

# GUEST EDITORIAL

## Can these bones live?

by Charles Tysoe and Carole Tysoe

Once again this Easter millions of Canadian Christians pause their secular pursuits to commemorate the death and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth.

But even among the faithful is this spring festival becoming an annual hunt for the bag of chocolatey bones belonging to Jesus? Such a person lived and died in ca. 30 C.E. in Roman-occupied Palestine, according to Tacitus, who also noted that in Rome Nero had slaughtered the followers of 'Christus.'

The Romans were annoyed with this thorn in the side of the empire. In the 30 years since their founder's grotesque execution the original small band of apostles had grown into a major social force in every city, with believers even in the very household of the emperor, and been transformed from fearful flight into men of invincible courage.

Too many witnesses had seen Jesus' tomb empty despite the heavy guard by the renowned Roman army. They even claimed he was seen by a crowd of more than 500 on one occasion. Ironically, Rome could produce no-one able to refute the church's claim to Christ's resurrection or deter the loyalty of his followers. That loyalty continues to this day. Though Christianity has been besieged with ridicule by a modern army and "scientifically" hammered on its historical basis, both ridicule and hammering have been without success.

The 19th-century scholar William Ramsey knocked himself out all over Asia Minor and the Middle East trying to scuttle the credibility of Luke's Gospel and Acts of the Apostles. Ramsey judged these documents vital to the issue and, forced by the evidence to elevate Luke to the first rank of historical writers, he devoted the rest of his life to the Christian cause. British lawyer and wavering agnostic Frank Morison tried the same task between the world wars. The last line of his book, 'Who moved the stone?' reads "On the third day He rose from the dead."

Many scholars and sons of the Church have tried to purge Christianity of this 'ancient tale.' Their cumulative triumph has been a new 'historical Jesus'

presented in solemn religious bafflegab; 'Resurrection Spirit', 'Christ Archetypes' or 'Jesus/God "Experience"', or "The disciples were so

filled with light...at the tomb that it didn't matter whether Jesus was alive or dead."

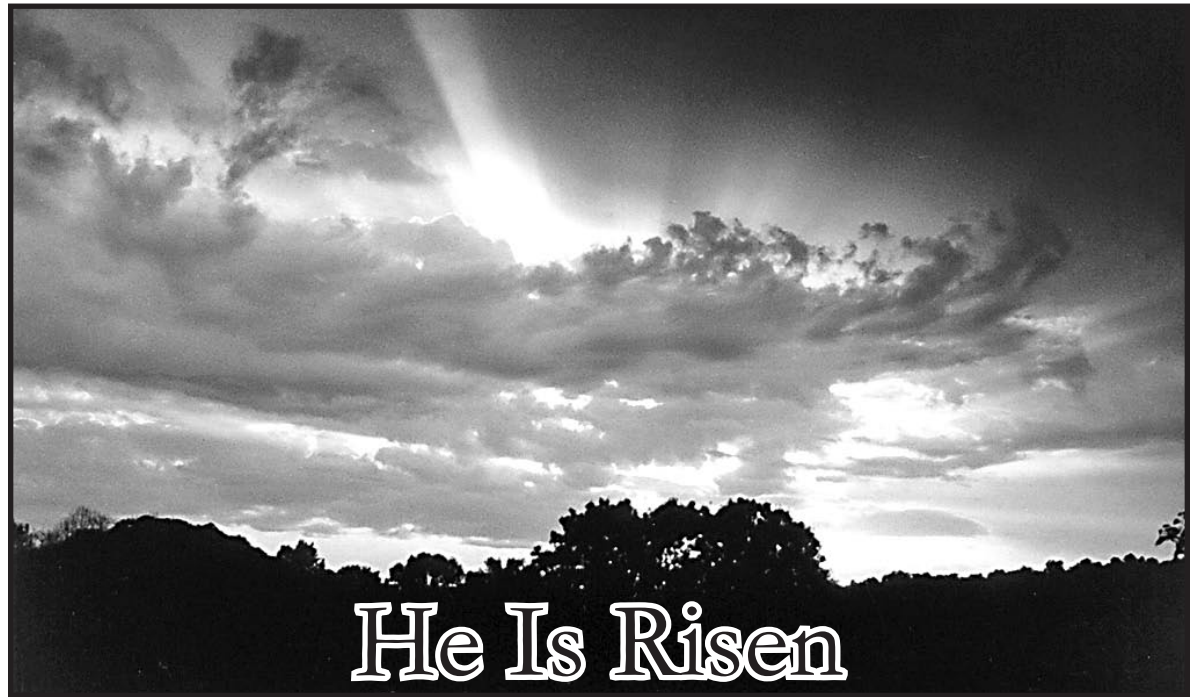
Lately the bones of Jesus occupy centre court: in the early '80s Dr Jenkins, Bishop of Durham, declared the Resurrection to be "a conjuring trick with a bag of bones," and Canada's own home-grown bone-digging celebrity the late Charles Templeton, after cleansing his faith engrams with a five-star theological education at Princeton, and quitting the ministry, wrote 'Act of God' in which an archeologist's discovery of the authentic bones of Jesus causes a crisis for his clergyman friend.

