

From probably<sup>1</sup> to indeed<sup>2</sup>

The Lord is probably risen.

Some years ago this small sentence was almost printed on an Easter card. The sender was looking for a nice Bible text as Easter-greeting and stumbled on Luke 24: 34. The Lord is risen indeed (KJ21), it says there. By mistake the sender changed the crucial word "waarlijk" (indeed) for "waarschijnlijk" (probably).

That same word "waarschijnlijk" (probably) is on a billboard which was placed by a group of atheists alongside the A4 highway: 'Probably there is no God'. Newspaper column-writer Jean-Jacques Suurmond called that billboard a missionary action. Because 'Had they written *There is no god* you would probably have past by shrugging.'

Precisely the word probably, he wrote, wrenches something open. 'In *probably not* sounds *it might be*. Whoever says *Probably there is no god* says at the same time: *Maybe there is a god*.'

He has a point, but still: the mistake of the sender of the Easter-card was crucial. At one blow maybe the most important sentence of the Bible was undermined.

Look at what Paul says in 1 Corinthians 15: 14 '..and if Christ be not risen .... your faith is also vain.' And: 19 'If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.'

Not that it is simple to believe that Jesus rose from death. On the contrary. It is the core of our faith and at the same time the hardest to comprehend. We are soon inclined to think – and understandably so – that death has the final word. Day by day we are confronted with suffering, dying and death. Nevertheless: the Lord is risen indeed.

Ultimately there can be no doubt about that.

Some time ago the director of the EO (Evangelical Broadcast) was talking at 'Pauw & Witteman'<sup>3</sup> about the creation-discussion which broke loose after the remarks of Andries Knevel. What, asked Jeroen Pauw, if Knevel says no longer to believe that Jesus rose from death? Then it is the end for Andries, replied the EO-director.

He wanted to say: we can have difference of opinion on this, that and the other and have different interpretations of the Bible at some points, but if we no longer believe that Christ rose from death, our faith is useless.

There truly is a God

The Lord is risen indeed

Blessed Easter-days

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*In this column managers and staff members of the Protestant Church shed their light on actualities in church and society.*

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<sup>1</sup> Probably is in Dutch: **waarschijnlijk**

<sup>2</sup> Indeed is in Dutch: **waarlijk**

<sup>3</sup> 'Pauw & Witteman' is a late-night talkshow, hosted by Jeroen Pauw and Paul Witteman.