

Easter Sermon 2008

Imagine the distress, imagine the perplexity when they saw that the body was not there. The clothes lying as if the body had simply dematerialised in an instant. Perhaps it did. It is such an extraordinary story that either Christianity is the biggest hoax in history, or else it is true. It is true, of course, and it tells us to be of good cheer: there will be the bad times, but they will be followed by the good.

The Jews still wait for the Messiah: we think he came 2000 years ago. Therein lies a trap for us: we think we have the answer. Well, we have part of the answer, but we must remember that the example of Christ needs to be applied anew every day in our changing world. The images of Jesus and his message that we had as children, or last year, or yesterday, are not necessarily the images appropriate for the tasks of today. This demands work—exploration and reflection. That is the task that Easter sets us: bringing to our society afresh the healing example and teachings of the risen Lord so that we might dwell not as Christians so often seem to on finger-wagging and gloom and guilt, but on delight in our lives and our relationships.

The Sunne arising in the East,
Though he give light, and th' East perfume;
If they should offer to contest
With thy arising, they presume.

Can there be any day but this,
Though many sunnes to shine endeavour?
We count three hundred, but we misse:
There is but one, and that one ever.