

Death is the ultimate humiliation

The first lie of Satan to mankind occurred in the Garden of Eden: **"You shall not surely die" (Gen. 3:4)**. As much as Christianity claims to hate Satan, they sure love believing and teaching this lie.

Christianity has this in common with all other religions: a belief in the immortality of the soul. In layman's terms, immortality of the soul means this:

We fear death. Above all else, we do not want to die. And in fact, we do not think it is fair that we should have to die. Aren't we better than that? After all, we are human beings, made in the image of God. What did we do to deserve to die? We'll take it even further; we refuse to believe that we DO die. We know that Jesus said we



must be resurrected from the dead, but what He really meant was that we are eventually *kinda sorta* resurrected from *kinda sorta* being dead. Let us reiterate: we do not like the idea of being truly dead, so we're just going to say that the soul lives on and on. After the so-called death of this life, a soul either spends eternity with God in heaven, or eternity with Satan in hell. "The immortality of man!" Ahh—now that really sounds good to us; it's not so humiliating. You don't mind if we side with Satan on this one—do you, God? ■

Martin Zender's Clanging Gong News

"If I know all mysteries and all knowledge, but have no love, I am a clanging gong" --1 Cor. 13:1-2



Two out of three isn't bad.

The glorious slavery of God's Son

The Son of God was not a slave and never could be a slave, yet He journeyed to Earth to take the form of one. And so, bowing His bejeweled head one consequential day, He became a cluster of reproducing cells on the wall of His mother's uterus. The next act of emptying for the sake of our race was to cry in a manger as a baby, mixing His breath with that of donkeys and cows. Thirty-two years later, He undid the sandals of mere mortals and washed their feet. The mere mortals protested this, failing to realize that He—not they—occupied the glorious end of the washrag.

So sure was He of His Father's high opinion of Him that He could kneel before the disciples and smile inwardly over His posture. Later, He could look down from the cross and count His shame as nothing in comparison with the joy of obeying His Father's will.

"For let this disposition be in you, which is in Christ Jesus also, Who, being inherently in the form of God, deems it not pillaging to be equal with God, nevertheless empties Himself, taking the form of a slave, coming to be in the likeness of humanity, and, being found in fashion as a human, He humbles Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Phil. 2:5-8).

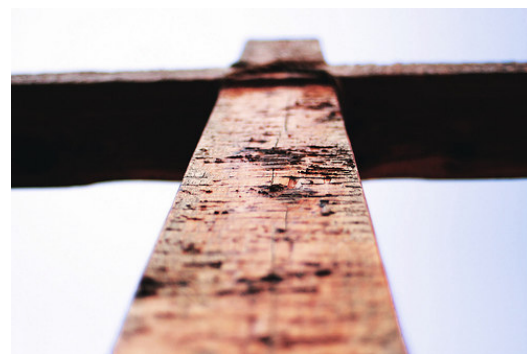
"Wherefore, also, God highly exalts Him" (vs. 9).

There is a principle in God's program that the lowest become the highest. This is why our Lord could revel in His abandon. There is no fear of loss in an equation where giving equals gain. This is why Jesus could say to His disciples in Matt. 11:28-30:

"Hither to Me, all who are toiling and laden, and I will be giving you rest. Lift My yoke upon you and be learning from Me, for meek am I and humble in heart, and you shall be finding rest in your souls, for My yoke is kindly and My load is light."

The paradox here is that self-promotion is toilsome and a burden, while laying down one's soul feels like a weekend in Cancun. What we all need is a vacation from ourselves, and we can begin it by lying on the floor.

Get on the floor with your face to the ground and tell Christ that you're tired of yourself. Go



on. Do it. I've done it; it feels great. While you're down there, pray for other people. By "pray," I mean just start thinking about all the people besides yourself who are hurting. Pray that God's program of humbling will make both you and them wiser and more joyful.

Live all life like you're naked before God.

Now flip yourself over and look up into heaven. It doesn't matter if there's a ceiling over you; Christ can see through ceilings, and so can God. Spread out your arms and legs as far as you can. It helps to be naked—in which case, go with a ceiling. God and Christ see you naked beneath your clothes anyway, but this feeling of vulnerability is for your sake, not Theirs.

All of this is symbolic—it's an outward display of an inward desire to be a slave of God and Christ. This outward display will help kick-start the inner principle. Vulnerability in all areas of life starts here in the privacy of your room, experimenting with trust.

