



A Decision Never Regretted

by Richard J. Foster

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As a teenager, I was shy and didn't make friends quickly. On my high school campus one group had an undefinable attractiveness—what I later came to know as "deep joy."

I soon discovered that they were Christians. Deep-down, bedrock Christians; young men and women who knew Jesus Christ as their life. I was intrigued.

They invited me to worship gatherings on Sunday evenings. I was too shy to say "no," so I said "yes." But I was also too shy to go to the meetings. It took several more invitations, gentle and encouraging, to get me there. The entire gathering was run by teenagers. I sat quietly, listening to the vibrant witness and the spirited music. I wasn't too sure about all the Christian beliefs of my new friends, but I was drawn to the winsomeness of their lives.

During those years, I was something of a pseudointellectual, and I enjoyed debating issues of ultimate meaning. One exceptionally bright young man from the group relished intellectual bantering. Together we discussed everything from quan-

tum physics to economic theory.

Inevitably our conversations gravitated to this Jesus who claimed to be "the way, the truth, and the life."¹ The arrogance and the exclusive nature of the claims of Jesus offended me, but everything about the life of Jesus attracted me. I saw a similar quality of life in my new friends.

Our debates went on for several months. While I kept up my intellectual defenses, I was scrutinizing these teenagers who lived so confidently. Not that they were perfect; but in their imperfections they always remained loving and forgiving and affirming.

After about seven months I became intellectually convinced of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Logic and history persuaded me that it was more reasonable to believe in the resurrection than to believe in other alternatives. And the lives of my friends made it all the more plausible. They were living witnesses that Jesus is alive and present among his people—teaching, guiding, transforming and empowering.

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I knew that intellectual assent by itself was insufficient. My belief demanded commitment. If Jesus truly has risen from the dead and is present among us today, he deserves my complete allegiance.

So, as a teenager many years ago, I knelt by my bed and yielded my life to the One who declares, "I am the resurrection, and the life."² It is a decision that I have never regretted. ✠

(1) John 14:6, KJV. (2) John 11:25, KJV