

"The Dawn of NEW"

Easter Sunday

April 17, 2022

INTRO ...If Easter is Anything—It is the Dawn of a New Day! ...The Sun rises on a day where DEATH has been re-worked and altered! ...and Something NEW is now Possible that WAS NOT Possible Before!

1 Cor 15:20-24 But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. ²¹ For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead.

C.S. Lewis description of “Death working backward”

At that moment they heard from behind them a loud noise — a great cracking, deafening noise as if a giant had broken a giant’s plate.... The Stone Table was broken into two pieces by a great crack that ran down it from end to end; and there was no Aslan.

“Who’s done it?” cried Susan. “What does it mean? Is it more magic?”

“Yes!” said a great voice from behind their backs. “It is more magic.” They looked round. There, shining in the sunrise, larger than they had seen him before, shaking his mane (for it had apparently grown again) stood Aslan himself.

“Oh, Aslan!” cried both the children, staring up at him, almost as much frightened as they were glad....

“But what does it all mean?” asked Susan when they were somewhat calmer.

“It means,” said Aslan, “that though the Witch knew the Deep Magic, there is a magic deeper still which she did not know. Her knowledge goes back only to the dawn of time. But if she could have looked a little further back, into the stillness and the darkness before Time dawned, she would have read there a different incantation. She would have known that when a willing victim who had committed no treachery was killed in a traitor’s stead, the Table would crack and Death itself would start working backward.” (from *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* by C.S. Lewis)

Ecc 3:11 He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also, he has put eternity into man's heart, yet so that he cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end.

...There are things that we long to know and understand (things beyond this natural, temporal existence) ...and there are things that we cannot know (deeper realities that we know need to be discovered) without God revealing them to us!

Man's Quest for NEW

Acts 17:16-21 Now while Paul was waiting for them at Athens, his spirit was provoked within him as he saw that the city was full of idols. ¹⁷ So he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and the devout persons, and in the marketplace every day with those who happened to be there. ¹⁸ Some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers also conversed with him. And some said, "What does this babbler wish to say?" Others said, "He seems to be a preacher of foreign divinities"—because he was preaching Jesus and the resurrection. ¹⁹ And they took him and brought him to the Areopagus, saying, "May we know what this new teaching is that you are presenting?" ²⁰ For you bring some strange things to our ears. We wish to know therefore what these things mean." ²¹ Now all the Athenians and the foreigners who lived there would spend their time in nothing except telling or hearing something new.

- **A City full of Idols!**

Idols = Something that we Look to, to provide for us a meaningful existence ...

- **A City full of "New Ideas"!** —v. 18, 21 (Epicurean & Stoic Ideas ...Athenians & Foreigners)

- **Think Recent History**

- **“Something New”**—what’s the deal with the allure of something new?

...Old things become things that lose their capacity to satisfy, fulfill, and hold our affections! ...Old things become things that have PROVEN to US that THEY DON'T WORK!! ...creation bearing witness to the “futility” that God has subjected it to! ...

Rom 8:18-23 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. ¹⁹ For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. ²⁰ For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope ²¹ that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. ²² For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. ²³ And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.

The Wisest Man on Earth Wrestled with This “Groaning Futility”

Ecc 1:1-14 ¹ The words of the Preacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem.

² Vanity of vanities, says the Preacher, vanity of vanities! All is vanity.

³ What does man gain by all the toil at which he toils under the sun?

⁴ A generation goes, and a generation comes, but the earth remains forever.

⁵ The sun rises, and the sun goes down, and hastens to the place where it rises.

⁶ The wind blows to the south and goes around to the north; around and around goes the wind, and on its circuits the wind returns.

⁷ All streams run to the sea, but the sea is not full; to the place where the streams flow, there they flow again.

⁸ All things are full of weariness; a man cannot utter it; the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing.

⁹ What has been is what will be, and what has been done is what will be done, and there is nothing new under the sun.

¹⁰ Is there a thing of which it is said, "See, this is new"? It has been already in the ages before us.

