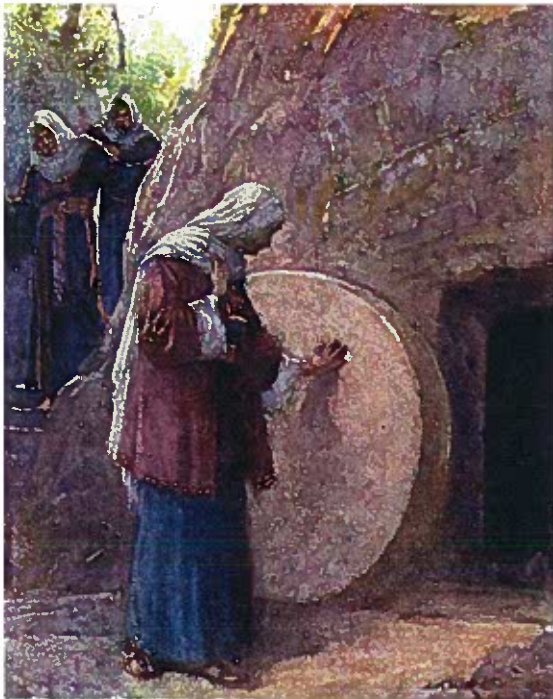


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The Resurrection of Jesus,



The Most Important Fact of History

*.... I felt I had to write and urge you to contend for the faith
that was once for all entrusted to the saints. Jude 1:3 NIV*

The Resurrection of Jesus, The Most Important Fact of History

Mark 16:1-6 (NIV) “¹ When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices so that they might go to anoint Jesus’ body. ² Very early on the first day of the week, just after sunrise, they were on their way to the tomb ³ and they asked each other, ‘Who will roll the stone away from the entrance of the tomb?’ ⁴ But when they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had been rolled away. ⁵ As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man dressed in a white robe sitting on the right side and they were alarmed. ⁶ ‘Don’t be alarmed’ he said. ‘You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who was crucified. **He has risen! He is not here.** See the place where they laid him...”

1 Corinthians 15:14 -20 (NIV) “¹⁴ **And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith.** ¹⁵ More than that, we are then found to be false witnesses about God, for we have testified about God that he raised Christ from the dead. But he did not raise him if in fact the dead are not raised. ¹⁶ For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised either. ¹⁷ **If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins.**” ¹⁸ Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ are lost. ¹⁹ If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are all people most to be pitied. ²⁰ But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep.”

If you took a survey to find out what people felt was the most important fact of history, you would come away with many different historic facts that people find important. For example, some Americans would list the signing of the U.S. Constitution as their most important fact of history. Other Americans might list the Emancipation Proclamation becoming law January 1, 1863 as their most important fact of history. In other parts of the world, you would get people to list the fact of history that they felt most important to them, probably based on something that transpired in their country.

However, there is one fact of history that trumps all facts of history, no matter where you live, and that is the resurrection of Jesus Christ. You ask why do I say this? Well, here’s why:

- If by some chance the world were completely destroyed and all the inhabitants of earth died, all history would become meaningless. All history has meaning to the living only. Not only that, there is no other fact of history that has any bearing on our eternal destiny.
- If all the inhabitants of the earth died, those that through faith, put their trust in Jesus will spend eternity in the presence of God. There is nothing that can solidify Jesus’ words about preparing our eternal dwelling place (that we read in John 14:2-3 (KJV), “² In my Father’s house are many

mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.”)
but his resurrection from the dead.

The fact of Jesus' resurrection is of the uttermost importance to Christianity. Make no mistake, Christianity stands because of the resurrection of Jesus, or it falls if Jesus was not resurrected from the dead.

Paul could not be clearer making this point in 1 Corinthians 15:14 (NIV), when he said, ***“And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith.”*** To be sure his point is clear, Paul said in 1 Corinthians 15:17 (NIV), ***“If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins.”***

The resurrection of Jesus is also important when we look at the claims of other world religions. For starters, all of the founders of the other world religions have one thing in common, they are all still dead. But since Jesus rose from the dead, he still lives. It is the resurrection of Jesus that puts him in a league of his own, never to be considered equal to or even compared with the founders of other religions (Confucius, The Prophet Muhammad, Buddha, etc.).

