

A World With No Easter

--**I Cor. 15:17-19** --What would the world be like if Jesus never resurrected? We are going to ponder that together today

--**No one wants a world without Easter**—no one wants a world that doesn't have Jesus' resurrection in it.

1. We can look into the past and see that though things are tough in our depraved world its nothing compared to what it was or would have been had Jesus not resurrected.

--**Fact of His resurrection has started movement of those who believed** that spread out from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth.

--**That movement and those people have become exactly what their founder, Jesus, said that they would be: salt** in a world rotting from corruption and depravation and **light** in world full of darkness.

--**How dark would it have been had He not resurrected and started this movement?**

--**It doesn't require much imagination; it was already very dark back then:**

Government: Republic in form but ruled by some extremely wicked people—Nero ruled the empire just 21 years after Jesus' resurrection—You think our leaders are corrupt and immoral?

Nero's list of atrocities: poisoned his brother, had his mother executed, married to 2 homosexual lovers once as a bride and the other time as a groom; had his aids bring him adolescent boys so he could rape them; had Rome burned killing hundreds and leaving 1000s homeless-- just so he could continue his building aspirations; had Christians put on wooden beam skewers, dipped in tar and set on fire to light nighttime parties.

By the way, this is Paul's statement of how the Christian of that day was to respond to government.

Romans 13:1-6

--**Missing is the mandate to protest at abortions, killing of unwanted children, protest** the heinous sexual orgies that were everywhere or for Christians to rise up as a voting block to change who teaches in public schools and the books that the board of education approves or disapproves of. –

--**Not that these things are bad and not even that they shouldn't be done,** but, today, we move on these issues as if they are explicitly commanded in Scripture.

--**The early church did not absorb themselves with trying to change society,** they absorbed themselves with preaching the gospel and, thereby, changed society.

--**What would happen if Christians today took the money and energy** that we are using to change politics and government and put that towards preaching and teaching that Jesus is the risen Savior and that sinners need to repent and turn to Him so that they can be reconciled to God?

Roman Legal system: no due process; criminals of any sort were given the death penalty (not lethal injection but crucifixion);

Rome was also a slave culture: had this group met 2K years ago 60% of those here would have been the property of someone else.

--**Romans 16:22-24**—Tertius was Paul's scribe but that wasn't his name; it was his title as a third ranked slave in a household: (Primary, secondary, tertiary, quaternary)—"**Quartus**" was the title of fourth ranked slave.

Roman Religion involved quite often going to the temples were you would consort with male or female prostitutes and listen to drug induced murmurings for inspiration. If you were real religious you would need to have more children since you would be sacrificing some of them to the gods you worshipped.

The Romans were the civilized ones: if your ancestry is Germanic or English your forefathers were still living in caves and dragging the wives around by the hair.

"**Oh, but we are so far from that today**", yes, we indeed are.

--**Do you know how we got here?** "**Well, we just got better**" is a uninformed answer.

—Here's some info: **Consider that we hadn't gotten any better** for the previous 4K years of recorded history.?

- Low and behold something happened in the first century A.D. and it gained momentum until even the Roman empire changed its way of doing things.
- Nearly 300 years after Jesus's resurrection, Rome repealed the organized and government sanctioned persecution of religious minorities which included summary executions.
- They forbade work on Sundays,
- They forbade the killing of unwanted children,
- They Abolished crucifixion as a form of execution.
- They Exempted Christian ministers from Taxes as had been true for leaders of other religions.

What movement spawned such a radical change when nothing had changed for 4K years?
 --Christianity: a movement that began with a mere 200 people armed with nothing but the knowledge of their risen Savior.

This movement spawned by the resurrection has eroded the darkness until this day: one would hate to think what this world would be like if it were not for the many Christian organizations that minister throughout the world.

--The world's first hospitals, first nursing homes, first orphanages were not started by Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus. They were started by Christians = people whose Leader is resurrected!

--**NO one would want to live a world (no one could live in a world) with no Easter/no resurrection!**

The only reason that the church is alive and active today is because our Savior is alive and active.

--**Voltaire**, the famous French philosopher, said that the Bible and Christianity would cease to exist within 100 years, yet he's been dead for 230 years?

--**In 1882 Friedrich Nietzsche** said, "God is dead" believing that science would abolish the Christian faith--he's been dead for 125 years.

--**The Communist dictionary** once defined the Bible and Christianity as a collection of fantastic legends, and now communism fell apart essentially 25 years ago.

Max Lucado said, "Everyone who has tried to bury the Christian faith has discovered the same thing: It won't stay buried because its founder wouldn't!"

Jesus lived in poverty His whole life, died at the young age of 33. Only had a **three-year** public ministry that was **confined** essentially to one tiny country in the Middle East. He started with only 12 **men but ended with 11** because one of them wound up betraying Him.

He never wrote a **book**, never wrote a **song**, never founded any **institution** or **college**. Never preached over the **internet or airwaves**. Never led an **army** or drafted a **soldier** or **fired gun** or used a **weapon**.

The names of the military leaders and statesmen of Greece and Rome have come and gone along with their influence. Names of **scientists, philosophers, theologians** and world leaders have come and gone.

2000 years have now passed since Jesus walked this earth and yet all the armies, all the parliaments and senates and kings and queens and generals and all that they have attempted to do over those years combined have **not affected mankind anywhere near as powerfully and continually as the one man**, Jesus, and the one main thing He did: **died for our sins and rose to prove that He is the Savior.**

--Absolutely nothing compares to effect of that solitary life and that solitary event!

3. This world, whether it likes or not, would have long since imploded without Easter.

--Life would be completely hopeless without Easter

--Jesus didn't mess around with stuff that ultimately doesn't matter--mere philosophy or world dominion or all the other things people deem important.

--In His short three-year ministry, Jesus got straight to the real issues: sin and death **Heb. 2:14-15** (what a breath of fresh air!). Especially compared to the **dead air** coming off of all other religions.

A former Muslim demonstrated that dead air when he explained his recent conversion to Christianity: When asked why he became a believer in the risen Savior, he said, "Well, it's like this. Suppose you were going down the road and suddenly the road forked and you didn't know which way to go. There at the fork in the road were two men: one dead and the other alive. Which one would you ask for directions?"

--Tell me what possibly could other religions offer since all their leaders are currently and permanently dead?

Christianity in its essence is an emancipation from that single reality--death:

--That emancipation is exactly what is offered to every last one of us in the Person of Jesus Christ: **Jn. 5:24**