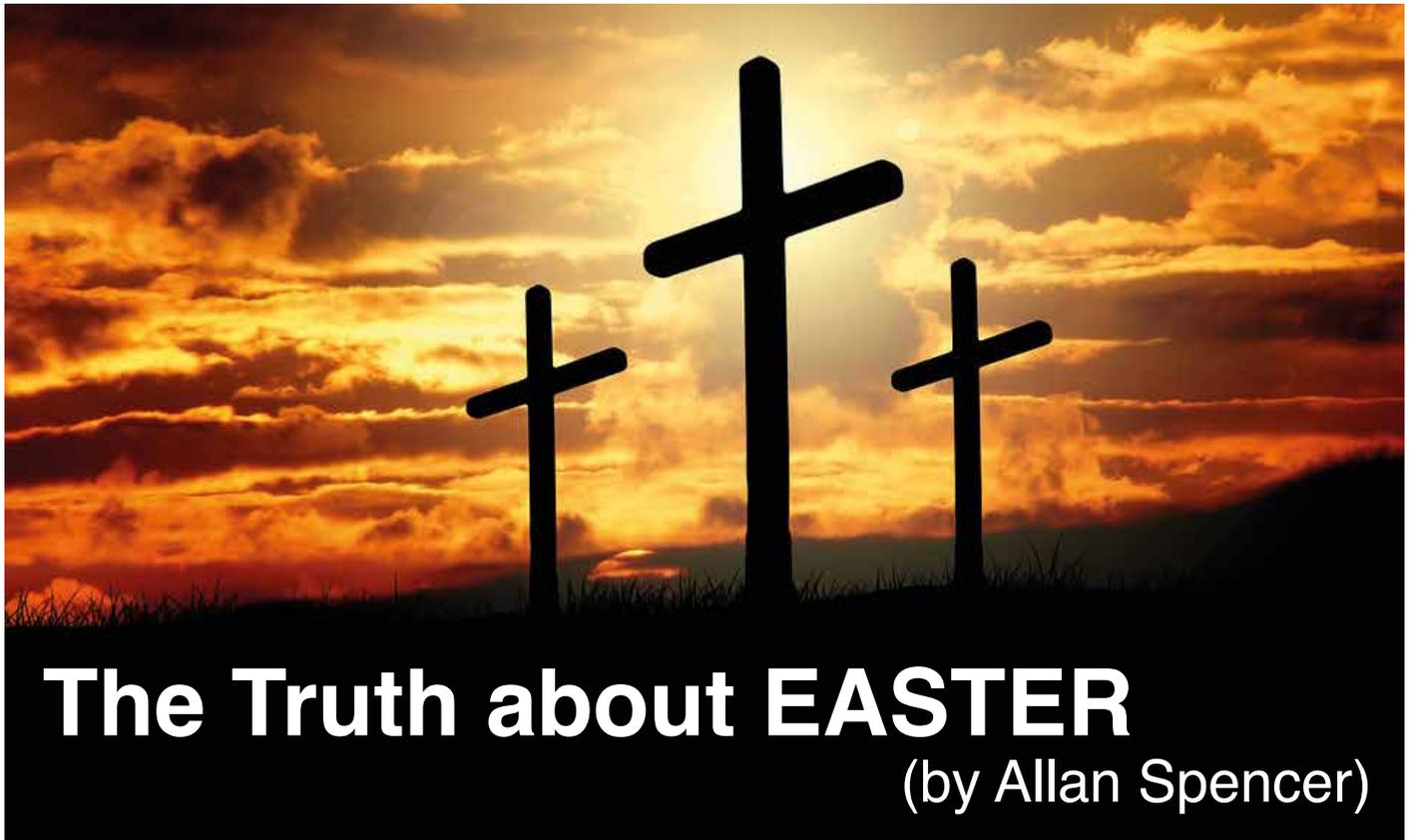


If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

Romans 10:9 [NIV]



The Truth about EASTER (by Allan Spencer)

Jesus himself told us to 'Know the truth and the truth will set you free'. (John 8: 32b). Yet today we find ourselves in a world where recognising the truth is becoming increasingly difficult, with even the Easter story coming under increasing scrutiny in a world sceptical of anything it's told - especially from the Biblical account of that first Easter that its critics argue was written, not as a factual narrative of events, but as a popular account for the death of a religious leader.

But what of events that first Easter? Could it all have been true? And given that everything that transpired did so 2,000 years ago is it still possible to discern this truth? Well, firstly there is of course the familiar Biblical account of how after his death nailed on a cross, Christ was buried before then being raised again to life three days later. But could this simply be just a 2000 year old legend?

