

Good Friday

Well it is for us!

John 19: 28-35

Easter is about this historical event, or so we assume, in ancient times, the death was less significant than the resurrection and I think that is probably right. But the resurrection wouldn't have happened without the death part of the event, I suppose that's logical.

In our culture and society, where it is at at present, it is Friday that is celebrated and Sunday is, well let's say less acknowledged. Our society accepts that death happens but not resurrection, I suppose that has always been the case and we see it evident in our non-christian experience of celebrating easter. It is no longer a religious holiday but just a holiday.

Why is that so?

Basically, There is scepticism about the historical event. And that starts in people's minds kind of like this:

If He became alive again, did He die?

Let's not criticise this. It is a logical thought process. Actually, I challenge you to think and ask that same question. Can you positively ascertain that Jesus actually did die?

All we have from history are these records in the bible and a few other bits from other ancient documents. So what does it say? Did Jesus die? IS it that important?

Well yes, if Jesus didn't die our whole belief structure as Christians would be nonsense. Look at

1 Corinthians 15:14:

12 Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, ^z how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? ¹³ But if there is no resurrection of the dead, ^a then not even Christ has been raised. ¹⁴ And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain. ¹⁵ We are even found to be misrepresenting God, because we testified about God that ^b he raised Christ, whom he did not raise if it is true that the dead are not raised. ¹⁶ For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised. ¹⁷ And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and ^c you are still in your sins.

Sounds logical, **If Jesus didn't die, we are all wasting our time and we should go home.** To be honest here, the lot of us must have a pretty good idea that Jesus really did die and rise again, other wise we just would be silly enough sit here 2000 years later and sing songs and here sermons and pray prayers. We are a pretty convinced lot.

Why is that? Well there are heaps of reasons but I want to look at just two now.

1. **The bible spells it out – He died.** Look at our bible reading.

³² So the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first, and of the other ^j who had been crucified with him. ³³ But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. ³⁴ But one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once there came out ^k blood and water. ³⁵ ^l He who saw it has borne witness-^m his testimony is true, and he knows that he is telling the truth-ⁿ that you also may believe.

Not only is there a record of it, but the process is recorded. And let's be realistic, the Romans knew when someone was dead. They had ways of making sure. Breaking legs was one way of making sure but in Jesus case He was dead and they checked. They put a spear in his side and opened up a wound and the blood had separated. The blood does that after someone dies, the red bits get gummy and the rest goes clear. The John is giving clear judicial evidence that Jesus died. Eye witness account. It happened.

John knew the importance of this, he was writing many years later (maybe 50 years later) and already people questioned what had happened. He knew remember, He was there with Jesus mother, Mary.

V 35 gives some perspective.

³⁵ ^l He who saw it has borne witness-^m his testimony is true, and he knows that he is telling the truth-ⁿ that you also may believe.

Now, this could be a couple of things. He who saw it has borne witness most probably means, John saw it and witnessed it. Or that someone John spoke to witnessed it (maybe the soldier himself) and He has credibility and can be believed.

SO the bible tells us it happened and remember the bible itself has incredible integrity as a historically accurate document.

2. Now the second reason I want to look at is fine for us but doesn't make sense to others. WE have experienced an alive Jesus, because as Christians we have a relationship with Him. AND we know HE ain't dead. Lets for a second go back to 1 Corinthians 15:

³ For ^l I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died ^m for our sins ⁿ in accordance with the Scriptures, ⁴ that he was buried, that he was raised ^o on the third day ^p in accordance with the Scriptures, ⁵ and that ^q he appeared to Cephas, then ^r to the twelve. ⁶ Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. ⁷ Then he

appeared to ^s James, then ^t to all the apostles. ⁸ Last of all, as to one untimely born, " he appeared also to me

Here we go, these people experienced an alive Jesus BUT as Christians so do we. The whole Easter event provides the salvation process for us to relate to Jesus, the Holy Spirit provides a communication avenue and we experience and an alive Jesus.

It doesn't make logical sense to those who don't experience it but WE KNOW.

Howe does that impact us? Well a couple of ways.

a. **It is academically and intellectually probable** – in other words it happened

AND

b. **We experience it.** We have more than head knowledge we have the experiential assurity also.

That means it is not a vague historical event but a reality to us. The tragedy for me is that we cannot convince people of its truth. They need to be convinced by the facts and then experience and feel God's love.

Yet we can and do provide and make the knowledge available. That is what easter is for. To tell people of the event that changes everything.