

On The Frontier

“For the glory of God and the furtherance of the Gospel”

Because He Lives

There are two events in history of paramount importance. Both concern Jesus Christ our Lord. The first being his birth, the second his resurrection from the dead. Due to pagan influences these milestones are referred to as Christmas and Easter. As to the epithet Christmas, its origin is found in the Romish Church. Which Church is rooted in a commingling of superstition, paganism, myth, fear and watered down Christian truths. The word Christmas is a compound word the prefix needing no explanation. The suffix comes from the word mass which describes a ceremony performed for the dead. Hence, Christmas means a mass for Christ. Or a celebration of the dead for Christ. Sort of convoluted, wouldn't you say? As to the time of year, we who have searched the Scriptures know full well the birth of Jesus did not occur on December 25. What is important here however, is not the name or date but rather the occurrence. Jesus the Christ, God's only begotten Son, the Saviour of mankind, the Holy One of God was born! He lives. Because he lives, we live. I'm not suggesting that accuracy isn't important, it is. But what's even more important is that God's Son was born. We dare not loose sight of that great truth. As wonderful as biblical research is, there's a tendency to get caught up in the "nuts and bolts" and miss the magnificence and fecundity of the message.

Isaiah 9:6

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

Matthew 1:21

And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.

Galatians 4:4,5

But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law,

To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

Christ the Lord was born and because he lives, we live.

John 20:31

But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.

I John 5:13

These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.

John 10:10

The thief cometh not, but for to

steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have *it* more abundantly.

Because he lives we can live life more abundantly!

The appellation Easter is also rooted in paganism. Easter is a rough transliteration of Ishtar, the goddess of spring. This idol was worshiped in springtime as "life giver." Because that's the time of year new life issues forth. Animals bring forth their young, trees bud, grass grows and flowers bloom. Man, long noted for his worship of the creation rather than the Creator (Romans 1:25), saw springtime as opportune for idol worship. A brief review of history will reveal the utilization of sex and reproduction in pagan ritual. Thus the act of sex was included in ceremony and seen as hallowed (intoxication was also an integral part of their rituals).

Perhaps you've wondered how imaginary bunnies who lay chocolate eggs became part of Easter? The egg is the universal symbol for fertility and the bunny is widely heralded for the ability to proliferate itself. Chocolate of course markets well and has been celebrated by many as a mild aphrodisiac. The only thing the resurrection of our Lord has in common with Easter is that it took place in the spring of the year. By the way, how many times do you suppose the English word Easter appears in the KJV of the Bible? Only one!

Here it is in context:

Acts 12:1-5

Now about that time Herod the king stretched forth *his* hands to vex certain of the church.

And he killed James the brother of John with the sword.

And because he saw it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to take Peter also. (Then were the days of unleavened bread.)

And when he had apprehended him, he put *him* in prison, and delivered *him* to four quaternions of soldiers to keep him; intending after Easter [*pascha*] to bring him forth to the people.

Peter therefore was kept in prison: but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him.

This word *pascha* is the Greek word for Passover which is a Hebrew concept. In fact, *pascha* is found 29 times in the New Testament and translated 28 times as Passover and only once as Easter.

Maybe you've also wondered why Easter never comes on the same date two years in a row? The reason is they utilize the cycle of the Moon to determine what day Easter should fall on. This of course negates history and accuracy. You certainly wouldn't use such a process to determine your birthday would you? Of course not! Nevertheless, what's really important is not found in the name or the date (especially since God warns us against being respecters of times and dates - Colossians 2:16; Romans 14:6-9). The magnitude of accomplishment is

found in the resurrection. God raised Christ from the dead. Because he lives, we live! The single greatest event in all of history is the resurrection of Jesus Christ, proving conclusively that God has power over death.

Romans 6:9-11

Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him.

For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.

Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

It's in the resurrection that we have power, life and salvation! It's in his resurrection that we are made whole!!! Abraham believed the promise of God and was made righteous. In like manner when we believe that God raised Jesus from the dead we are made righteous.