Over time legends have a tendency to grow and become exaggerated. Yet, in relation to that first Easter, any embellishments to what actually happened would have been unlikely while multiple eyewitnesses were still

around to refute them. In addition, legends do not readily find support in contemporary historical documents. However, the Gospels, which concur with such records, were written within three decades of this event.

Subsequently, Jesus also appeared not only on multiple occasions to his disciples but also on another occasion to more than 500 followers. Indeed later Peter also added *'We apostles are witnesses of all he did throughout Israel and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by crucifying him, but God raised him to life three days later. We were those who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead.'*(Acts 10:39-41)

If such eyewitness reports and historical accounts are still insufficient to sway those who wish to regard the events of that first Easter as mere invention, then there will always remain what was the most extraordinary transformation of eleven broken disciples into individuals willing to suffer humiliation, torture, and death as martyrs for this cause.

Professor J. N. D. Anderson, author of 'The Evidence for the Resurrection' summarised this well when he wrote

On & Off Duty

'Think of the psychological absurdity of picturing a little band of defeated cowards cowering in an upper room one day and a few days later transformed into a company that no persecution could silence – and then attempting to attribute this dramatic change to nothing more convincing than a miserable fabrication. That simply doesn't make sense'

And another legal expert, Lord Darling the Chief Justice of England from 1914-18 wrote *'There exists such overwhelming evidence both actual and circumstantial, that no intelligent jury in the world could fail to bring in a verdict that the resurrection story is true.'*

By all rights, if there was no resurrection then Christianity should have died out at the cross, once those first disciples had deserted and fled for their lives. But a short while later those very same people regrouped to establish a growing Christian movement, such that this tiny and apparently insignificant group were then able to prevail over the might of Rome. Such was the tide of change that the claim of this small band of disciples caused, in less than fifty years it had begun to change the face and faith of the entire Roman Empire.

The truth will always be just that, the truth. And what we know, what we can read and what we can comprehend all points to the fact that a man called Jesus, who claimed to be God, not only lived amongst us but also

[The writer acknowledges references from jesusonline.com]



died before three days later rising again. This sacrifice ensured a permanent bridge to our Lord and Saviour.

So what of us today as Christians, as supporters, members, leaders of the Christian Police Association, especially when our society and the wider world is currently facing challenges to this truth. When we are facing the anxiety and fear about the future in a Covid-19 world.

We need to remain, inspired, excited and empowered about 'walking the talk' and 'going out to preach the gospel'. Jesus set out his great commission clearly and made the ultimate sacrifice for us all. He loved the disciples and knew the disciples would go out, they would preach the truth of the Gospel, and they would establish Christ's church. It is down to us to continue this journey of faith. And believing the truth of Easter is critical to this journey.

“Shine the Light” International Christian Police Fellowship [ICPF] – Global meeting

(update from Lee Russell – CPA Executive Director)

It was a real privilege for me to join our brothers and sisters across the world when the ICPF hosted a global online gathering in late February 2021 (note from editorial team – this event was too late to be included in our March issue)

Trustees from the ICPF hosted this online event, which saw members from Australia, South America, India, Europe and the UK join in a time of fellowship and prayer. Felix Ceccato is the Chair of the ICPF. Neil Collin, Tony Britten and Brian McCarthy are our UK representatives on the ICPF Board. Neil, along with colleagues in Spain, did a superb job of hosting the event in English and Spanish. Brian McCarthy (CPA Branch Leader for Cleveland) brought a time of live worship and then gave a short sermon. He did this in English and Spanish – I was impressed!!

The ICPF hope to have regular online meetings going forward. Here at the CPA we look forward to supporting these meetings and we are grateful for the global fellowship and network that the ICPF brings. For more details about the ICPF please see [**International Christian Police Fellowship \(internationalcpf.org\)**](http://International Christian Police Fellowship (internationalcpf.org))



Finding Faith – from a CPA Member

Having read the poem that is included in this article, I contacted the CPA member who wrote this. They prefer to remain anonymous but were happy to give their testimony along with their poem. I hope you find it as moving and inspirational as I did – Lee Russell – Executive Director

“Following family breakdown, I arrived at a Children’s Home just four days short of my 6th birthday. I was not told why I was being placed there. I would be almost 17 years old when I left.

Throughout all my 11 years in care I never once felt threatened by any of the other kids, there was a natural turnover of course, some kids would be fostered out, others would be reunited with their parents and of course the eldest would move on. There was a real camaraderie between the kids but we also suffered bias and rejection from others. People were so quick to judge you because of where you lived and I suffered the normal torments such as “Orphan Boy”.

