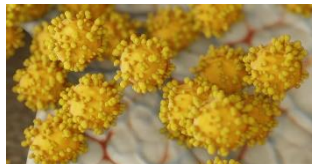
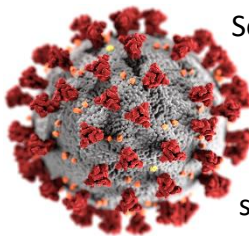


I do not think that I have ever washed my hands as much as I have during this past year. If we do some gardening, decorating or make pastry, it is quite obvious to us that our hands are dirty and need washing. At other times they may **appear** to us to be clean, but, how clean are they? I suppose that if you are in a job such as nursing there is much more of an awareness of the state of our hands and it has probably taken Covid to give us all a greater insight.



According to the internet, some bacteria are so small that if you lay 1,000 of them end to end they would only measure about one cm. No wonder we are not able to see them except with a microscope! I think that one of the hardest things for us to get our heads round is the fact that these are living things, even though they have no legs or eyes. It is difficult for us to realize how fast they multiply and the dreadful consequences that they can have on our lives. Now here is a bit of information for you to digest – In just 7 hours, a single cell can multiply to over a million cells. I suppose it is a bit of a miracle that we are still alive!



Sorry, I do not know the difference between bacteria and viruses, they all seem to be pretty dangerous things to have around. When we look at a picture of the Covid virus it looks so intricate. The picture also look very colourful but I do not know if that is the actual colour. (I am thinking that there are so many 'Don't knows' here that maybe I should stop writing the Doodles for a few months and do a bit of research. No, writing Doodles is much more interesting!)

Back to hand washing. We use the term, 'To wash our hands' of something when we do not want any more involvement in a particular happening or with a person. This expression comes from the time of the trial of Jesus. After questioning Jesus, Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor at that time, knew that it was out of envy that the Jews had Jesus arrested and that He was innocent of the charges that had been made against Him. Pilate offered to release Jesus, but the crowd shouted for Him to be crucified and for the release of a murderer, Barabbas, instead. As Pilate could see that the crowd was getting out of hand he agreed to their request, but, washed his hands in front of the crowd and said, "I am innocent of this man's blood."



The question that comes to my mind is, "Who was actually responsible for the death of Jesus?"

- ** 1. Pilate – Who wanted to keep the peace on his patch.
- ** 2. Jews – Who were jealous of His popularity and who did not agree with some of His teaching.
- ** 3. Roman soldiers – Who crucified Him.

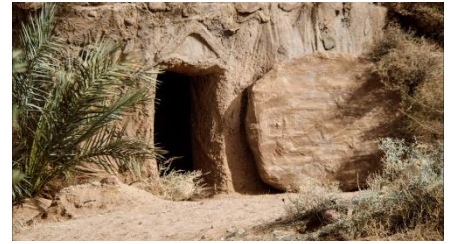
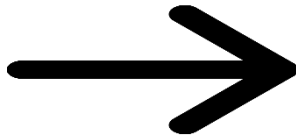
Do you think that it was 1, 2 or 3?????

I would say that the answer to the question is 1, 2 and 3, but also:-

- ** 4. You and me.

You are probably thinking, 'How on earth could I have been responsible for the death of someone that took place nearly 2,000 years ago?'

If Jesus died on the cross to say, “Sorry” to a holy God on our behalf, then, as there is not one of us who is perfect, we must **all** be responsible for His death. What an awesome thought.



The good news of course, is that even though Jesus was put to death on the cross, He did not remain dead. What a mind-boggling thing that must have been to His disciples and others who saw Him during the following weeks. I wonder how we would have felt had we stood in front of the cross and seen Jesus die and then a week later had Him come and speak to us? We may have wondered if we were in our right minds! We have the benefit of being able to read about the subsequent happenings, but His disciples and other followers were not in the same position.

It is not only the death of Jesus that gives us a hope for a life in God’s presence in Heaven, but a combination of His death and resurrection. Had Jesus remained dead in the borrowed tomb, then His death would have been no different from the deaths of millions of others. It is the fact that He came alive again that gives us the opportunity to be with Him for eternity. It is the resurrection of Jesus that helps to form a basis for our Christian beliefs. Those who deny or who do not believe that Jesus was resurrected are deleting part of the purpose for which He came to the earth as a human being. The death without the ensuing resurrection is incomplete and would not make sense. I am so glad that the death of Jesus was not the end for Him and that His purpose in coming to earth was successfully completed by His resurrection.

Death + Resurrection = Eternal Life

I must have read the account of Pilate’s decision many times over the years, but, there is something that I had not noticed previously. It is recorded that when Pilate was sitting on the judgement seat, his wife said to him, “Have nothing to do with that righteous man.” We are not aware of how much influence this had on Pilate’s decision, however, it reminds us that God is able to speak to anyone regardless of their sex, nationality, position, religious beliefs or age.

Back to hand washing. There are many people today who ‘Wash their hands of Jesus’ and who do not wish to know anything about Him. It is a shame that they are missing out on something (someone) that could make such a difference to their lives. Jesus came back to life nearly 2,000 years ago and is still alive and can make a difference to our lives today.

Yes, we are number **4**, and none of us are able to say as Pilate did, “I am innocent of this man’s blood.”

Bible readings: Matthew 27: 15 – 26. Acts 2: 36 – 38.

