

Mom Had It Right

“Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen.” Luke 24:5

When you were young and trying to get permission from your mother to engage in a certain activity, did you ever say, “**Everyone’s doing it.**” And did she say, “Not everyone’s doing it, but it makes no difference. Even IF everyone was doing it, that’s not who we are!”

And then did you grow up to notice that some of what you have valued through the years has seemingly disappeared? People aren’t as civil or modest as they used to be. Greed is off its leash. Concern for the common good has been replaced by partisan politics, winner takes all, loser takes a fall. Fewer and fewer people sing together, bowl together, live together in the same household, or even talk face to face. Life seemingly would be better if, when it comes to what we value, “**Everyone was doing it.**”

I have found myself in both positions above, and in my better moments take heart in the resurrection. Neither the empire nor the religious establishment had any use for him. They were right, he was wrong. Or maybe they knew Jesus spoke the truth and needed to be done away with before he loosened their grip on power. That is so often the case. So, they did away with him.

But not really. Nor did they do away with his followers. Nor his truth and values.

The resurrection is God overruling the forces that suppress the truth and the values that spring from truth. It’s the vindication of Jesus as the best glimpse into God’s truth that we’re going to get. Three days after the crucifixion, there he was again, putting the fingerprints of his nail-scarred hands on all he’d accomplished. *“Why do you look for the living among the dead?”* He’s out and about bringing life to a world in need of resuscitation.

We might ask ourselves the same sort of question. *Why would we look to everyone else for support when it comes to living by truth-based values?* They could be brain dead to God. Why not look first of all to ourselves? Why not concern ourselves that we practice such values and truths regardless of what others are doing? It used to be demanded by the best of moms, “**It makes no difference if everyone else is NOT doing it. This is who we are!**” We’re not dependent on a practice being popular or trendy to live it. If it has value and is true, it has value and is true.

Also, it’s likely that we’re not the only ones concerned about values and truths and practices that seem to have disappeared. The story of Elijah fleeing from Queen Jezebel is full of lessons, one of them the following. Elijah, feeling sorry for himself, says, *“I have been very zealous for the Lord; for the Israelites have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets. I alone am left, and they are seeking my life.”* 1Kings 19:10

I doubt God applauded Elijah’s melodramatics even though it was quite a performance. He’s the only one left who is faithful? Sure he is. God knows that there are 7,000, a perfect number of Israelites, who have not bowed the knee to Jezebel’s god, Baal. All is not lost.

He is not here, but has risen. They couldn’t get rid of him. Nor can they rid the world of his truth and values. -DJ