

THE event that changed the world

Just as we begin let's think on inventions that changed the world.

Wheel, Tools, Toilet, Printing press, Clock, Penicillin, Computers, The web, Nuclear Bomb, Gun, Ebay, Telephone, Television

Events that changed the course of history?

9/11, July 7th, WW 1& 2, Vietnam?, Berlin wall, conversion of constantine, European reformation, age of empires, origin of the species .

Arguably THE event that changed the world is the resurrection of Jesus

Why?

Well, if it is not true we are wasting our time here but if it is then the implications are huge.

I come across many folks in the course of my job. Many people outside of the church are aware of a spiritual reality but for many it is vague, mysterious and unknown. A shroud of mystery and myth surrounds what it really is and what life there me beyond the grave.

For example I met the husband of a medium who told me they had chosen their spot to be buried where they could be together for eternity. I came away thinking for them eternal life is being stuck 6 feet under with nobody but themselves and anybody else who is there to talk to FOR EVER. What a grim prospect!

When Jesus came he came to make things clear. He said, '*I am the **light** of the **world**. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the **light** of life.*' He came as a light into the darkness of human understanding about God, life, death, meaning, human significance, purpose and so on.

So the two Mary's find an empty tomb that is the only thing that is empty for their world is about to be filled with a greater fullness than they could ever have dreamed.

When Jesus bursts forth from the tomb – death is defeated, its brother in arms sin is disarmed and the very gates of hell are shaken.

I attended the funeral of my friends mother who was a strong Christian woman. Here son spoke at her funeral of the hope of heaven, of how Jesus stared death in the eye and declared before it an end to its reign for all who would believe.

That's why the apostle Paul could say in his great passage on death 1 Corinthians 15:55

Where, O death, is your victory?
Where, O death, is your sting?"

Do you believe it?

Malcolm Muggeridge, an atheist journalist who investigated the gospels claims, was so convinced by them he became a Christian. Well on in years and full of Christian hope wrote this:

"When you're old as I am, there are all sorts of extremely pleasant things that happen to you...the pleasantest of all is that you wake up in the night and you find that you are half in and half out of your battered old carcass. It seems quite a tossup whether you go back and resume full occupancy of your mortal body, or make off toward the bright glow you see in the sky, the lights of the city of God."

The last words of the great German reformer Martin Luther were:

"Our God is the God from whom cometh salvation: God is the Lord by whom we escape death."

What hope made possible by Jesus dying and rising again.

If we really believed in heaven you can see how our view of life here would be very different can't you? We would see ourselves as temporary residents here our true and lasting home being heaven. Which is of course how the bible encourages us to view ourselves.

We can see how that view of heaven, and hell for that matter, influenced the practice of the church after Jesus went back to heaven. The church became like a passport office – offering new citizenship for the Kingdom of God that promised those who took it by faith and trust in the Lord Jesus, a taste of heaven now but the full thing to come. Death no longer held fear for them, they had their passport (Jesus) that would see them accepted to heaven – their permanent home.

Also their possessions took on a different role, rather than things to accumulate they were things to share with those who were like them, as the singer Larry Norman called it, just visiting this planet. Their possessions were no longer their but Christ's, it was Kingdom property for God to do with as he pleased.

We can see that the follow through on the resurrection of Jesus is far reaching isn't it? It begs the question tough, how much is it following through into our lives? Our view of death, our view of wanting others to resurrection life that Jesus gives to those who trust in him, our possessions? Do we see them

as kingdom property, Christ's to do with them as he pleases? If not, why not? Christ gave his all for you and I – should we not also give our all for him? Now don't mistake me here, I am not saying sell up and give it all away but I am saying make ensure that what you have at his disposal – your time, your talents, your money, your home.

We see this king of implication of Jesus resurrection coming out in Jesus own words in the passage. What does he say to the disciples, basically now you know there is a God, a heaven and the forgiveness of sins now Go tell everyone about it.

Vs 28 “Go make disciples of all the nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, the son and the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey all things.”

Jesus bursting from the tomb....

But before they did that, they were to wait weren't they? Luke tells us they were to wait until the Holy Spirit came upon them to enable them to live out this commission.

Paul tells us that when we have the Spirit of God in our lives it provides power or an enabling to live the Christian live or resurrected life of the Christian. Resurrected life because our souls once dead by faith in Christ are brought alive to God – they are as Jesus puts it – reborn or born again. That power that

brings us to faith and sustains us in the faith Paul describes in Eph 1:18-19

“That power is like the working of his of his mighty strength, which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead”. He went on to say I want to now the power of the resurrection in my Christian life. God's resurrection power is at work in us, is available to us but so often we leave it untapped don't we?

Resurrection power to live a life less ordinary!

What are we doing with this resurrection life?

Mark Twain said, *‘Let us endeavor so to live that when we come to die even the undertaker will be sorry.’*

One morning in 1888 Alfred Nobel, inventor of dynamite, awoke to read his own obituary. The obituary was printed as a result of a journalistic error. Alfred's brother had died and the reporter carelessly reported the death of the wrong brother. Any man would be disturbed under the circumstances, but to Alfred the shock was overwhelming because he saw himself as the world saw him. The "Dynamite King," the great industrialist who had made an immense fortune from explosives. This, as far as the general public was concerned, was the entire purpose of Alfred's life. None of his true intentions to break down the barriers that separated men and ideas for

peace were recognized or given serious consideration. He was simply a merchant of death. And for that alone he would be remembered. As he read the obituary with horror, he resolved to make clear to the world the true meaning and purpose of his life. This could be done through the final disposition of his fortune. His last will and testament--an endowment of five annual prizes for outstanding contributions in physics, chemistry, physiology or medicine, literature, and peace (the sixth category of economics was added later)--would be the expression of his life's ideals and ultimately would be why we would remember him. The result was the most valuable of prizes given to those who had done the most for the cause of world peace. It is called today, the "Nobel Peace Prize."

Jesus burst from the tomb...

The resurrection power of the Christ in our lives is given for us to make a difference. Living out his life in our lives, living his way in our day in word and in deed. A life filled with joy Peter reminds us

“In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead... Though you have not see him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with inexpressible and glorious joy, for you are receiving the goal of

your faith, the salvation of your souls”
(1 Pet 1:3, 8-9)

After a big discourse on the nature of live in heaven Paul makes this statement

“Therefore, brothers and sisters, always give yourself fully to the work of the Lord, for you know that your work in the Lord is not in vain”