

Resurrection Awakening
#505, Week 4-1-2018

by Dr. Dennis Prutow

“Some of the scribes and Pharisees said to Him, ‘Teacher, we want to see a sign from You.’ But He answered and said to them, ‘An evil and adulterous generation craves for a sign; and yet no sign will be given to it but the sign of Jonah the prophet; for just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the sea monster, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth’ (Matthew 12:38-40).

Psychic readers and seers experience booming business. What about the real sign? Jonah came back from a watery grave. A great fish swallowed him. Jonah was no tasty dish. The fish vomited Jonah on dry land. It was a sign. God sent this prophet to preach to the people of ancient Nineveh. They all took notice. They all turned to God.

Jesus likened his impending resurrection to the return of Jonah. Thomas doubted. “Unless I see in His hands the imprint of the nails, and put my finger into the place of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe” (John 20:25). When Jesus appeared to him, Thomas had one response. “My Lord and my God!” (John 20:28). The sign of the resurrection awakened Thomas from the slumber of unbelief. What about you?

Classic Christian Faith
#503, Week of 4-8-2018

by Dr. Dennis Prutow

The classic Christian confession is simple. “If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved” (Romans 10:9). Jesus died and rose again. He died as a sacrifice for sins. He rose from the grave as proof His sacrifice was acceptable to His Father. “When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high” (Hebrews 1:3).

The risen Christ appeared to Paul on the Damascus road. From personal experience, the apostle understood, “Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved” (Romans 10:13). This is a quote from the Old Testament, Joel 2:32. It is a reference to Jehovah. The apostle Paul has no hesitation. He applies to Jesus a verse in the Old Testament that specifically refers to Jehovah.

Some consider this blasphemy. When Jesus made the claim people assaulted Him. “For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy; and because You, being a man, make Yourself out to be God” (John 10:33).

The claim of Classic Christianity remains the same. Jesus is Lord. He is not simply a good man. He is not simply a divine being. He is The Divine Being. He is Immanuel, which means “God with us” (Matthew 1:23).

Hope Confirmed
#506, Week of 4-15-2018

by Dennis Prutow

God has a strange way of confirming hope within us. It is through trials and tribulation. God pushes us through knotholes. We squeeze through difficult jobs. We struggle through troublesome relationships. We wrestle with cranky kids. Storm clouds regularly gather over us. The future looks bleak. There is little hope. The Bible puts the silver lining of hope around the black clouds of despair.

“And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope; and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us” (Romans 5:3-5).

We wonder if God has given us faith by the power of the Holy Spirit residing in us. How do we know? When we push through our trials, the difficulty produces perseverance. As we persist in our work or in overcoming adversity, God proves the character of our faith. There is actual fruit in our lives. Hope emerges. God is with us. We know the embrace of God’s love in the most trying of circumstances.

The storms of life give way to the sunshine of grace and the smile of God’s love. We bask in its warmth and give thanks for tribulation. God uses it for our growth.

Seek Peace
#507, Week of 4-22-2010

by Dennis Prutow

Here is great motto. Something to live by. “Depart from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it” (Psalm 34:14). When confronted with evil, we want to lash back and get even. We want to avenge injustice and set the record straight.

A vengeful spirit is the opposite of one that seeks peace. “Never pay back evil for evil to anyone” (Romans 12:17). Remember this and avoid a lot of violence and heartache. God will balance the scales of justice. We must not take matters into our own hands. “Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, ‘Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,’ says the Lord” (Romans 12:19).

What can we do on the positive side? Here are a couple of suggestions. First, be ready to overlook the faults of others. “Hatred stirs up strife, but love covers all transgressions” (Proverbs 10:12). So, “keep fervent in your love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins” (1 Peter 4:8). Love overlooks much.

Second, always be ready to forgive. When we realize how much God has forgiven us, how can we be unforgiving toward others? “Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you (Ephesians 4:32). Love forgives.

Seek peace. Overlook faults. Readily forgive.

God’s Love
#508, Week of 4-29-2018

by Dr. Dennis Prutow

“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life” (John 3:16).

The world is a spiritual realm hostile to God. The apostle John says, “All that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world” (1 John 2:16). The devil is the “ruler” and “god” of this spiritual realm (John 12:31, 2 Corinthians 4:4).

God loved what was hostile to Him. He sent His own Son into enemy territory. He rescued men and women from bondage to sin and Satan. If we remain in the kingdom of the devil, we perish. If God rescues us from this kingdom, we have the promise of eternal life in heaven.

When God gave His Son, He gave that which was dearest to Him. He sacrificed Himself. “God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” (Romans 5:8).

Followers of Christ say of God, “He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son” (Colossians 1:13). It gets personal. They exclaim of Christ, He “loved me and gave Himself up for me” (Galatians 2:20).
