

Reactions to the Truth

By Greg Gwin

When Paul preached his famous sermon on Mars Hill in Athens, his teaching received three distinct reactions. "And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked: and others said, We will hear thee again of this matter. So Paul departed from among them. Howbeit certain men clave unto him, and believed..." (Acts 17:32-34). Do you see it? Some rejected the teaching immediately. Others procrastinated or withheld judgment, and did nothing. But some enthusiastically accepted the truth and acted upon it.

The same three reactions are in evidence to this day — even among members of the Lord's church. Consider this scenario: The preacher preaches a "hard" sermon that exposes sin and worldliness. It's one of those sermons that "steps on toes" and hits "close to home." Some Christians will grow angry. The things taught suggest the need to change, and they are not willing to do so. They are happy to hear preaching on things they already agree about, but if a lesson contradicts their existing views or

practices, they get mad. They are like those in Athens who "mocked."

Some other brethren hear this same sermon and, while it plainly shows that there are things they need to change in their life, they postpone any action. These are the ones who commend the preacher as they go out the door: "I really needed that!", or "You really stomped on my toes today!" And, yet, they do nothing. They continue in their former ways. "We will hear thee again of this matter."

Thank God that there are those who are tender-hearted; those who are always looking to bring their lives into closer harmony with the will of God. These are the folks who, upon hearing the truth, respond by putting it into practice in their lives. If it means changing from what they previously believed, they will do so. Their commitment is to the Lord. Serving Him is their first priority. May their tribe increase!



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Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. (Matthew 5:16)

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The Second Proof of the Resurrection

By Robert Turner



Thoughts to Ponder

We often forget that the ultimate healing for a Christian is resurrection.

The resurrection of Jesus is, of course, absolutely essential to the true meaning of Christianity. Without it Jesus was a teacher of great insight and ability, but self-deceived, and a deceiver. Without it Christianity becomes but another human philosophy, totally of this world. As Paul put it, "then is our preaching vain, your faith also is vain" (1 Cor. 15:14), and having only a this life hope "we are of all men most pitiable" (v. 19). Jesus Christ "was declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead" (Rom. 1:4). (Phillips says, "patently marked out as the Son of God by the power of the Spirit of holiness which raised Him to life again from the dead.") Cancel the resurrection, and you cancel the power that gives Christianity its life. Proofs therefore are tremendously important.

by the Apostle Peter, on the first Pentecost following the resurrection. One rested upon the testimony of believing witnesses; and the second, upon the experience of enemies who heard the witnesses. The first, His enemies were asked to believe; the second, they could prove to themselves by their own logic and experience.

Prophecies from Isaiah and Daniel had pointed to the "rule" of a coming Messiah. (The "anointed one" was Messiah to the Hebrews, Christ to the Greeks.) The "mountain" of Jehovah's house would be established (Isa. 2), and the "sovereignty" and "dominion" of this government would be exercised by a descendant of David (Dan. 2:44; 7:14; Isa. 9:7). Peter must prove the crucified Jesus to be "Lord and Christ." Obviously, both of these hinge on proof of the resurrection, and Luke records the marvelous way the Apostle blends these two purposes (Acts 2). Get your Bible, and follow with me.

The Scriptures, as historic literature from the first century, record many proofs of the resurrection. His enemies knew very well His promise to rise again after three days and used every means at their disposal to make the sepulcher sure, lest "the last error be worse than the first" (Matt. 27:26f). Yet, at the appointed time the tomb was empty. The apostles and early disciples displayed incredible faith - even unto death - for what? A ruse they themselves had worked? But we do not plan to discuss such proofs in this study. Instead, we beg your attention to two proofs offered

When the Holy Spirit was poured out upon the Apostles, a multitude of Jews were attracted and were amazed and marveled at what they heard (v. 7f). But others mocked, saying these men were drunk. Their rash charge set the stage for Peter's introduction. He declared "this is that" manifestation of the Spirit which Joel said would mark the "last days" (final dispensation) in which the remnant of the Jews, and "whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Joel 2:28f). He thus gave those who marveled at the