Skeptics from Asimov to Voltaire have always found unbelief profitable and scoffers comprise the routine of history: the real dissonance here is in the clergy who live parasitically within the church, dispensing corrupt food without poisoning their flocks so rapidly as to kill the host before extracting the maximum in wages, benefits and pensions. With their deadly dronings (denying the resurrection) they fleece and eat their sheep:

"Did it happen? Not literally so, but  
...profoundly...believed...some  
dramatically...way...very real...  
but...very believable..." *Et cetera....*

But this sea of ecclesial anarchy hides a phrase heard by Christians in their communion services, particularly poignant at Easter time: "Remember his death" we are told: "until he comes again." The same church claiming witness to the Resurrection also believes Jesus will return in splendour. Just as these two beliefs are inseparable, the "What is?" surrounding organized Christianity should not obscure the vital question: "What IF?"

Charles Tysoe is a regular New Tanner contributor and Carole Tysoe is his sister.



## Spring clean-up stirs sad memories

Dog poop is a weird thing. Kodi seems to think every time I pick his poop up it's playtime. I have never been able to figure this out. This weekend when I went on the spring "haul" of poop, Kodi stayed inside. He was sad. He was thinking of Shadow.

Shadow was the Dude's dog. She was with him through thick and thin. She had been there for him through every heartache and every good time. She was a wonderful dog.

I first met Shadow after the Dude and I started dating. You couldn't help but love her. She was a ham. She was "man's best friend." She had a perfect temperament and was basically the perfect dog, minus the St. Bernard slobber.

When we married I was severely nervous about amalgamating the two dogs. Kodi was a control freak, where Shadow was the passive gentle one. She knew when to "ham" it up and when to play subdued. She was loving and faithful. Somehow they found a way to live together. They had what the Dude refers to as a "love/hate" relationship.

The only problem Shadow acquired, which I seem to have inflicted, was her sudden love for the indoors. The former loving-the-outdoors kind of dog only went out to do her business. She had learned to prefer the comforts of home. The Dude scolded me for this saying she needed her outdoor time. I, on the other hand knew she was a senior. If she enjoyed sunning herself by the sliding door, who was I to



By  
Angela Tyler

complain? I seemed to have spoiled both dogs.

Unfortunately, Shadow developed a disease that was causing her problems with her bowels. We would take her to the vet and get her medicine. That would cure her temporarily, but it was only a band-aid.

Our first year of marriage was filled with sleepless nights for the Dude as each dog took turns waking him up in the middle of the night to go out. They knew I could sleep through a freight train and wouldn't get anywhere trying to wake me. For the Dude it was like having two newborn babies.

Dinner time saw the dogs taking



Shadow

turns dining on the terrace, a.k.a. the deck, so Kodi wouldn't bully Shadow over her bowl of food. Our milk-bone budget increased as the Dude changed my habit of giving the dogs a treat when they come inside to getting one on departure and return to the house. The "kids" as the Dude called them filled our lives.

Then, the worst came. Shadow's problems were getting more severe. They were really starting to affect her and the Dude too. We were all affected. People may say they may only be a dog, but those people don't really understand.

That is when we had to make that awful trip with Shadow to the vet. We had hoped for the best, but in our hearts we knew it would be a one way trip for Shadow. I hadn't experienced this before. My dad always looked after situations like that when I lived at home. Before we knew it, the vet told us Shadow was in dire straits. We were devastated even though we knew it was what we were expecting.

Teary-eyed and hugging her, the Dude and I bid farewell to our loveable companion. I didn't realize how hard it would be. There are few times when men break down. This would be the kicker for him. I was at a loss of how to console him.

Over the next few weeks we slowly came to grips with our loss. Shadow's collar and leash are still on the Dude's night table. I still listen for her barking at the patio door

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