

## **Same Evidence, Different Stories**

‘A thief picked a man’s pocket on a crowded elevator. As the result of quick police action, he was arrested and brought before the local magistrate. “You are charged with stealing another person’s wallet”, said the magistrate. “How do you plead: guilty or not guilty?” The pickpocket replied, “How can I tell, Your Honor, until I have heard the evidence?”’

Seems like that pickpocket was fixing to put a spin on whatever evidence was presented, all in order to put himself in the best possible situation. And that’s the problem with evidence. While it should be able to stand on its own, the crux of the problem is who’s looking at it. Humans are exceedingly slippery, sly, in other words, sinful beings, and thus usually refuse to let evidence speak for itself, instead insisting on interpreting the evidence so that it says or indicates whatever people want it to.

Last Sunday we celebrated the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. While dead people coming back to life is a very uncommon occurrence, hard as it is to believe, it has happened several times through history. But the most famous case is that of Christ Jesus. Multiple historians, researchers, scholars, and investigators have all come to the conclusion that His resurrection is perhaps the best, most well-attested event in all of human his-

tory. Let alone that it was of a difficult-to-believe event. Most humans desire to live long, even forever, if possible. So the fact that Lord Jesus did rise from the dead should serve as a great hope and reassurance to humanity that we can live a very long time, even for all eternity. But, it doesn't.

Looking at the court case that resulted from Peter's and the other apostle's preaching, he and the others wouldn't stop claiming that Lord Jesus was alive, that He had risen from the dead. While these words inspired the crowds, and moved them toward belief, faith and ultimately eternal salvation for their souls, these same words elicited a very different reaction from the magistrates of the day, the leading priests and the teachers of religious law who were members of the Sanhedrin, the high council whose decisions could exalt people or, more frequently, destroy people.

The Sanhedrin was comprised of two main groups, we'd probably call them religious political parties today. There were the Pharisees and the Sadducees. A smaller group of Essenes probably also had a handful of members among that elite body of rulers. But so few the Bible does not explicitly mention them at all. Of the two main parties, the Pharisee believed in resurrection. They were a more conservative group, quite legalistic, and prone to judgementalism. The Sadducees were a more liberal group, quite choosy in what they accepted from the Holy Scriptures. This is evidenced by the simple fact that despite multiple passages in the Old Testament, they did not even acknowledge the

possibility of resurrection. As adamant as the Sadducees were that there was no resurrection period, just as convinced were the Pharisees that there was. Bringing up this disagreement between the two groups would reliably result in a fracas.

Now with our intrepid apostles constantly preaching in the name of a convicted felon, “justly” crucified, declared enemy of the state, One Who supposedly threatened the very existence of the Jews, Who had been convicted of blasphemy against God Himself, well, the Sanhedrin had to protect the people from these lying and deceived apostles. Their teaching was incendiary, dangerous, and could so badly mislead the people that Rome would come in and assume direct control, and they would lose their last bits of autonomy and local sovereignty. Most importantly, the very Sanhedrin itself would be dissolved by the Romans. And with no Sanhedrin and no rabbinical order, well, that would be the very extinction of the Jews. Or so the elites believed.

The evidence that Lord Jesus had risen from the dead was plain to see. Yet so unbelievable it was that even one of the apostles, Thomas, would not believe the other’s testimony at all. He would have to see, and touch, for himself. And Lord Jesus, in His infinite kindness, accommodated Thomas. On today, eight days after Resurrection Day morning, He personally appeared to Thomas, in the midst of the other apostles, directly addressing Thomas, quoting his very words, telling Thomas to touch His scars and the marks of the wounds. The very fact that Christ the

Lord spoke Thomas' own words of doubt, would be enough to prove that Lord Jesus was alive. But no, He insisted that Thomas also physically touch Him, proving beyond any shadow of doubt that Lord Jesus was indeed alive and kicking again! And what a witness! Because of Thomas' doubt, we have additional, and irrefutable evidence that Christ Jesus had accomplished what was otherwise impossible—rising from the dead. He had defeated death. Just as He had prophesied. Lord Jesus had now broken down death's door, and if anyone put their faith in Him, as Thomas so beautifully expressed, "My Lord and my God!", such believers themselves would now gain access to life beyond physical death. For us, we will seamlessly cross from this physical life to eternal life in heaven upon our physical deaths. So easy and pleasant is the transition that St. Francis of Assisi in his famous hymn, "All Creatures of Our God and King", addresses death and calls it, "most kind and gentle death". Well, death is not kind and gentle to those who've not joined their lives with Christ's. But for those who have, Christ has "defanged" death, and put it under His control, accomplishing His will for His blessed people.

Evidence truly does stand on its own. It exists independently of people. It stands in the way of what many people want to think and believe. One of America's founding fathers famously said, "Facts are stubborn things; and whatever may be our wishes, our inclinations, or the dictates of our passions, they cannot alter the state of facts and evidence". Since that is the "fact", people there-

fore want to conceal the facts, or disguise the facts, or “reinterpret” the truth, so that it says or shows what they want. The desire to escape the truth is so overwhelming that all too many in our modern society have literally lost their minds, pretending that they can be whatever they want to be at any particular moment in time. This is resulting in a total breakdown of rational behavior for many people. Truly, many leftist governmental authorities and bureaucrats are certifiably mentally deranged. It really is a mental illness, a psychotic breakdown, a illusory world of make believe.

I needn't go into the all the nearly countless ways we see this insanity manifesting all throughout our world. Most tragic is the current delirium of transgenderism. There is a verifiable mass psychosis, a kind of mass hypnosis, mass brainwashing, that thousands of people have succumbed to. People are irrational to the point of clinical lunacy, and really need to be committed to insane asylums so they can be treated and regain their sanity. The problem is, the asylums are being run by those who should be patients. For the real source of their psychosis is the devil himself. Can you imagine how he is laughing his head off at how much destruction he's wreaking in the lives of so many children who are being taught in schools, by professional, union teachers, that they can be any gender they can imagine, or no gender at all? They undergo hormone treatments and surgical butchering, maiming and disfiguring their bodies until they're all but unrecognizable as the beautiful humans God originally created them to be. And sa-

tan is rolling on the floor cackling with devilish delight.

For people do not realize that we are each and every one of us magnificent creations of God Almighty. And we are designed to be perpetually plugged into Holy Spirit, receiving from Him a constant flow of eternal life, through faith and continuous trust in Christ Jesus. This is how we were made. This is a beautiful and joyful and abundant life; how life is supposed to be lived. But those who refuse to acknowledge the evidence of His love and creation all around us, they then rely solely on their own discernment and judgement. Or so they think. We are not independent creatures. Our lives do not belong to us. They came from God and to God will return. But if we turn our backs to God, then guess who we're reorienting our lives to face? Why the devil. And while Father God gives us free will, the "right" of choice, does the devil do likewise? Absolutely not. With his devious disinformation, people then will believe anything and everything that is evil and think it good. Looking at the same evidence, they can no longer see it as it really is. And they are happy, or so they convince themselves. Until they wake up. Most won't, but a few will, and when they do, how blessed is their witness. For the only truth, the only reality, the only "facts" of life, are written right here, in God's Holy Bible. His words are truth, and light, and life. Holy and blessed is He. His life is the light of all mankind. For we are His, sheep blissfully, contentedly living on His luxuriant pasture. With not a care in the world, now or ever, for He is love.