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Classes This Week

Tuesday 7 PM - at the Church Building
Contending for the Faith Class

Thursday 7 PM—On Campus
Truth Seekers

Sick

Richard Wood (Melanie Smith's Uncle)	Eli Williams (Friend of Sarah Norman)	Frank Hand (Laura Humphrey's dad)	Sandlyn Fultz (Davis Fultz's Sister)
Gloria Detmer and Carol Dickerson (Toni Herd's Sisters)	Don Lanier (Father of Greg Lanier)	Marion Vanhal (Paula Davis' Uncle)	Jeffery Miller (Friend of Walker Davis)
Virginia Crawford (Hunter's Sister-in-Law)	Neal May (Manna Jones' Mother)	Roger Whatley (Daphne Whatley's son)	Andrew Hagewood (Friend of Sarah Norman)
Gaylord Huffman (Jennifer Daniel's Grandfather)	Quinton Addison (April Jerkins Grandfather)	Betty Bradford	Arlene Harkrider (Nichole Pender's Grandmother)
Gerald White (Christopher, Anna and Wesley's Father)	Dave Brown (Friend of the Lanier's)	Dale Herd (William Herd's brother)	Carl Alexander (Hannah Alexander's Uncle)
Marty and Aubrey Meeks, Russell Dickerson (Toni Herd's Nephews)	Melissa Walker (Chuck Hahn's Cousin)	Jerry Coleman (Jon Coleman's brother)	Caleb Dobbs (Melanie Smith's brother)

July Birthdays

3 – Nathan Rouse
6 – Nathan Bradshaw
11 – Chase Winslett
14 – Laurel Jerkins
15 – Bradley Seymore
16 – Nathan Smith
23 – Drew Haley Smith
25 – Yvette Rouse

News and Notes

- ☑ - Suzanne Nichols' mother (Judy) is having surgery on Monday.
- ☑ - Davis Fultz's uncle, Mike Tatum, is having surgery soon to remove cancer.
- ☑ - Our new quarter begins today!
- ☑ - Let's continue to remember our expectant mother in our prayers, Terria Burton.
- ☑ - We will have a congregational meeting with the Elders on Sunday afternoon July 15.
- ☑ Let us pray for those traveling!

Elders

Walker Davis
(334) 703-0050
Larry Rouse
(334) 734-2133



SCHEDULE OF SERVICES Sunday

Bible Class 9:30 AM
Worship 10:20 AM
Evening Worship 6:00 PM

Wednesday

Bible Classes 7:00 PM

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demonstration of power something to consider, but with Jesus still dead this could be dismissed as a groundless boast. So Peter offers his first proof of the resurrection: the testimony of witnesses who had seen the resurrected Jesus. Peter said God had raised Him up (v. 24) and established His testimony by other witnesses (v. 32; cf. 1 Cor. 15:1-8). And His testimony was strengthened by the fact that this Jesus was "a man approved of God unto you by mighty works and wonders and signs which God did by him in the midst of you, even as ye yourselves know" (v. 22, all Scripture emphasis mine).

Peter then reasoned with the Jews from Psalms 16:8f, a Scripture they considered Messianic. "David saith concerning him. . . " (i.e., Jesus), "I beheld the Lord. . ." (Acts 2:25). Furthermore, the "Holy One" would not see corruption (v. 27). And finally, "Being therefore a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins he would set one upon his throne; he foreseeing this spake of the resurrection of the Christ. . . . On the strength of Peter's first proof, the testimony of witnesses who saw the resurrected Jesus, he has reasoned that Jesus of Nazareth is Lord, Holy One, and Christ; and that He now occupies the throne of David. Unless we are extremely well versed in Hebrew thought and their obsession with prophecies about a Messiah, we can scarce appreciate the force of Peter's argument. The Holy Spirit was guiding him to reach these Jews with their own brand of logic and with Scriptures they all held in a proper understanding of his next statement. "Being therefore by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he hath poured forth this, which ye see and hear" (Acts 2:33). "Being exalted" and "having received" are both singular and masculine, and must refer to Christ. It was Jesus who had been exalted, and it was Jesus who had received "the promise of the Holy Spirit." The big question is, had Jesus been promised the Spirit; or, does this refer to something the Spirit had promised to Jesus?

Robertson says, "In itself the genitive is neither subjective nor objective, but lends itself readily to either point of view." We must therefore allow the context to answer our question. If "promise of Holy Spirit" refers to the Spirit Himself, we have the problem of deity being given to deity, of whom it has already been implied that He had the Spirit without measure (Jn. 3:34). Isaiah wrote of "the Spirit of Jehovah" resting upon a branch out of Jesse (11:2), upon the "chosen servant" (42:1), and the "anointed" (61:1). However

these passages point to the Lord's show of divine power (Matt. 12:17f; Lk. 4:17f), and of divine approval during His personal ministry (Matt. 3:16-17). I am persuaded this passage refers to something the Holy Spirit promised relative to kingship; something closely suited to the argument and proof Peter is offering.

