***THOUGHT FOR EASTER***

***2 Timothy Ch1 v10. "But it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Saviour, Christ Jesus, who destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.***

**So many people are dying around the globe from the coronavirus. Let's look beyond the subject of death and put the spotlight on the one individual in history about whom the claim has been made that He conquered death.**

**The Christian message of life is, that in the midst of death and loss there is hope. We all need to develop a deeper sense in the meaning of the hope of 'resurrection' and 'eternal life' this Easter. We recognise that no one has all the answers. There is much about death that is a mystery and we will only understand when it comes to our own death.**

**It is written in the Bible that Christ Jesus destroyed death. However, the original Greek word ' destroyed' doesn't mean to obliterate or to treat death as though it wasn't there at all. Rather it means to make ineffective or to nullify. Like the defusing of a bomb. It is there alright. It is very dangerous but it has been defused and rendered harmless. It is in that sense that Paul writes about destroying death.**

**Behind each of the following verses is the idea of liberation and freedom from death and Paul uses the same word.**

 **"Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death - that is, the devil and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by the fear of death." Hebrews 2:14**

**"We know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin." Romans 6:6**

**So much of the speculation that goes on about life after death today, fails to take into account what is at least a claim that a man came back from the dead to be the everlasting conqueror. It is quite useless to speculate about what lies beyond the grave until that claim has been investigated.**

**If Christ hadn't come back from the grave as the permanent conqueror of death for all human kind we would never have heard of him. The demoralised movement comprising of 11 scared men would have fizzled out on the launching pad. On that first Easter Sunday, Jesus rose from the dead to the astonishment of his disciples. The world has not been the same since then.**

**So we are challenged, all of us, to take a fresh look at the claims of Jesus this Easter:**

**1. Every one agrees that the tomb was empty.**

**2. The grave clothes were all folded.**

**3. Jesus was seen a multitude of times and in different places and in different circumstances.**

**4. The disciples changed in their attitude, no longer scared but joyous.**

**There is enough evidence. He really is alive. I am persuaded that Christ is the great destroyer, so that the despair of growing old, the prelude to death, is stripped away by him.**

**Christ is also the great illuminator as he has brought life and immortality to light - something we really need currently.**

**Up to the time of Jesus the whole question of death was shrouded in mystery. There were many pointers in the Old Testament to the resurrection theme. For example in Job we read "I know that my redeemer lives". But once Christ rose from the dead the whole issue was flooded in light. The New Testament account is not only that Christ conquered death but those who have a relationship with Christ share in his victory. We shall be like him and see him as he is. A resurrection body. The teaching is that as Christ retained his own individual significance, identity and a glorified body beyond the grave, so will those who put their trust in him. And the good news is that we can begin the resurrection life now.**

**"And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life". 1 John 5 v11**

**Christ the great destroyer. Christ the great illuminator. AMEN.**

**David Robinson**

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