

Truth We Can Hold On To

(Mat. 28:5-7)

For the Christian faith, I consider Easter to be the biggest of celebrations given its implication! Jesus rose from the dead! From verse 6 of our text, we see that the tomb is empty, and this truth justifies everything for us as Christians. Without the truth that Jesus rose, our faith will be baseless and our hopes will be one big fallacy. However, since death could not hold Him back, we can take Jesus at His words; He is God incarnate, we have redemption and new life through Him; we can focus on Him and balance our sojourn here on earth with heavenly expectations (Mat 6:19-20) knowing that heaven is our eternal home.

As we celebrate the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, let us consider some of the implications of the truth that He lives forever? Foremost, because Jesus lives all accusation of the wicked one and of this world against us are nullified. “Who shall bring a charge against God’s elect? It is God who justifies. Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, ...” (Romans 8:33-34). Because Jesus rose from the dead, healing becomes our inheritance by His stripes (Isa. 53:5). Not only that, we gained authority as believers in Christ to pray for those that are sick and they will recover (Mark 16:18). Because Jesus Christ rose from the dead, the ordinance of evil and death that was against us has been wiped out by His blood (Col. 2:13-15). Our hopes are justified because they are premised on the Solid Rock (Col. 1:27; Rom. 8:10-11), all because Jesus lives! You and I can trust God for the difficult things in life because Jesus rose from the dead (Phil. 4:13). Now in telling us that “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me” Paul was not asking us to act stupid. Remember, Jesus taught us that “You shall not tempt the Lord, your God” (Mat. 4:7). As recorded in Acts 28:1-6, Paul Apostle was just gathering sticks for the fire, he did not seek to pick up the viper. We are not at all asked to engage in stupid acts in the name of faith.

You will agree that most believers profess Christ with authority. Had Jesus not risen, all our boasting and professing of faith will be baseless; we would have no authority to boast of God’s power since that will be an illusion. However, because He rose again, Christians are not just a bunch of gullible and ignorant people. Our trust and boasting is of Him who reigns for evermore (Heb 13:8). Also, because Jesus rose from the dead, we can dream big, hope in His power, and stand resolute in expectations; because God honors His words more than His name (Psa. 138:1-2); His words will never go void (Isa. 55:10-11); and Jesus told us that if we ask anything in His name, we will have them. In short, we have a direct access to God Almighty because Jesus, the way, the truth, and the life, rose again! What a comforting fact that we can forget about our past failure, hurt, injustice, error, and transgression just because Jesus rose again. You see, God made a perfect sacrifice in Christ in order to make us anew out of the old (2 Cor. 5:17). Because Jesus rose again, we can find our way through this murderous, evil, and deceptive world since His Spirit guides and leads us (Rom. 8:14; John 1:11-12). And of course, because Jesus rose again, we can be rest assured of better things to come since we will reign with Him if we do not waiver (Mat. 24:12-13; 2 Tim. 2:12). Now, these are truths that are worth holding on to.

Despite these truths that many of us know, why then do we still doubt? What are some of the causes of our doubts? Foremost, I think that doubt arises when we take our eyes off the Lord Jesus and place them instead on ourselves. In the account in Mat. 14:23-31, Peter walked on water until he looked and considered the boisterous wind. We look and gage ourselves against the challenge or opposition that lies ahead and suddenly realize there is a mismatch (in the physical sense). We doubt because we consider a situation “as reasonable to a reasonable person.” The Red Sea in front, Pharaoh’s forces behind – this is a reasonable situation for which the children of Israel will be

considered to be over-matched by a reasonable person (Exo. 14:2, 9-10). However, the move of God is not based on human reasoning; it is based on the supernatural, the divine! The disciples demonstrated similar reasonable conclusion in Mark 6:35-44. Where were they to get enough bread to feed over five thousand people; reasonable except they forgot that they had the Miracle Worker with them. We doubt because our natural reasoning and calculation cannot come up with answers that will meet our objective. Expressed in another way, I think we doubt when we allow what we see and hear to take really deep roots in our thoughts. If they are positive, they strengthen and help us in our faith. However, when they are negative, they drain us of motivation and positive attitude. We doubt when we put excessive trust in human being, including in ourselves. Jesus is our perfect Standard, any human being is bound to fail at one time or the other. In Psalm 27:10, David wrote, "When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take care of me." I don't think that David was necessarily telling us that he had bad parents; rather, that while human being will fail, God can never fail. We are admonished in another Psalm not to make man our trust (Psa. 40:4).

Brethren, I am sure that many of us know the implications of the truth that Jesus walked out of that tomb. The question is "how much do we apply that truth? Do we live everyday holding these principles as sacred?" Though relatively a baby, I wonder, when it comes to Christian focus, whether like a pendulum, it has not swung from old-time heavenly focus to more of a worldly focus these days. Growing up, there was so much focus on heavenly expectations and aspirations that I always thought that our leaders must perhaps knew that Jesus' second coming was within a few years! Things that were thought to represent worldly desires were mostly shunned for the pursuit of the eternal home. In some circles, TV and other modern technologies were (wrongly) rejected because "they could pollute the Christian character!" A brother told me of some believers who held the view that formal education was bad because Paul writes in 2 Cor. 3:6 that "the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life." Of course, this was clearly a misinterpretation and misapplication. I cite these two examples to show how much heaven dominated the discourse then. All glory to God that TV, Radio, Social Media have now all become part and parcel of reaching the world with the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. However, we must also consider whether there is now excessive focus on riches, fame, popularity, influence, and power. Not that these things are bad in themselves, but they are fast becoming the only measure of gospel success, thus compromising our focus and putting them where they ought not to be.

As we celebrate Easter, do you know Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior? Have you dedicated your life to follow Him yet? If not, why not start today? You can invite Jesus into your heart right now and let Him begin to guide your path in life. Now, that will be a true Easter success story! Remember He is always waiting for you to respond (Rev 3:20).

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