During the Lord's personal ministry He had spoken of a time when "living waters" would flow from His disciples; and John explains this referred to the Spirit which "was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified" (Jn. 7:38-39). An outpouring, such as that on Pentecost, awaited the glorification of the Son of God. When Jesus promised the Spirit to His disciples He not only stressed the necessity for His going away; He also explained that He would occupy a new and different heavenly office (Jn. 16:7). Note, "Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name, ask and ye shall receive. . . ." (v. 24). "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter" (14:16). "The Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name" (v. 26). His glorification and Lordship is here clearly indicated.

Now, how are these things "the promise of the Holy Spirit"? The immediate context quotes David as saying, "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, Till I make thine enemies the footstool of thy feet" (vv. 34-35; Psa. 110:1). Jesus had cited this same Psalm (Matt. 22:43) saying, "How then doth David in the Spirit call him Lord, saying. . . ." Mark's account of this reads, "David himself said by the Holy Ghost. . ." (12:36, KJ). Clearly, the Holy Spirit had foretold (promised) that the Son of God would be glorified, seated upon David's throne. This exaltation would be given Him by the Father (Dan. 7:13-14). Then, and only then, would the glorified Son "pray the Father" that the Spirit be given the disciples "in my name." But none of this could occur until Jesus had been raised from the dead.

Peter's second proof of the resurrection called upon his audience to accept the logical conclusion of their own seeing and hearing. It ran something like this: You have seen and heard proof that the Holy Spirit is poured out from heaven; and you are amazed and marvel at this fulfillment of Joel's prophecy. But these "last day" wonders could not occur until the Messiah is exalted, and the Holy Spirit's promise of kingship is realized. The promise of kingship was to one who would not be left in the place of the dead, and whose body would not see corruption. The conclusion is inescapable: We are witnesses to Jesus' resurrection (v. 32); and you are witnesses to something that could only occur after Jesus had been resurrected, exalted, and made King on David's throne (v. 33).



Dealing With Our Doubts

By Bob West

It is safe to say that there is not a person living who has not had doubts in the realm of religion. Conviction or faith is described in the Bible as "evidence of things not seen." Obviously, if one is unfamiliar with available evidence on a subject, he will be doubtful concerning it. Thus we see one of the causes of doubt: *Ignorance*.

Doubts and their antecedent ignorance are not wrong in themselves. On the contrary, if dealt with properly, they can be the occasion of leading to greater growth and knowledge. As is too often the case, however, the doubter mishandles his doubts which then lead to his own harm as well as that of others. It would appear, then, that it is of the greatest importance for us to know how to deal with doubts when they arise. When some doubt is raised in our mind concerning a doctrine or religious practice, there are three courses of action usually open to us.

1. We can harbor that doubt and constantly look for things with which to nourish it until it makes complete ruin of our faith.
2. We can express such doubts publicly and thus run the risk of creating further doubts in the minds of others.
3. Or, we can engage in diligent investigation of the subject and resolve or confirm the doubt.

Unfortunately, too many doubters want to expose their doubts before anybody and everybody. Some do this in writing, from the pulpit, and in Bible classes. It is one thing to have strong convictions on something and stating

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such convictions publicly. It is quite another thing to entertain doubts and express such before babes in Christ, the unconverted, or outright enemies of truth. When we have doubts, don't spill them all over everybody else and thus run the risk of hindering the free course of truth in other people.

Obviously, one should never leave a doubt alone. Doubts are like a leaven that, left unattended, will eventually permeate and corrupt all of one's convictions. Doubts indicate insufficient evidence to bring real conviction, either because such evidence does not exist or because the doubter is unfamiliar with it. So, let's not harbor a doubt and foster it with continued ignorance. Get after it! Face it squarely and do something about it! Dig the information out of the Bible for ourselves. Or study the matter with ones who have more knowledge of and no doubts about the subject. Find out wherein their confidence lies. Don't just take their word for it. Require them to point out the evidence from God's word.

One cannot live happily in doubt. Eminently more important, one cannot serve God acceptably with a doubtful mind (Romans 14:23). So, when doubts arise (and they will), face them for what they really are: signals indicating that our knowledge is deficient, then get busy and investigate. By so facing our doubts we will not only resolve them, but will find ourselves growing more and more in the knowledge of Jesus Christ.

