

What's Shakin'?

The Testing and Training of Trusting

July 31, 2022

Today we're talking about waking up, and shoring up our faith.



So just, **how shaky is your faith?** It has everything to do with your foundation. So be aware that **our Father will rattle everything in us and around us** till *all our trust is settled* and firmly *founded* on our Rock.



Therefore let us be *grateful* for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and *thus* let us offer to God *acceptable* worship, with *reverence* and *awe*, – Hebrews 12:28-29 ESV



Knowing that **He's gotta shake us to wake us, to firm up our faith**, so we can receive His unshakable *kingdom* with unshakable *trust*, resting *in* and *on* **the bedrock of the resurrection of Christ**. Which, as the *naysayers* love to say, is rife with apparent *contradictions* that *undermine* its *stability*.



[I mean, being that *Paul* himself said] If Christ has *not* been raised, our preaching is *useless* and so is your *faith*. – 1 Corinthians 15:14 NIV



However, when it comes to Jesus' *testimony* as presented in God's *Word*, **don't assume the Lord is trying to be clear**. He's *not*. **He's training and testing your trusting**, until you really *lean* into it as His *child*, and:



Trust in the Lord with *all* your heart, and *do not* [ever] lean on your *own* [faulty] understanding [whenever it contradicts His] – Proverbs 3:5 ESV



Because, as we saw, a "trust fall" doesn't work so well on our *own*! Only the most arrogant, ignorant, idiot thinks they can *trust* their self to *catch* their self to save their self. Remember that *rock* in the *wall*, that's not a *rock* at *all*, but a *lack* of *perceiving* the ash *end* of a protruding cigar? Well, here's mud in your eye! Jesus said:



"I have come into this world, that those who do *not* see *may* see, and that those who [think they] see may be *made blind*." ... [Some Pharisees] said to Him, "Are we blind also?" Jesus said to them, "If you [knew you] were blind, you would have no *sin*; but now you say, 'We see.' *Therefore* your *sin* remains." – John 9:39-41 NKJ



And one of the ways He blinds those wise-in-their-own-eyes is by saying things like:

"The Son of Man ... must be *killed* and ON the third DAY be raised to life." – Luke 9:22 NIV

[But He must] "[be] three NIGHTS in the heart of the earth. – Matthew 12:40 NKJ

... “and AFTER three DAYS rise again.” And He said *this plainly*. – Mark 8:31



Hopefully you’re starting to see that “again”. Now, He died on *Friday* and rose *Sunday morning*. And if you’ve stayed in a *hotel*, you know **if you check out early on day three, you’ve only stayed two nights**. So how can He rise early on day three, and yet spend three nights down below? This is universally considered an unsolvable contradiction of the Gospels. To which I say: BLIND. ARROGANT. IGNORANT.

By simply trusting Jesus, we can see that *He* rose early on the third day, returned to “Sheol” the third night, and ascended to heaven *after* three days. **It’s not a case of contradictory accounts**. In fact, **it’s a case of complimentary components**. And to leave His statements *unrectified* and *unwoven*, being *content* with *ignorance* of their *existence*, or worse, their apparent paradox betrays an underlying self-deceiving belief that God is the author of *confusion* (1 Cor 14:33) who *requires* a little *grace*! Well, **we refuse to give God grace!** Because only an *arrogant ignoramus* would believe *He needs it*, or that *we have it* to bestow upon *Him*!

² I proclaimed to you [writes Paul] ... ³ that Christ died for our sins in *accordance* with the *Scriptures*, ⁴ and that He was buried, and that He was raised *on the third day* in *accordance* with the *Scriptures*, ... ²⁰ in *fact* Christ has been *raised from the dead*, [as] the First Fruits [of the first harvest] of those who have died. [The “first fruits” belong to *one harvest*, dedicating *that harvest* to God, *right before it’s reaped!*] ²¹ For since death *came* through a human being, the resurrection of the dead has also come through a human being; ²² for as *all die* in Adam, so *all will be made alive in Christ*. [Including Christ] ²³ But *each* in his own *order*: Christ [on the 3rd day as] the First Fruits, [of the harvest of the dead] then [on the 3rd night] at His coming [to the heart of the earth] those who belong to [the harvest of] Christ [the First Fruits]. [Daniel saw “One like the Son of Man, *coming with the clouds of heaven!* He *came* to the Ancient of Days, and *they* {“the clouds” of *witnesses* (Heb 12:1)} brought Him near before Him. Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a {unshakable} *kingdom* {that we are *receiving*} ... which shall *not* be *destroyed*.” (Dan 7:13-14)] [Jesus said to the thief on the cross: “*Today* you will be with Me in *Paradise*” (Lk 23:43); but wait till you see where we’ll be in *three nights!*] ²⁴ Then [after those two things] comes the end, [Zechariah says, “*Then* the Lord my God will *come*, and *all* the holy ones *with Him*.” (Zech 14:5)] when He hands over the [unshakable] kingdom to God the Father, *after* He has destroyed *every ruler* and *every authority* and *power*. – 1 Corinthians 15:2-24 NRS

So let’s be clear, He’s not *trying* to be *clear*. **He’s trying to train our heart to lean on Him rather than arrogant ignorance**. And *that requires* shaking things up, in our *World* and in His *Word*. Check out the story of the Centurion at the cross, the moment Jesus dies, and watch for a “cigar”.

