

The Absurdity of Christianity

Part 3: So you want to be spiritual?

1 Cor 15:35-58

INTRO: Xianity absurd.

Core... Jewish peasant in 1st century Middle East claimed to be God... was crucified by Roman occupiers... and raised from dead days later conquering both sin and death... not only that but b/c he was raised... we too will be raised from the dead... forever.

It's this absurd idea that billions of people have held to, been united by, and had their lives transformed by for 2000 yrs.

But even if it's true, even for those who truly believe it is, it still raises other questions/issues... What does it mean to be resurrected? And does it really matter? How does this idea actually help my life now? Have any effect on my life/what I care about now... job/family/school/relationships?

Great question. I'm glad you asked... Let's talk about it... together.

WE: There's an old saying... Xians can be so heavenly minded that they're no earthly good.

Why does this ring true so often?

Many people simply see xianity as a way (perhaps one of many) **to become "more spiritual."**

We might say it's about a personal relationship with Jesus... but often it becomes simply a personal internal spiritual experience.

We want to escape this world... the evil and pain... and make God happier with us... So we focus on a vague idea of being "spiritual."

Of course we all have our own definitions for what that looks like. Definitions that make us feel good while making others feel unable to measure up.

And this pursuit of "spiritual" distracts us from the people/needs around us... we don't see the need to make the world better now... b/c it's just the physical world... not the "REAL" important spiritual world.

Not new. Same thing was happening in the Roman city of Corinth around AD 55.

Corinthians were getting all hyped up on "being spiritual." Having spiritual experiences (speaking in tongues/prophecy/etc) and thinking they had obtained some special level of spirituality b/c of it.

Believed physical matter was only a hindrance from true spirituality.

“Let’s focus on spiritual things and wait for the day all this physical stuff is destroyed.”

B/c they were so fixated on spirituality they rejected the core belief that Jesus would raise people from the dead... Why would he raise our nasty physical bodies... not very “spiritual”.

So Paul has to set them straight...

As saw in other episodes... First reminds them of the core historical fact of Jesus’ resurrection then explains that b/c he rose it proves we will rise... then he explains not only will we be raised, we will be transformed and it’s in this transformation we find true spirituality.

Jesus doesn’t provide us with a detached spiritual experience; he transforms us now and forever.

GOD: 1 Cor 15:35-58 (Bibles)

Sometimes reading Paul feels like reading Shakespeare. I’ll do my best to break this down...

V. 35-38 Corinthians- “We’re raised from the dead? How's this even possible? Like what will the bodies be like... zombies? Gross.

And what if they are burned, or eaten, etc?”

Paul- “What a foolish question”... seems like a good one to me... right? Foolish b/c examples are all over the place...

Paul- “Look, you’re over-thinking/complicating things...”

Our resurrection is like a seed. A seed is just a seed but when you put it in the ground (dies) and God raises it into something completely transformed...

A plant that sprouts from a seed is directly linked to that seed but is always remarkably different from that seed.

Resurrection and transformation is the main theme of the natural world.

- More of a philosophical poetic idea than scientific... relax.

(Paraphrase 39-41)

Goes further... There are different TYPES of bodies...

Everything in the universe has its own body that is designed for the purpose its has... for the environment it finds itself in... plants, animals, people

Even Sun, moon, stars have their own type of radiance... there is a differentiation.

- Gas giants, moons, Pluto... all different types of bodies.
- All glorious but different.

There are different bodies designed to exist in the environment they are in.

Same w/ humans...

V. 42-44 Humans have different types of bodies... original physical body and the one that will come from it... a transformed spiritual body.

What our bodies are now is the seed. One day God will raise them as bodies but gloriously different...

These current earthly bodies are under the effects of sin... they die, are broken, and weak.

But our spiritual bodies will be ... Eternal, glorious, strong, they will be spiritual bodies designed to live spiritual lives...

Face to face with God... living in and under God's perfect rule (v. 28)

(Paraphrase 45-50)

Then he explains... Just as we have inherited a physical body from the first man (Adam) we will be given a heavenly body by the 2nd man.

- Jesus is the new man. The 1st of a new humanity.

First comes the physical body then comes the spiritual body. First seed- then plant.

These earthly bodies must be changed. They were made to exist in this current existence. That which dies cannot live in the eternal kingdom of God.

V. 50-51 Paul is basically saying... Whatever you might think about your current "spirituality" it is actually nothing compared to what we will ALL BE.

Whatever you are trying to do to be spiritual/to have that detached spiritual experience right now...not necessarily bad... but it's not what makes you truly spiritual.

And it doesn't make you better than anyone else...

True spiritually is the result of being transformed by Jesus.

We will ALL be transformed into spiritual beings with spiritual bodies designed to live with God himself in his eternal kingdom...

Ok but HOW/WHEN?

V. 52-53 I love how vague/simple... when? "Relax" At the end.

Those who have already died will be raised and those who are alive will be transformed in the blink of an eye.

That is WHAT will happen and NOW here's what it really means... Takes them back to the core truth...

V. 54-57 When all of creation is restored and transformed we will all be free from that force that is constantly chasing every living thing... death.

Not only is death it defeated.. It is obliterated. Swallowed up in Jesus' victory.

