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April 4, 2021: Happy Easter

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4/4/2021—C.S. Lewis used to say that Christianity is one great miracle. This is true and important because it measures the difference between religion and the secular very precisely. Lewis meant the incarnation, not the resurrection, but they are all one story, as he also said. The divine comes into nature and then rises, bringing nature, including us, with it. I have a stubborn streak—like Dr. McCoy in Star Trek. I cannot accept miracles—any interruption in the usual causal natural processes. This is not a logical position. The Big Bang was a miracle. We don't really understand anything about it. So, I have to admit that I don't want to accept the possibility of a miracle. Nor is this really experiential. I have experienced inexplicable interventions in my life—spiritual events without any sensible explanation other than divine action. But forgiveness of sin is not a miracle. Accepting this stance as a choice not to believe is helpful because I now have no reason to look down on religious believers. We have all made commitments, just different ones. The argument for the resurrection rests on a lot of evidence actually, not the least of which is the fact that 20 or 30 years after the death of Jesus, Jews are eating pork—about as likely as the Taliban putting on cocktail parties. But it's not for me. Nor for many others. In fact, we now live in a secular culture. The question going forward is a simple one—how to build secular civilization instead of the mess America is now. The answer is simple too but hard to do. First decide what flourishing secular civilization has to be—it has to be hallowed. (Hence the blog and book). Second make peace with religion as part of the resources to do that. (Hence American Religious Democracy), Third, accept that building secular civilization is a communal task, not an individual one. (Hence Church, State and the Crisis in American Secularism). Fourth, commit to a positive view of the universe as the basis of secular civilization—my upcoming book. Fifth, design a new secular life—with an eye toward calendar, the ritual of daily life, prayer and repentance. (my next book) Finally, adopt love as the basis of all life. This last step brings the secular right back into the neighborhood of religion.