There is no deliverance like the deliverance of emptying oneself for the sake of a Higher Power. This is a vacation from selfdom. Jesus did it naked on the cross; you can practice on the floor. Be aware that not only God and Christ, but the entire celestial world will be looking at you. Do not be ashamed. If you spread your arms and legs wide enough, the celestials will be moved to tears. ■

Jesus Christ: Image of the invisible God

In 2 Cor. 4:4, Paul calls Christ, “The Image of the invisible God.” If I show you a picture of my son Paul and say, “This is my son,” you know that it is not *literally* him, but an image. Thus also with Christ. Being the image of God does not make Him the same *being* as God. In fact, He Himself denies it. Here is His own testimony:

► **I cannot do anything of Myself; I am not seeking My will, but the will of Him Who sends Me (Jn. 5:30).**

► **The Father is greater than I (John 14:28).**

God has given us fathers and sons to help us understand the relationship between Him and His Son. We stare at this simple example daily, then ignore it. Not only that, but we deny Jesus’ own testimony. He says the Father is greater than He is. We say, “No, Jesus. You *are* the Father.” We think we’re doing Him a favor. We aren’t. Jesus Himself would spit the suggestion from His mouth. He came to do His Father’s will, not His own. It is His glory to submit Himself to the Father. Will we rob Him of that? Apparently.

And yet, Christ is such a perfect image of the invisible God that He is worthy to take the titles of God. And just as with the photograph of my son, He is worthy to be called God, and worshiped as God. When Thomas



The Pope can tell you all about the Trinity, and other lies.

placed his hand in His wounds, he said, “My Lord and my God.” Thomas spoke rightly of Him. As God’s image, Jesus Christ is the only God we will ever see. “Not one has ever seen God” (Jn. 1:18). That people have seen Christ proves once again that He is not God Absolute.

This truth is simple; it’s the Trinity that is complicated. No one has ever explained it; this is why it is called, “a mystery.” In truth, it is a teaching of demons (1 Tim. 4:1), injected into humanity by Satan via the Nicene Counsel of 325 A.D. to keep millions of people from believing in the death and resurrection of Christ, even while insisting that they *do* believe it.

What a master-plan of deception. ■

Q&A

DID JESUS CHRIST REALLY DIE?

Q: You insist that Jesus Christ was dead for three days. But if He was, why did He say in John 2:19, concerning His body: “Destroy this temple, and I will raise it up.” How can a man raise up His own body if He’s truly dead?

A: Christ Jesus raised His body, yes, but He did *not* wake Himself from the death state; that’s impossible.

There are three different Greek words for coming back from the dead: *anistemi* (RAISE), *egeiro* (ROUSE) and *zoopoieo* (VIVIFY). Naturally, the King James and other common versions mix them up. These three different words correspond to the three aspects of our being: *soul, body, and spirit.*

Appreciate how precise God’s revelation is: The soul is always spoken of as **roused** (that is, awakened), the body as **raised** (that is, gotten up), and the spirit as **vivified** (that is, given life beyond the reach of death.) What precision!

Consider Lazarus: Lazarus was roused and raised, but not vivified. Our Lord could not rouse Himself; in no way could He wake Himself up; He was dead. **Romans 8:11** speaks of “the spirit of Him Who *rouses* Christ Jesus from among the dead.” That’s very specific language, and minutely accurate, so let’s pay attention to it. Here’s your answer: God roused Christ. Christ, being roused, raised Himself from the slab. ■

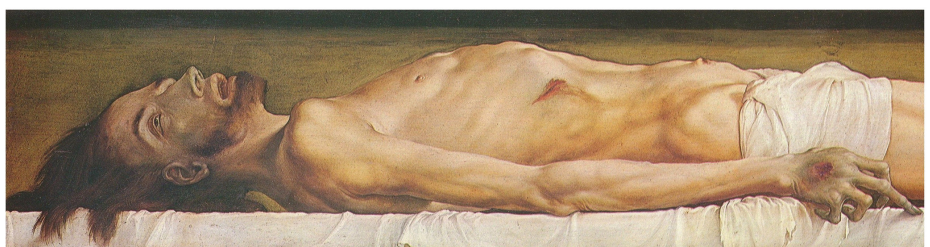
Jesus is God’s *Son*—not His own Father

Absolute Deity cannot die. If Jesus Christ is Absolute Deity, then Jesus Christ could not have died. And yet Scripture says that He did die. Since Jesus Christ did die, then the teaching of the Trinity—stating that the Father is absolute Deity, and that the Son is *also* Absolute Deity—is a false teaching. If the Trinity is true, a foundation of our faith (the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ) is denied.

