

## Easter: Truth, Lies, and Bullshit

We are living in very interesting times. Each day the media confronts us with with truth, lies, and bullshit! What do we typically do? What can we do? What should we do? These times are actually no different that those of the ancient world. Truth was and is always true, lies were and always were lies, and bullshit is always BS.

Easter is the time when Christians focus on and celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus. His resurrection is the foundation and basis for our faith, as Paul wrote, "...and if Christ has not been raised from death, then we have nothing to preach and you have nothing to believe" (1 Corinthians 15:14). The Bible presents that the resurrection of Jesus played out in the context of truth, lies and BS.

### Understanding our Terms

**Truth** = a statement about reality supported by evidence.  
**Lie** = a false statement made to deliberately deny the truth.  
**BS** = the lack of concern for truth or lies. The concern for the BSer is not to say things that are false or true but to serve another purpose - to convince, persuade or manipulate. BS is inflated, exaggerated, deflated, or co-mingled truth or lies told to produce fear, greed, envy, and desire.

### New Data / Truth Revealed

John 20:19-23 **19**It was the evening of the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked because they were afraid of the Jewish leaders. Jesus came and stood among them. He told them, "Peace be with you." **20**After saying this, he showed them his hands and his side, and when they saw the Lord, the disciples were overjoyed. **21**Jesus told them again, "Peace be with you. Just as the Father has sent me, so I am

sending you." **22**When he had said this, he breathed on them and told them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. **23**If you forgive people's sins, they are forgiven. If you retain people's sins, they are retained."

### What to do with New Data? VERIFY IT!

John 20:24-25 **24**Thomas, one of the Twelve (called the Twin), wasn't with them when Jesus came. **25**So the other disciples kept telling him, "We've seen the Lord!" But he told them, "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands, put my finger into them, and put my hand into his side, I'll never believe!"

- "Unless I see..." is the doubt of faith.
- Our culture has a problem with credulity - a readiness or willingness to believe especially on slight or uncertain evidence.
  - Credulity (n): willingness to believe or trust too readily, esp. without proper or adequate evidence; gullibility.
  - Credulous (adj): Disposed to believe too readily; gullible.

### The Facts Presented - A Skeptic Sees and Believes

John 20:26-31 **26**A week later, his disciples were again inside, and Thomas was with them. Even though the doors were shut, Jesus came, stood among them, and said, "Peace be with you." **27**Then he told Thomas, "Put your finger here, and look at my hands. Take your hand, and put it into my side. Stop doubting, but believe." **28**Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" **29**Jesus told him, "Is it because you've seen me that you have believed? How blessed are those who have never seen me and yet have believed!" **30**Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples that are not recorded in this book. **31**But these have been recorded so that you may

believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and so that through believing you may have life in his name.

### **Seekers and Bullshitters in the Bible**

Acts 17:16-18 **16**While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, his spirit was deeply disturbed to see the city full of idols. **17**So he began holding discussions in the synagogue with the Jews and other worshipers, as well as every day in the public square with anyone who happened to be there. **18**Some Epicurean and Stoic philosophers also debated with him. Some asked, "What is this blabbermouth trying to say?" while others said, "He seems to be preaching about foreign gods." This was because Paul was telling the good news about Jesus and the resurrection.

### **Ancient Facebook!**

Acts 17:19-21 **19**Then they took him, brought him before the Areopagus, and asked, "May we know what this new teaching of yours is? **20**It sounds rather strange to our ears, and we would like to know what it means." **21**Now all the Athenians and the foreigners living there used to spend their time doing nothing else other than listening to the latest ideas or repeating them.

### **God, His Creation, His Love and Easter**

Acts 17:22-31 **22**So Paul stood up in front of the Areopagus and said, "Men of Athens, I see that you are very religious in every way. **23**For as I was walking around and looking closely at the objects you worship, I even found an altar with this written on it: 'To an unknown god.' So I am telling you about the unknown object you worship. **24**The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth. He doesn't live in shrines made by human hands, **25**and he isn't served by people as if he needed anything. He himself gives everyone life, breath, and everything else. **26**From one man he made every nation of humanity to live all over the earth, fixing the seasons of the year and the national boundaries within which they live, **27**so that they might look for God, somehow reach for him, and find him. Of course, he is never far from any one of

us. **28**For we live, move, and exist because of him, as some of your own poets have said: '...Since we are his children, too.' **29**So if we are God's children, we shouldn't think that the divine being is like gold, silver, or stone, or is an image carved by humans using their own imagination and skill. **30**Though God has overlooked those times of ignorance, he now commands everyone everywhere to repent, **31**because he has set a day when he is going to judge the world with justice through a man whom he has appointed. He has given proof of this to everyone by raising him from the dead."

### **New Data / Change is ALWAYS coming to us**

Acts 17:32-34 **32**When they heard about a resurrection of the dead, some began joking about it, while others said, "We will hear you again about this." **33**And so Paul left the meeting. **34**Some men joined him and became believers. With them were Dionysius, who was a member of the Areopagus, a woman named Damaris, and some others along with them.

- What do you typically do?
- What can you do?
- What should you do?

"Examine everything carefully; hold fast to that which is good." 1 Thess. 5:21

A good response is: "Where I am right now, I think..." then dive into it or not. Just remember that new data is always (thankfully) coming to us!

**Easter calls us to get engaged with the data of life!  
To be like "Doubting Thomas" NOT credulous!  
To live a life impacted by the resurrection!**

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