I was brought up Catholic and attended local Roman Catholic Schools. I attended the local village Catholic Church every Sunday. In the early days I have to say that I didn’t think much of God. I used to say to him “If you are so powerful why I am here?” – I blamed him for my situation as much as my parents. Gradually I got to see that God had in fact been there for me all the time and that there was a reason behind me being there. I became an altar boy and my faith and love of God increased.

I also learned of my Mother’s predicament and that she was badly treated by my Father. She simply could not cope and I do not think the support mechanisms back then were as good as they are today and that is why I was taken into care. I forgave her and became reconciled with her but sadly she died at the age of 54 just as our relationship was improving.

At the age of 16 I applied to join the Police Cadets. I was successful, and I would go on to serve a full 30 years as a Police Constable. I know that my experiences in the home helped me deal more empathetically with the vulnerable of society, particularly young people, because of course to some of them I could say, “Been there, done that”.

Living in the Children’s Home all those years deprived me of “real love” but through my faith I have managed to live my life well. I know that the Lord has and always will love me and I now have my own loving family to support me. I truly believe I would not be the kind of person I am today if it was not for HIM. Yes, I still have the scars of that early life but I am so proud of what I have achieved”.

I found my faith in a children’s home

He stepped out of the car, Not knowing what to think,
At 6 years old, if truth be told, He couldn’t take it in.

The house, though modern, Nonetheless, looked fearful and foreboding,
He shivered against the Autumn wind, Thinking why had no one told him?

And where was Mum? he asked himself,
Perhaps she’s running late?
For his arrival here, must surely be, Some kind of mistake.

“Hello” a stranger greeted him, “This is your new home”

And fear showed its fangs again, To the boy who stood alone.

And as he walked into that house, Little did he know,
That from a child of tender years,
This house would watch him grow.

For there hadn’t been any mistake, No one had got it wrong,
And despite his many desperate pleas, His Mum would never come.

And what about this God?

Who they insisted he should seek, At the local Catholic Church, Nine A.M, each Sunday week?
They told him God was loving, Full of Majesty and Grace,
So why he asked, did you choose me, And leave me in this place?

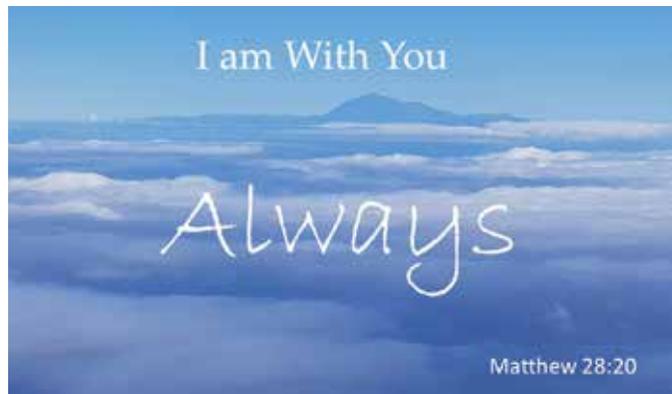
But this little boy grew older, And he began to understand,
That God had always loved him,
And that boy became a man.

Now if you were to ask, Of the boy who stood alone,
Where did you find your faith?
He’d say “in a Children’s Home”.

And Finally, from the Director

As we think of Easter, I look to Canon Dr Hazel Whitehead's book "God in Lockdown" (see the February issue of On and Off Duty). Hazel reminds us of one of the Collects that Anglicans use during Easter: - *"Risen Christ, for whom no door is locked, no entrance barred; open the doors of our hearts that we may seek the good of others and walk the joyful road of sacrifice and peace, to the praise of God, the Father. Amen".*

As we look back over the last year, it is so important to pray that we will soon be able "unlock those doors" and worship together and welcome people into our homes and our lives.



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OUR MISSION is to

- Be a National Voice for Christians in Policing.
- Encourage and support Christians in the Police Service.
- Communicate in words and action, the truth, message and hope of the gospel of Jesus Christ to colleagues and the community we serve.
- Build bridges between the Christian community and the Police.

OUR VISION is to see

- The CPA as a national charity which actively leads on issues relevant to Christians in Policing.
- An active and growing branch of CPA in every Police Service in the UK and every Christian in the Police Service to fulfil their potential in Jesus Christ.
- Colleagues and those we serve to know Jesus Christ personally.
- Police and Churches working together in every community to reduce crime and improve quality of life.

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Administrator Lindsey Monk

ON & OFF DUTY is the CPA monthly digest of news and articles. We also update a monthly Prayer Diary intended to inform and encourage those associated with the CPA. Please forward any items to office@CPAuk.net by the 20th of each month.

NB. All articles published will also be available for unrestricted viewing via the Internet. The views expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the CPA Council.

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