Everyone hates death, as they should. In 1 Cor. 15:26, Paul calls death an enemy. Death is not a friend that takes us to heaven, otherwise we should celebrate it. Death saddens us for a reason; our instincts know what our doctrine might deny. Death did not take Jesus to heaven. People say that Jesus’ *body* died, but that *He* went to heaven. Scripture, on the other hand, says that *He* died. I realize how hard this is to accept. Perhaps you have thought for a long time that you believed in the death of Christ, but really, you have not. I hope that this article has brought you to the hard but God-glorifying truth. ■

TRUTH
is hard.
JESUS *was dead.*

Dead people cannot wake themselves. GOD ROUSED HIS SON (Rom. 8:11)...



...otherwise, Jesus Christ would still be dead.
(The doctrine of the Trinity denies the death of Christ.)

Rants & Stuff

The Apostle Paul says we should not murmur (Philippians 2:14). Therefore, I shall rant.

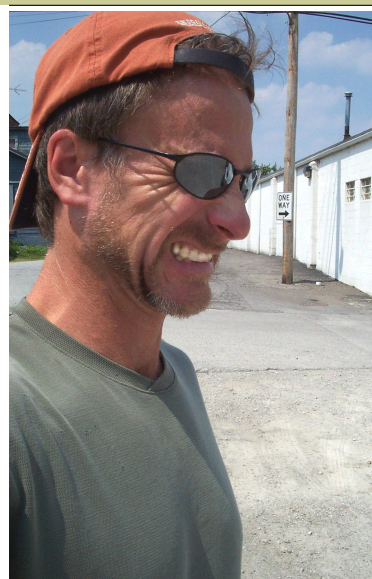
Christ's faith now stuns me



I remember where I was when I realized that Jesus Christ died: I was in a car. It was raining; the windshield wipers squeaked to and fro; I stared out the window. *Oh, my God. He actually died.* This was a more shocking truth to me than the day I realized the world-cleansing effects of the cross. How strange that I had been a so-called Christian for eleven years and was only just then believing the simplest, most plainly stated part of the gospel of God's grace. I knew then just how effective the Sa-

tanic deception of "three Gods in one" truly was. It had literally shut down the section of my brain that *knew* death was an enemy, but that had been tricked out of it.

Apart from the lesson of demonic subtlety, the first realization that hits a person who finally understands death, is a desperate thankfulness for resurrection. I even remember the exact words that came to my mind: *I have always believed that resurrection was the icing on the cake. But oh my God; resurrection IS the cake!*



Next, the faith of Christ became blindingly real and important. I at once realized the true worth of Him letting go on that cross and commending His spirit to God. What's the big deal if He doesn't really die? But if He *does* die—and He *knows* He's going to die—then the faith He places in His Father becomes truly that: FAITH.

Thank you, God, for the amazing, life-saving faith of Jesus Christ. ■

Visiting the spirits *after* resurrection, not before



Jesus Christ went nowhere for 3 days; He was dead

Tradition teaches that while Jesus was so-called "dead," He went to visit the spirits in jail. In other words, He was not really dead at all. Let's see what Scripture says. From 1 Peter 3:18-20:

"Being put to death, indeed, in flesh, yet vivified in spirit in which, being gone to the spirits in jail also, He heralds to those once stubborn, when the patience of God awaited in the days of Noah."

Many people assume that "being put to death in flesh" and "yet vivified in spirit" are simultaneous events. They're not; they occurred three days apart. This will be easier to see with Lazarus, since no one assumes that *he* was gallivanting around the universe during the days of his entombment.

"Being entombed, indeed, in flesh, yet vivified in spirit, Lazarus came forth and had a nice lunch."

It is much easier to see in the Lazarus example that several days can elapse between a man's flesh being entombed and his spirit being vivified by God. These spirits Christ preached to upon His resurrection, by the way, were not dead humans. They were the non-human, evil entities that caused the humans of Noah's day to sin.

* * *

So who cares whether Christ really died or He didn't? *You do!* Only when you realize that Christ truly died can you appreciate His faith in going to the cross. He knew that, unless His Father roused Him, He would have stayed dead forever. It is this faith that saves us:

"Yet now, apart from law, a righteousness of God is manifest, yet a righteousness of God through Jesus Christ's faith, for all, and on all who are believing" (Rom. 3:21-23). ■