

Is it the Church that has Moved, or Truth?

Who Moved The Church?

A few years ago, I went for a holiday in Porthmadog, north Wales. Being Easter, I went to the main Anglican church (Church in Wales) in the town on Easter day; it was little more than half-full, maybe two-thirds, and this in an area which had once been a stronghold of Christianity.

Why is mainstream Christianity, in Britain, dying? Well, there are various reasons, most central of which is the sustained attack upon it from the secular materialist culture we live in – but there are other reasons, which include Christian's attitudes to Jesus' physical resurrection, and this includes attitudes held within the hierarchy of the Anglican church.

In 1984 Bishop (of Durham) David Jenkins was at the centre of a row in which he seemed to have cast doubt on the physical resurrection. Whatever he may or may not have said, or meant, at least, thankfully – we may think – it caused a row.

This spring (2018) the Archbishop of Wales made comments that were interpreted as clearly casting doubt on the physical resurrection – and this at Eastertide, when you might expect archbishops to say things that gave heart to Christians, and publicly upheld their beleaguered faith (it never ceases to amaze me how prominent people, in all areas of life, recklessly, almost wantonly, make remarks, in public, which they must know can, and probably will, be (re-)interpreted to their discredit).

In 1930, Frank Morison (real name: Albert Ross) published *Who Moved the Stone?* He had set out to write a book showing the resurrection to have not actually happened; perhaps it even was a deception (an accusation that many other writers have made, such as Hugh J. Schonfield). Unfortunately, Morison was not able to produce the book he'd planned, since he became more and more convinced of the truth of the apostles' original assertion, and he ended up writing a book which said just that.

Of course, he lived and wrote at a time when all Christians, whatever denomination they came from – and certainly their leaders – upheld the truth of the physical resurrection, and took to heart St. Paul's suggestion (1 Corinthians 15; 16-19) that if we do not believe in the complete truth of it, we are people without hope (and certainly, we might add, not authentically Christian).

The modern dissemblers, of course, often attempted to 'reinterpret' the resurrection in some symbolic or spiritual terms – they still do – not knowing, believing, or otherwise accepting, Nancy Pearcey's insightful, accurate, contention that an event (eg. the resurrection) which did not actually happen can be of no 'spiritual' significance whatever (*Saving Leonardo. A Call to Resist the Secular Assault on Mind, Morals, & Meaning*, B&H Publishing Group, 2010, p. 35). But since 1930, the church (and certainly many church leaders) has moved from its original, true, position – but why, and just who, moved it?

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