

Wendy's April Prayer Thoughts

The Resurrection is a miracle from the hand of God. Jesus himself had foretold His disciples that it would happen on 3 recorded occasions. Just after He had fed the multitudes He said, "The Son of Man must suffer many things, be rejected by the elders, chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again." Mark 8:31. Shortly after the Transfiguration when Peter, James and John had seen Christ in glory, He said, "The Son of man is to be betrayed into human hands, and they will kill him, and three days after being killed, he will rise again. But they did not understand what he was saying and were afraid to ask" Mark 9:31-32. The 3rd time was when they were journeying to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover. "He took the twelve aside again and began to tell them what was to happen to him, saying, 'See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be handed over to the chief priests and the scribes, and they will condemn him to death, then they will hand him over to the Gentiles, they will mock him, and spit upon him, and flog him, and kill him, after three days he will rise again.'" Mark 10 32-34. Jesus gave the warning about the death He would face "so that when it does occur" you may believe." John 14:29.

When faced with the Pharisees and Sadducees who came demanding "a sign from heaven," to prove Jesus was God, Jesus replied by saying that the only sign that this generation would receive would be "the sign of Jonah/." Matthew 16:11-4. Amazingly this was just after the feeding of the 5,000. Jonah was in the whale for three days, before going to Nineveh to preach a message of repentance to the people. Jesus was pointing to His death, entombment and resurrection on the third day. - The heaven sent sign, proving He was the Messiah (the Son of God) sent to save His people from their sins. The Apostles were prepared to preach the message of repentance and salvation to the Gentiles. "We can't but speak the things we have seen and heard." Acts 4:20.

The Resurrection remains essential to the Christian faith. Mary was the first to see the risen Christ on Easter morning, and to hear His words which speak of the new and lasting relationship we have with God, when we surrender our lives to Him. "Go to my brothers (disciples,) and say to them, I am ascending to My Father and your Father to my God and your God." John 20:17. Through His death, and resurrection, we have been adopted into God's family, as His beloved children. The life we now live, we live in Christ, who has promised "never to leave us or forsake us." Hebrews 13:5.

I share with you the thrilling story from David Harper, the antiques dealer, entrepreneur, artist and speaker. He is known for his appearances on Bargain Hunt, and the Antiques Road Show, and now through his book *The God Conundrum Chronicles*, detailing his journey to becoming a born again Christian. He was brought up in a non Christian home, one rooted in secularity, where faith was portrayed as being intellectually weak. "God never played a part," he wrote. However, they were fairly moral. The Bible was considered to be a fairy tale, made up by man to control man. David's quest began when his daughter Hetti (Henrietta) had left home for London. She became exceptionally depressed. For years he saw her struggle with mental health and self harming. He felt absolutely useless. When her name came up on the phone, he wouldn't want to answer it. He was petrified, not knowing what he was going to hear next. Hetti had been on antidepressants, and had attended therapy sessions. They didn't work. Finally, she was advised to look for something spiritual, and started training to be a spiritualist.....

.....Nothing came of it! Then, she started to go to a lively Church, and eventually told her dad she was considering becoming a Christian.

David watched and monitored her for fifteen months, and the changes were "mind boggling". He heard her laugh and giggle, something he had thought he would never hear again in his life. Her physical health improved, the chronic pain subsided. Her work as a singer and song writer changed from secular to heavy metal God rock. Hetti was home for Christmas in 2024. In the two weeks they visited cathedrals and churches talking much about Jesus. David was asking questions. Was Jesus real? He saw the light on her face and in her eyes, realising something miraculous had happened. He decided to investigate Christianity, the existence for God, the evolutionary theory, the claims surrounding the resurrection etc. studying and writing over a period of eleven months. During the period he started reading the Bible, and praying. Finally he reasoned, if the resurrection is true, then everything else is true. If the resurrection is true then Jesus is God. He had given mental assent to this belief, but not heart and soul. The epiphany moment came when he confessed that it was Jesus Christ who had saved his daughter's life. "I just fell to my knees and realised at that moment it was Him, it was Jesus." Now he openly confesses, "I've got to know Jesus. I've a brand new life". "I've found Jesus". "It's my role to tell others of this free gift . . . It's available for all." David is enthusiastically witnessing whenever, wherever he can.

Let us find time to pray as we realise the wonderful change the Resurrection has made in our lives "Then their eyes were opened, and they recognised Him." Luke 24:31 CEV. Thank You Lord that the resurrection is not just an historical event, but an invitation of new life for every believer. Praise You Jesus, for those who have had their eyes and hearts opened to Your living presence today. May they continue to look to You, learn from You, and walk with You. Keep Your hand of blessing upon them. Amen.

"Death swallowed by triumphant Life! Who got the last word, oh Death? Oh, Death, who's afraid of you now?" 1 Corinthians 15: 54-55. MSG

Father God thank You that through Jesus, His death and resurrection, we are on the victory side. May we never forget the cost, but rejoice in the hope of eternal life. May we continue to live as Easter people, remain steadfast in faith, ever eager to witness to Your great and bountiful love. Alleluia! Amen...