Reality is... death is powerless over life.

Just like darkness is powerless over light. (flashlight in dark room)

And b/c of all of this... The main point... The SO WHAT of all of it... it's not hide/get as "spiritual/knowledgeable" as possible and wait for this to happen...

V. 58 Strong and immovable- Doesn't mean be closed minded jerks...

Hold to what you KNOW- Go back to the 1st core truth... Jesus' death and resurrection and what that proves...

...All things will be under God's rule. And we will be transformed...

We will be transformed AND we are BEING transformed.

It's this already/not yet idea... We ARE this new creation but we are not yet entirely what it will be...

Which means we can start living as spiritual people now...

Being "spiritual" isn't having inside knowledge/powers... It's living in and for the Kingdom of God now

... your life/choices/mindset is led by/permeated by God and his will.

"Your kingdom come (now/future). Your will be done on earth (in and through me) as it is in heaven"

See being spiritual means living as Jesus... In the will of God, In his direction and care... Love... joy, peace, patience, etc...

That's why he says work enthusiastically... Live as a transformed citizen of God's Kingdom now.

While we have these earthly bodies there is work to do... love your neighbor as you love yourself...

Someday that work will be finished and we will see that all of it was more than worth it.

AND that is why the absurd core truth of Xianity is THE most important truth... it transforms every aspect of our life now...

When we trust Jesus died and rose again so that we can rise again... it transforms our perspective, motivation, and purpose...

And there's a new life placed in us... It's his life, the HS, that empowers and enables us to live a truly spiritual Kingdom of God life... now.

We become better spouses, friends, employees/employers, parents, etc. B/c we are beginning to live our transformed lives now.

Knowing we have eternal life now makes us better at life now.

YOU: It's crazy right?

What seems to be the most absurd idea in the world is actually the most logical, powerful, and life changing.

God gave us examples all around us for a reason... b/c it's the foundational truth of the universe...

There is a God who created us...

Who loves us.

Who lived in a physical body. Physically died and physically rose. Obliterating the power of sin and death.

Who promises to also raise us when we trust him to rescue us and transform us.

We see this truth everywhere... seeds that turn into trees, Winter that turns into spring.

He offers this life to everyone... an eternal life that starts now and lasts forever.

It's available through a simple and profound choice to trust Jesus to forgive, rescue, and transform you.

"I want to follow you. I choose to trust you with my life now and forever."

Question for all of us...

WHAT IS THE CORE TRUTH OF MY LIFE?

- Look out for #1? The truth is out there somewhere but who knows?, I hope things work out someday?
 - Only creates fear, empty selfishness, regret.

- Or is it the historical fact Jesus' Death and Resurrection.
 - It is this core that truly transforms lives now and forever.

If not, why not? What evidence would convince you? What is stopping you?

If it is, are you living like it? What are you enthusiastically working at? Where is your love, joy, peace, patience, etc. needed and where is it being used to transform the world around?

WE: That's what it means to be spiritual. To live for and in the kingdom of God now to bring the Kingdom of God to earth now knowing that nothing we truly do for the King will ever be useless.

What would that be like?

- Personally?
- Family?
- Community?
- Country/World?

I'm not exaggerating to make a point... this life IS available to every person watching and listening. It can be yours if you simply choose to trust the most absurd truth in the universe...

The absurd truth of Jesus' resurrection is the foundation of the life we are longing for... now and forever.

Summary: How does Jesus' death and resurrection actually change anything for our lives right now?

Episode Breakdown:

- 00:00 An "absurd" idea for over 2000 years...
- 01:40 Is Christianity simply a way to become 'more spiritual!?'
- 03:38 The Physical world matters...
- 05:00 Is it a "foolish" question...?
- 06:40 The importance of nature
- 08:00 The two kinds of bodies
- 10:20 True spirituality...
- 13:04 The "So what," the main point!
- 14:40 So NOW... we can...
- 17:00 We become better versions of ourselves
- 18:50 For you to consider.
- 21:40 Discussion Qs + Updates

Main Points:

Many people simply see Christianity as a way (perhaps one of many) to become "more spiritual."
 Jesus doesn't provide us with a detached spiritual experience; he transforms us now and forever.
 Resurrection and transformation is the main theme of the natural world.
 True spirituality is the result of being transformed by Jesus.
 We will be transformed AND we are BEING transformed.
 Being "spiritual" isn't having inside knowledge or powers... It's living in and for the Kingdom of God now
 Knowing we have eternal life now makes us better at life now.
 Question: WHAT IS THE CORE TRUTH OF MY LIFE?
 The absurd truth of Jesus' resurrection is the foundation of the life we are longing for... now and forever.


Questions:

1. How have you experienced God's love recently?
2. How would you typically describe the idea of "being spiritual?" Does it differ at all from what was described in this episode? (Review main points in show notes, if that's helpful.)
3. Read Colossians 3:10-17. What words, thoughts, or ideas stand out to you? How do you think this passage relates to some of the ideas presented in this series and/or episode?
4. Jon asked us, "Where is your love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control needed?" What are some ideas that come to mind? What steps could you take this week to bring those to the world?

5. How can your group pray for you this week?

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SHOW NOTES
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