

“Idle Tales” or Joyful News?

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Hidden away in the records we have of that most amazing miracle of all time—the resurrection of our Lord—are found two expressions of quite opposite import. In Luke's portrayal of the event we find the news received by some of the disciples as "idle tales" (24:11). In Matthew's account we read that the women spread the tidings with "great joy" (28:8).

The great fundamental truth, underlying all other truths of Christianity, is the fact of the resurrection of its Founder. Without it the vitalizing principle of Christianity would be lacking; its heart, and center dead; its profession a false and cruel hoax. If you agree, and who does not who seeks to worship God in truth, that without Christ's death we are indeed laden with our sins and without hope, you must also agree that without His resurrection we are equally hopeless. The one takes our guilt away and leaves us in an "unclothed" state. The other covers us with the shining garments of His righteousness.

Is it not just that which the great Apostle is trying to tell us in these words: "Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification" (Rom.4:25)?

The importance of that truth then looms up before us in ever increasing measure. Above all other events the resurrection of Christ stands preeminent. Above all other tasks of His followers should be that of heralding it far and wide. In the light of its truth all other facts of Scripture take on added value and beauty.

Many there may be who read these pages who are familiar with such expressions as "the death and resurrection of our Lord." But to some the joyful news within the words is not apparent. They hold no real meaning for them; they are as "idle tales."

By some, professedly religious, the need for the Savior's death is openly rejected and the fact of His resurrection gainsaid. Does that not make it the more binding upon those who acknowledge these truths to teach them with more zeal? Should we not therefore redouble our efforts?

The risen Christ, His saving power for mankind, are vital facts which admit of no half-hearted acceptance by us His followers. Our privilege is to carry the news "with great joy," even as did those to whom He first appeared after the angel had rolled away the stone.

"Some doubted" and "believed not" (Matt. 28:17; Mark 16:11-14) even then and must needs be convinced. Likewise today, some doubt and will not believe. Ours is the task to witness to a living Savior, in word and deed, in unmistakable terms. His coming kingdom of peace and justice over all the world, righteousness and truth holding sway where once were evil and corruption—what joyful tidings are ours to spread! What more timely announcement to despairing men today! No greater message could be conceived.

Ah, but you say, the field is so broad, the task so great. My feeble effort will never cause even a ripple in the tide of destruction sweeping over the earth. The little I can do will not even be noticed in the great reckoning day.

True, the task is great, but it is also small. My duty is simply to pass on to the one nearest me that there can be "no other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). Mine is the task to make Christ known in all His love and saving power. And my Helper is the ever-living, all-powerful, the risen Son of God, the Savior of men.

To you, are these truths "idle tales" or joyful news?

