

From Pastor's Desk...

I BELIEVE IN THE RESURRECTION! JESUS IS THE LORD

The resurrection is a historical-theological truth like the incarnation and atonement, and it is integral to the very plan of redemption. Its historicity is proved by an unbroken, extensive testimony from the Old Testament predictions through the pages of the New Testament record, and into Church history in the writings of the Fathers as well as in the earliest Creeds. Ilayaraja, a music maestro from India recently questioned the credibility of Jesus Christ's resurrection and claimed that it had happened only in the life Ramana Maharshi of Hinduism. We don't need to get hurt by it because Jesus' resurrection is an experiential truth for us.

- It is the *central fact* of the Christian faith. The empty tomb, appearances before the disciples, and their transformed lives are the strongest evidences for the genuineness of Jesus resurrection. When the unbelieving Jews asked Jesus for a sign or proof of his authority to cleanse the temple, he pointed to his future resurrection, "destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it again" (John 2:19). The resurrection of Jesus is the great and invincible proof of who he is and what he has accomplished on behalf of his people.
- It is the *powerful message* of Christian church. The apostles went everywhere with great power and continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 2:22ff, 3:15-16, 4:10, 10:40). It is significant to note that to be a witness of the resurrection was also a pre-requisite to be chosen as an apostle (Acts 1:21-22; 1Cor. 9:1). Normal Geisler writes, "of all the wonderful things Jesus taught them about love (Matt 22:36-37), non-retaliation (Matt 5), and the Kingdom of God (Matt 13), the prevailing of apostolic preaching was none of these, it was the resurrection of Christ".
- It is the *model* of Christian resurrection for the believers. He is the first fruit of those who have fallen asleep. Apostle Paul was assured of the resurrection of the dead in Christ in the rapture (1Thess. 4: 16). The fear of death is vanished in the truth that Jesus has risen from the death. Christians are being persecuted everywhere and face martyrdom with the living hope of a better resurrection.

"He lives He Lives Christ Jesus lives today
He walks with me and talks with me
Along life's narrow way
He lives He lives salvation to impart
You ask me how I know He lives
He lives within my heart"

God bless you.

In His Glorious Ministry,

Rev. K. P. Mathew
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Tomb for three days

Br. Sajy George, Youth Director

A tomb that was used for only three days, draws the biggest controversy in human history. The burial place of Jesus Christ had been a place of constant conflict and controversy in all generations. It's not just the city of Jerusalem that was attached, but this site has drawn violent attacks by invaders and rulers. This burial site has undergone numerous destructions and reconstructions.

On one hand, millions of dollars have been spent in restoring this site, and ironically, on the other hand many organizations have spent millions of dollars on projects to disprove this tomb as the place where Jesus Christ was buried. Since the site was a burial ground, and many other tombs are found there, critics have tried to raise doubts on this tomb believed to be the burial place of Jesus Christ. The big difference between these tombs is that one was used only for three days and is now EMPTY, but others are still occupied.

Whether this tomb was the burial place or not, does not really matter now. Bible, gives a profound answer to this whole conflict. In Luke chapter 24, a question is raised by an Angel of God to those women who went to the tomb with the spices they had prepared. The women found the stone rolled away, and the body of Jesus Christ was missing. While they were wondering what happened to the body, an Angel of God asked them, "*Why do you look for the living among the dead?*" And the Angel of God answers his own question, and the answer can be summarized in three words- **HE IS RISEN!**

The Angel's question does not just apply to those women but is a question for all, including you and me. Are we looking for Jesus Christ among the dead? Let the angel's response that echoed in the empty tomb of Jesus Christ, and recorded in the Gospels, now and ever echo in our hearts, always proclaiming- **HE IS RISEN!**

God bless us all.

Do you know??

- Jewish Christians, the first to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus, timed the observance in relation to Passover. Direct evidence for a more fully formed Christian festival of Pascha (Easter) begins to appear in the mid-2nd century.
- The date of Easter can fluctuate between March 22 and April 25 as the Western churches (Catholic and Protestant) now follow the Gregorian calendar and the Eastern churches follow the unrevised Julian calendar to celebrate Easter (and other Church holidays) on two different dates.