

## Pulling Back the Curtain

Most of us enjoy watching the performance of a skilled magician or illusionist. We wonder in amazement, "How did he do that!?" Of course, we are also aware of the magicians' code, that the secret must never be revealed. There are some magical tricks and illusions that are so clever, and performed so well that even when we know *how* they are done, we are still amazed. Then we really wonder, "How *did* they do that?"

We have a natural craving to *pull back the curtain* and see for ourselves exactly how things work. Many people approach life in the same way. They live as if every mystery must be unveiled to reveal the hidden truth. They shout the motto of the State of Missouri, "Show Me." Or, like Dorothy, in the *Wizard of Oz*, they wish to *pull back the curtain*.

Our society cries out, "I'll believe it when I see it!"

When this same attitude is applied to Christianity, faith fails and the scoffer is born. That is not to say that we should not desire to understand. There is no virtue in *blind* faith, that is, faith based only on a desire to believe. However, we must understand that not everything about God has been revealed. We may not even have the capacity to understand all the ways in which God operates.

So, we must not identify too closely to Thomas who openly declared, "Unless I see I will not believe." Most of us can relate to Thomas. Like Thomas, we are only human. So, while his statement revealed his *humanity*, it also revealed his lack of faith. He refused to believe his fellow apostles who were eyewitnesses of the empty tomb and the resurrected Christ.

It is with a *Show Me* attitude that one scoffs at God's promises.

It is when a person demands that the *curtain of mystery be drawn back* that they deny the resurrection of Christ.

It is when a person's *how-did-he-do-that* curiosity demands to be satisfied that they risk refusing the aid of the Holy Spirit of God.

Hoping to gain a better understanding of life, people often ask, "Why?"

"Why are things in my life so difficult when others seem to have it so easy?"

"Why does it seem like people who do not believe in God have fewer troubles than me?"

We instinctively believe that good things should happen to good people, and that evil people should be punished for their evil. That is not unreasonable. However, as Solomon so vividly teaches in the book of Ecclesiastes, life is filled with inequities. Things are not always the way they *should* be. Still yet, we want to make sense of things. We want to understand.

Difficulties arise and we wonder why:

Is the Lord testing me?

Is Satan tempting me?

Is this trial simply an unfortunate event in the natural course of life?

We want to pull back the curtain and SEE . . . as if seeing will provide meaning . . . as if knowing will change things.

So, we must ask ourselves . . .

What if God . . . ?

What if Satan . . . ?

What if life . . . ?

Does knowing the source of our difficulties really change the needed response?

Jesus allowed Thomas to *pull back the curtain* by seeing and touching his scars. But Jesus also rebuked the disciples who did not believe those who were eyewitnesses. (Mark 16:14)

God has revealed some things and we can be truly grateful as we learn from his revelation of Scripture. However, when you just cannot figure it out, forget what is *behind the curtain* and focus on our almighty God and his promises. It is not *seeing* that makes one believe, but *believing* that gives one true sight!

"And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of those who seek him."  
(Hebrews 11:6)

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