those and was eventually turned into the great healer, redeemer and Risen Savior.

What they don't answer is How did the rag-tag band of followers pull that off? They had no positions of power. They weren't 'social influencers' on Tik Tok. In terms of political, social, and religious connections, the disciples were on the margins of society.

The secular views of Jesus and the Resurrection mock Christians for living by faith.
WHO IS REALLY LIVING BY FAITH AND HAS SERIOUS QUESTIONS TO ANSWER?

On a regular basis, the same old arguments are brought out with some new twist or some new expert, but they can't undo the scholarship that has been done for the past 2000 years. What they can do is proclaim, "we don't accept it, we simply don't believe it."

But they can't explain WHAT HAPPENED? **Something propelled the marginalized band of disciples to go out and preach a message at the threat of death. NO ONE DIES FOR A QUESTION MARK.**

The Bible does NOT deny or ignore the reality of a life of faith, but it is not a faith that has no basis or foundation in time and space.

Scripture recognizes that people will doubt the reality and the work of God in the world BECAUSE they suppress the truth in unrighteousness.

We love the darkness more than the light.

Facing the reality of a Risen Christ means that we have to give up our control.

If Christ be raised and Christ is Lord, then we are not the final authority in this world or over our own lives. Ever since the lie of the Garden of Eden, we have wanted to be God.

Gen 3:4-5 ...the serpent said to the woman, "God knows that in the day you eat of the tree in the middle of the garden your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

The testimony of scripture and human history is that we are NOT God, but we have a hard time accepting that.

EX: French college age guy:

Me: If there is a God then we aren't in control, God is.

Pierre: I can't live that way.

ME: If there is no God then life is ultimately meaningless.

Pierre: I DON'T WANT TO live that way.

What I've found over the years is that MANY people want to find a middle ground, i.e. there is no God, but life can still have meaning. To manage the obvious tension, they simply avoid the deeper questions. They adopt the OSTRICH STRATEGY;



The secular idea is to live the way you want and hope for the best. It sounds like these slogans: *Carpe Deum; YOLO, Be young, be foolish, but be happy, You only go around once in life so grab for all the gusto you can get. "Live and let live"; Live and Let Die;*

Or the slogan that made it into scripture...*Eat, drink, for tomorrow we die. 1 Cor 15:33.*

Paul is quoting Isa 22:13

In that context the Prophet is speaking of God's call for weeping and mourning, but the people are doing the opposite. Their behavior is not in line with the current reality.

In 1 Cor 15, Paul finds this the perfect expression of an attitude that has no regard for the deep and lasting realities of life.

Paul makes the argument for the Resurrection by noting that if the dead are not raised, 'Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die.' 15:32 cf Isa 22

This is in the context of a defense of the Resurrection in 1 Cor 15

v. 1-9 The Resurrection is foundational – OF FIRST IMPORTANCE and according to' the Scripture.

There were 500 eye witnesses v. 6

v. 12-16 If there is no Resurrection, then Christ is not raised

v. 17- 18 If Christ is not raised our faith is worthless and we are still in our sins, and there is no hope for those who have 'fallen asleep in Christ.' i.e. the dead will stay dead.

In scripture the crucifixion and resurrection are bound together. The Res' is seen as the triumph and vindication of the death of Christ on the cross. If there is no Res', then His death on the cross did NOT DELIVER us from our sins.

v. 19 If our hope in Christ is for this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied.

It may seem odd that Paul is speaking this way to his Christian audience. Non-believing authors or philosophers might agree with him that the poor deluded Christians are to be pitied. The unbeliever today might say the same thing..."Those Christians have a useless faith in some make believe savior and a futile hope in eternal life. They are looking for meaning here and pie in the sky. "

Paul's wake up call to the believers in Corinth is this...If there's no pie in the sky, then we'd better get it here and NOW. If our hope is confined to this world, then we are to be pitied. If there's no Res' then let's party like there's no tomorrow, ...because THERE ISN'T

In v. 32 Paul is facing the full weight of the reality of No Resurrection – This is all there is so get what you can. Look out for Number 1. Eat and drink for tomorrow we die. FULL STOP.

There's no time or need to play the social or religious game of "just be nice, be kind, we're all in this together, it takes all of us, choose love, give peace a chance, all we need is love."

When a philosophy of unbelief sinks in, we should NOT be surprised that a generation comes along doing

everything in their power to intoxicate their senses to find some means of escape from the grim reality of the world they see every day.

Sadly, when the church compromises on the Truth of Christ, His death and Resurrection, people look for hope by turning to all sorts of things.

Here's a newsflash...an article about a ["Church without God: Nonreligious Americans are finding fulfillment in secular congregations."](#) Milwaukee Independent March 17 2024

Secular congregations often mimic religious organizations by using the language and structure of a "church," such as meeting on Sundays or hearing a member's "testimony," or by adapting religious language or practices in other ways. For example, there are a growing number of psychedelic churches, which cater to people looking to experience spirituality and ritual through drug use.

These secular atheist churches reject God but are looking for what God alone can provide:
An abiding sense of meaning and transcendence that lasts beyond the grave.

This assurance of eternity and the hope of abiding with God is grounded in the Resurrection of Christ. His victory over the grave was the down payment for His Bride, the body of believers united to Him by faith. Jesus is the firstborn of many brethren, and His resurrection represents a cosmic victory over death.

With the final enemy death being conquered we can now live to the fullest.
With meaning and purpose grounded in the Risen Savior, we can live with a joy and hope that lasts beyond the grave and is not tied to our current circumstances.

For us as believers, the Resurrection means that we are not defined by the worst things that we have done nor by the worst things that have been done to us.
We are defined by the best things that Jesus has done and the worst thing that happened to him.

Through faith in Christ, His righteous record is credited to us, and His death covers our sin.
These are no small matters in terms of biblical thinking and living.

The resurrection of Christ is the ground of our hope.

50 Now I say this, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. 51 Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.

53 For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality. 54 But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, "Death is swallowed up in victory. 55 O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?" 56 The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law; 57 but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

In concluding the chapter Paul gives the SO WHAT?

Why does this matter? How does it impact us right here in the midst of our daily lives?

If our desire is to live before the Face of God and practice the presence of God in every aspect of our lives, then the 'so what?' is energizing...

58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord.

In the midst of the routine humdrum of life do you ever feel that your toil is in vain – the changing of diapers, the daily grind of work, relationships, paying bills, trying to stay healthy or regain health, serving in the family, at church, or in the community, school, hobbies, etc

BECAUSE of the Resurrection and the power of the Holy Spirit our labor is not just labor, but it is the daily work of the Lord, and it is NOT in vain.

Have you trusted Him?

- The ABC's of a Trust Transfer –
- A - Admit that you can't save yourself and that you need grace – That means there is GOOD NEWS FOR YOU
- B- Believe that Jesus is the only Wisdom and Savior who can forgive your sin and heal your heart
- C- confess to God that you want to trust Jesus as your savior and Lord.

--	--