

## **Faith Matters # 8 – Resurrection – April 16**

The woman beside me at the bus stop noticed my white clerical collar. “You’re a minister?” she asked.

“Yes, I am,” I replied. “Are you a Christian?”

Judging by her anger, that was the wrong question to ask her. “I certainly am! I’m a decent person.” I guess she didn’t realize that there are lots of decent atheists and Jews and Muslims. She expressed a very common idea: that being good and decent makes you a Christian.

No. In fact there are some Christians not known for their decency or their goodness. Of the several things that **do** define a Christian, one is the belief that Jesus Christ died and rose from the dead. His resurrection – and ours – is mentioned 40 times in 12 books of the New Testament, plus twice in the Apostles’ Creed.

In 1961 at New Westminster Presbyterian Church I stood before the Hamilton ministers to be questioned about my faith. It was to determine whether or not I should be ordained. One minister, well known for his piercing questions asked me: “Do you believe in the resurrection of Jesus Christ?”

Unhesitating, I answered “Yes, I do.” That was the right answer for him and for all the ministers. It is for you, too, and it ought to have been for that decent woman who claimed to be Christian.

Resurrection is not just a theory or an idea. It’s a fact. Not even an “alternative fact”. Paul sums it up in his letter to the young Christians in Corinth: “I handed on to you as of first importance what I in turn had received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he was raised on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day... and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve....” He continues, “If for this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied.” (I Cor. 15: 3-5,20)

Every Sunday, not just Easter Sunday, we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus and our certain hope. Christ is risen **indeed** – Hallelujah!

(by Rev. Willard Pottinger – Erskine Presbyterian Church)