In fact, the resurrection of Jesus makes the clearest statement that could be made to the world when looking for the one true religion. To me, God could not have made it clearer for all the inhabitants of the earth which is the true religion. The resurrection of Jesus is the undeniable, irrefutable and unmistakable proof that Christianity is without doubt the one and only true religion that leads to the one and only true God.

Although other religions have some good qualities such as morals, etc., they have nothing to compare to the resurrection of Jesus to validate their claims. It is Jesus' resurrection that cancels out all other religions, regardless to their good qualities, there are no exceptions. In the day in which we now live, such derogatory statements about other religions are considered “politically incorrect” or “intolerant.” However, this is the Christian message, the possibility of other religions being valid or leading to the one, true and living God has always been denied by the Christian church and the Bible.

In fact, Jesus himself is the one responsible for starting such a “politically incorrect or intolerant” notion. He said in John 14:6 (NIV), ***“...I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”*** Notice, Jesus did not say he was one of the ways we access God the Father, he said he was **“the way,”** meaning the only way to access God the Father. This same teaching is echoed throughout the New Testament. Consider Acts 4:12 (NIV), where we

read, *“Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.”* That name of course is Jesus.

It was the resurrection of Jesus the apostles proclaimed and said they were witnesses of. In Acts 5:29-32 (NIV), we read, *“²⁹ Peter and the other apostles replied: ‘We must obey God rather than men! ³⁰ The God of our fathers raised Jesus from the dead – whom you had killed by hanging him on a tree. ³¹ God exalted him to his own right hand as Prince and Savior that he might give repentance and forgiveness of sins to Israel. ³² We are witnesses of these things, and so is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey him.’ ”*

Because of the impact Jesus’ resurrection has on other religions, they are forced to try and disprove Jesus’ resurrection, knowing fully well the resurrection of Jesus invalidates their claims and beliefs. The resurrection of Jesus can best be described as the deathblow to other religions. Remember, Jesus said he was the only way to access God the Father (John 14:6), his resurrection proves he was correct.

The attempt to disprove Jesus’ resurrection started shortly after his resurrection, when the guards went to the city to report to the chief priests everything that had happened at the tomb of Jesus. Because the chief priests and elders did not want the truth told about the resurrection, they made up a story. In Matthew 28:12-13 (NIV), we read, *“¹² When the chief priests had met with the elders and devised a plan, they gave the soldiers a large sum of money, ¹³ telling them, ‘You are to say, His disciples came during the night and stole him away while we were asleep.’ ”*

It is interesting to note that even then, shortly after the resurrection, nobody could explain Jesus’ empty tomb. It amazes me to see so many trying to explain it today, 2,000 years later, with no success!! One need only look at the angelic response in Mark 16:6 (NIV) to explain Jesus’ empty tomb, *“...He has risen!! He is not here...”*

The resurrection of Jesus is indeed the most important fact of history for at least the following reasons:

- The resurrection proves that Jesus was in fact the lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world, thereby giving us an opportunity to be reconciled to God (John 1:29), nothing could be more important than to be reconciled to God.
- The resurrection proves that Jesus was God; no one else has the power over life and death but God. Because He is God, every promise He made is true and will come to pass. (See John 11:25, Matthew 28:20, John 14:3, John 15:7, and John 14:27)

- The resurrection guarantees our own bodily resurrection in a body that will never experience sickness, decay or death. (1 Corinthians 15:42-44; 51-52)

It is clear then, no fact in history is more important than the resurrection of Jesus. Therefore, when Easter / Resurrection Sunday comes around, we must focus on the fact of the resurrection alone. No bunnies, eggs, egg hunts, new clothes, etc., should be the focal point, it's all about our risen Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. It is because He lives, we can face our tomorrows with the assurance we are never alone!!

God Bless,
Pastor D. M. Duncan

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