

## Easter 2024

### **This is the most significant and consequential event in human history: What is, the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.**

*Acts 2:22-24 “God publicly endorsed Jesus the Nazarene by doing powerful miracles, wonders, and signs through him, as you well know. <sup>23</sup> But God knew what would happen, and his prearranged plan was carried out when Jesus was betrayed. With the help of lawless Gentiles, you nailed him to a cross and killed him. <sup>24</sup> But God released him from the horrors of death and raised him back to life, for death could not keep him in its grip.”*

*1 Corinthians 15:3-8 “I passed on to you what was most important and what had also been passed on to me. Christ died for our sins, just as the Scriptures said. <sup>4</sup> He was buried, and he was raised from the dead on the third day, just as the Scriptures said. <sup>5</sup> He was seen by Peter and then by the Twelve. <sup>6</sup> After that, he was seen by more than 500 of his followers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have died. <sup>7</sup> Then he was seen by James and later by all the apostles. <sup>8</sup> Last of all, as though I had been born at the wrong time, I also saw him.”*

*1 John 4:10 “This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.”*

Pliny the Younger, A.D. 111 to Emperor Trajan

“I have asked them if they are Christians, and if they admit it, I repeat the question a second and third time, with a warning of punishment awaiting them. If they persist, I order them to be led away for execution; for, whatever the nature of their admission, I am convinced that their stubbornness and unshakable obstinacy ought not go unpunished...”

Historian John Dickson details in *Bullies and Saints: An Honest Look at the Good and Evil in Christian History*, the amazing spread of Christianity through kindness and generosity, first centuries Christians fed the poor, buried the dead left on the street, adopted discarded children from streets and garbage dumps, purchased freedom for slaves, so much so in the early centuries through the middle ages local governments relied on Christians to provide the social safety net for its people.

1972 forecast of five factors could destroy Western civilization:

- 1) nuclear war or terrorism
- 2) famine
- 3) climate or topographic catastrophe
- 4) pandemic/plague
- 5) boredom

*Acts 17 “He is the God who made the world and everything in it...<sup>26</sup> From one man he created all the nations throughout the whole earth. He decided beforehand when they should rise and fall, and he determined their boundaries. <sup>27</sup> “His purpose was for the nations to seek after God and perhaps feel their way toward him and find him—though he is not far from any one of us. <sup>28</sup> For in him we live and move and exist...<sup>30</sup> “God overlooked people’s ignorance about these things in earlier times, but now he commands everyone everywhere to repent of their sins and turn to him. <sup>31</sup> For he has set a day for judging the world with justice by the man he has appointed, and he proved to everyone who this is by raising him from the dead.”*

Do you have a confident hope, a purposeful faith in these last days?