At *that moment* the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook and the rocks split. The tombs broke open and the bodies of many holy people who had died were raised to life. They came out of the tombs, and after Jesus’ resurrection they went into the holy city and appeared to many people. When the centurion and those with him who were guarding Jesus saw the earthquake and all that had happened, they were *terrified*, and exclaimed, “Surely he was the Son of God!” – Matthew 27:51-54 NIV

Okay, so *when* did the “earth shake”, the “rocks split”, the “tombs break open”, the “bodies of the holy people raised to life”? Keep in *mind* that *third day*, and that *third night*, and *that*:



Jesus Christ ... [is] the firstborn from the dead – Revelation 1:5 NKJ

The *prophets* and *Moses* said ... that He would be the first to rise from the dead, – Acts 26:22-23 NKJ



For in Yah, the Lord, [writes Isaiah] is everlasting strength. ... With my *soul* I have desired You in the night, [Guess which night!] ... *Your dead shall live*; together with my dead body they shall arise. *Awake* and sing, you who dwell in *dust* – Isaiah 26:4, 9, 19 NKJ

“Multitudes who *sleep* in the *dust* of the *earth* [an angel tells Daniel] will *awake* ... [and] at the end of the days [Guess how many!] you will *rise*” – Daniel 12:12-13 NIV

Awake, awake ... Shake off your dust; [till it's unshakable, and] *rise up* – Isaiah 52:1-2 NIV

I know that my Redeemer lives, [says Job] and that in the end [“of the days” “in the night”] ... after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh *I will see God* – Job 19:25-26 NIV

Say to my *soul*, “I am your salvation!” [writes David] ... *Wake Yourself up*, and *arise* to my right – Psalm 35:3, 23 AMP

You have visited *me* in the night; [Guess which one!] ... *Arise*, O Lord ... I will see Your face ... when *I awake* in Your *likeness*. – Psalm 17:3, 13, 15 NKJ

“For a time is coming [Guess when!] when all who are in their *graves* will hear His voice and come out—those who have done good will *rise* to live” – John 5:28-29 NIV

So when did “the earth shake”? Did you notice three little words, “after Jesus’ resurrection” tucked in there, out of sequence, just *waiting* to be *noticed* and relocated to their rightful position? This is a great example of how the out-of-sequence pieces can be nailed into place, not by *guessing*, but *seeking*. Cuz, Matthew *anchors* that *earthquake* just *twelve* verses later.

Mary Magdalene and the other Mary [Oh Matthew, is that *Jesus’ mother*; or *Mary the mother of James and Joseph*; or *Mary the mother of John Mark*; or *Mary of Bethany*; or *Mary of Clopas*? Cuz there’s at *least five* “other” *Marys*! (Mt 27:56; Jn 11:1, 12:7, 19:25; Acts 12:12)] went to look at the tomb. There was a violent earthquake, [There it is! “The *earth shook* and the *rocks split*” (Mt 27:51); and *here’s why*] for an Angel of the Lord came down from *heaven* and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like *lightning* ... The guards were so afraid of *Him* that *they shook* and *became like dead men*. [Because, “When the centurion and those with him who were *guarding Jesus* saw the *earthquake* and all that had happened, they were *terrified*” (Mt 27:54a)] ... Some of the guards went into the city and reported to the *chief priests* everything that had happened. [“and exclaimed, ‘Surely he was the Son of God!’” (Mt 27:54b)] ... [the chief priests] gave the soldiers a large sum of money, telling them, “You are to say, ‘His disciples came during the night and stole him away while we were asleep.’ ... So the soldiers took the money and did as they were instructed. – Matthew 28:1-15 NIV



These guys are shaken to the core; but, then they go into the city, the reality of owning that declaration, and leaning into that truth, and living out the ramifications, begins to set in. And **they cave to the pressure to deny what they know to be true.** And literally live a lie. They had their earth shaking moment of confessing Christ; but instead of holding onto it, they traded it in.

And, by anchoring this particular piece in place, we can now see a powerful contrast: **the dead come alive and go into the city and proclaim the truth;** whereas **the living become like the dead and go into the city and proclaim a lie** – because of peer pressure, which is really *fear* pressure, because **the clearest path is often the hardest to take.** It's not impossible, just confusing and challenging, and requires no compromising; like everything worth anything that we choose to overcome. Because trusting requires training. So, you got'a let the Word *do* what it wants to do *in you*, even when it's unattractive *to you*.

Those guys *knew* what they *needed* to do; just as *we* so often do. But, **their fear of man was greater than their reverence and awe of God.** Cuz we can't love what we don't know. So, they chose the *faithless path of least resistance* because it *appeared* much *safer*. However:

Fear of man will prove to be a *snare*, [however well camouflaged] – Proverbs 29:25 NIV

The *path of avoidance* is so tempting as pertaining to **facing our fears, confronting our friends, forgiving our wrongdoers, loving our haters,** and **dealing with our sins.** I wonder how many times I've *chosen* the *snare* because I allowed my deceitful, backstabbing heart to convince me that the path of least resistance is a better way. But when we allow fear to dictate our decision-making, we lose our power to overcome darkness with light. And, if we give in to it, and adjust our life around it, **we're taking a bribe to keep quiet about all that we know to be true.** And so, although **He won't forsake us, He will shake us ... to wake us!** In order to remove our comfort so we can grow in our trust of the truth.



For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light ... and find out what pleases the Lord. Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them ... for it is light that makes everything visible. ... Wake up, O sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you. – Ephesians 5:8-14 NIV

Let's face it; these *bodies* aren't getting any younger. But, our *spirit should be increasing* in youthful enthusiasm and passion and drive, as we're being transformed by His Spirit inside. So, **when you're shaken, and awoken, don't hit the snooze button.** That's just a wicked bribe to stay warm and comfy ... *and asleep*, even though you fully know that it's time to wake up.

So, are you going into the city to proclaim truth and light and new life?

Or, something much darker?