¹¹ There is no remembrance of former things, nor will there be any remembrance of later things yet to be among those who come after.

¹² I the Preacher have been king over Israel in Jerusalem. ¹³ And I applied my heart to seek and to search out by wisdom all that is done under heaven. It is an unhappy business that God has given to the children of man to be busy with. ¹⁴ I have seen everything that is done under the sun, and behold, all is vanity and a striving after wind.

Ecc 3:18-19 I said in my heart with regard to the children of man that God is testing them that they may see that they themselves are but beasts. ¹⁹ For what happens to the children of man and what happens to the beasts is the same; as one dies, so dies the other. They all have the same breath, and man has no advantage over the beasts, for all is vanity.

Beware—at some point, even the things that 'satisfy you the most' and have won over your affections are going to GROAN and taste like "Futility".

- ***The Athenian Areopagus is "Think-tank Central"—***

...Then Along Comes Paul! ...

Acts 17:22-32 So Paul, standing in the midst of the Areopagus, said: “Men of Athens, I perceive that in every way you are very religious. ²³ For as I passed along and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription: ‘To the unknown god.’ What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. ²⁴ The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man, ²⁵ nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything. ²⁶ And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place, ²⁷ that they should seek God, and perhaps feel their way toward him and find him. Yet he is actually not far from each one of us, ²⁸ for “‘In him we live and move and have our being’; as even some of your own poets have said, “‘For we are indeed his offspring.’

²⁹ Being then God's offspring, we ought not to think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of man. ³⁰ The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent, ³¹ because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead.”

³² Now when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked. But others said, “We will hear you again about this.”

v. 22-23 ...I noticed that you are religious—

v. 24-29 ...Paul clarifies what the Creator is Like

What's This Got to do with EASTER?

...well, when Paul interacted with the issues and troubles and matters of this life—the Resurrection of Jesus was CENTRAL!!

v. 18 “...And some said, “What does this babbler wish to say?” Others said, “He seems to be a preacher of foreign divinities”—because he was preaching Jesus and the resurrection.”

v. 31-32 “...he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead.”³² Now when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked. But others said, “We will hear you again about this.”

...People are looking for NEW! (V.

21) ...when Paul arrives in the Athenian Areopagus (this marketplace for new)—He introduces them to the “Gateway to New!” ...

The GATEWAY of the RESURRECTION

...Something needs to take us to a “Life” that is truly “BEYOND This Life”!! ...It cannot be made from or built out of the “dust of Futility”!!

Ecc 6:1-3 There is an evil that I have seen under the sun, and it lies heavy on mankind:² a man to whom God gives wealth, possessions, and honor, so that he lacks nothing of all that he desires, yet God does not give him power to enjoy them, but a stranger enjoys them. This is vanity; it is a grievous evil.³ If a man fathers a hundred children and lives many years, so that the days of his years are many, but his soul is not satisfied with life's good things, and he also has no burial, I say that a stillborn child is better off than he.

...GOD has subjected the world to "Futility"
 ...GOD “does not give him power to enjoy them” ***...BUT, the God who has hardwired creation with Futility—also, offers a NEW LIFE via the Resurrection!***

John 11:25-26 Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, ²⁶ and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?”

...Jesus has brought the Dawn of New to us ...he has "made death run backward" such that Now, Death is Not the End, but the BEGINNING!—And, Life is NOT merely about the Temporary, it is about the Eternity that is In Our Hearts!

Rev 21:1-5 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. ² And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. ³ And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. ⁴ He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.”
⁵ And he who was seated on the throne said, “Behold, I am making all things new.”

If the Resurrection is THE Gateway to a NEW Life (a Life that is Beyond the Futility of This Life)—Then Jesus Christ is NOT “an option” among many options!—HE IS the Resurrection ...He is “The Way” ...He is the Gateway!

1 Corinthians 15:20-24 But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. ²¹ For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. ²² For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive.

***Resurrection includes a Gateway to a
NEW Life HERE!***

Romans 6:1-5 What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? ² By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? ³ Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴ We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.

⁵ For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.