Romans 4:23-25

Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him;

But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead;

Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.

Romans 10:9-11

That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead,

thou shalt be saved.

For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

Isn't that awesome! He lives, it's so wonderful!!! Because he lives, we live.

I could go on and on about all of the spectacular benefits that are ours in the resurrection but one thing stands supreme in my mind. The most important aspect of all is that he lives. I am of little consequence as is any man, but the Lord Jesus Christ is more precious than can be told. He lives! That in and of itself is the most magnificent truth of all. God raised Jesus Christ His Son from the dead. Hallelujah! All praise and glory are due to our God for raising Jesus Christ to life eternal!

I rejoice with all those who recognize the resurrection of Jesus Christ and you should too. If we are blessed to have a greater insight as pertains to detail, than thank God. But never, never, never forget the great crux of it all, i.e., the resurrection. I know, as perhaps you do, that Jesus didn't die on a Friday. He died on a Wednesday. I also know that there's nothing good about his death regardless of the day it took place. If anything, his death is the darkest day in all of history. But, in contrast, the resurrection of Jesus from the dead is the most wondrous event that has ever taken place. It should be for us a gala occasion. He lives, he lives, our Lord lives for ever more. Praise God, praise God!

I'm very thankful for the events of this month as once again I'm reminded of the most extraordinary event in history. The resurrection of Jesus Christ. As if that weren't enough, his resurrection is the first of many.

I Corinthians 15:21-23

For since by man *came* death, by man *came* also the resurrection of the dead.

For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.

Because he lives, we live!

I have a favorite hymn that always reminds me of this. Every time I hear it I get chills. It's called "Because He Lives" and was written by Gloria and William Gaither. I'd like to share the chorus with you:

"Because He lives I can face tomorrow, because He lives all fear is gone; because I know He holds the future and life is worth the living - just because He lives."

I Thessalonians 4:14-18

For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive *and* remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.

For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the

voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

Then we which are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

Remember he said:

John 14:19

Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also.

The Counselor's Corner

Disobedience And Discipline

Recently I watched a news documentary on child behavior. Really it was on child misbehavior and parental cowardice. Anyway, the piece revolved around a small family, mom, dad and two children. The child who was the "problem" was about five years old. It seems his parents could not get him to behave in a seemly manner. They were said to have tried everything and to no avail.

This program stunned me. I'll tell you why in a bit. It seems every time the little fellow didn't get his way he would throw a tantrum. For instance, if he didn't want to go to bed at the prescribed time he would begin to flail his arms and legs in a violent attempt to hurt his parents. His language would become foul and he would even go so far as to spit in their faces. Their response?

Lackluster to say the least. At first they would begin to reason with him, this of course didn't work. Next they would hold him at arms length. This too would fail. He grew more insufferable and they grew fatigued. The situation degenerated and they attempted to restrain him using a technique they called "the wrap." They sat with the child on their lap holding his arms across his chest in a "straight jacket" like position. This too proved futile (I thought it unnecessarily frustrating and debilitating). Eventually one parent would fold leaving the other to deal with the situation unaided.

This became so hard on the family that their marriage began to fail. They no longer had the time or energy for one another. Their youngest was in danger also and they knew it. They were afraid and embarrassed to be seen in public. Not only this but their friends and family would no longer come to visit. All because of this unruly boy. To complicate matters kindergarten was right around the corner. Now they were really pressed for time. What were they to do?

Enter a certain psychiatrist who shall remain unnamed. He said he could help. Upon examination he diagnosed the lad with what was said to be a newly discovered malady termed **Oppositional Defiance Disorder**. His solution was simple. The boy wouldn't starve, he said, so let him eat whatever he wants whenever he wants to. Since television is not a good reason to be miserable and fight, let him watch it as often and long as he desires. As for bed time, whenever he's tired is good enough, he will not die. After doing this for a while the good doctor had these hapless folks working the

old compromise with the tot. Basically what happened is the kid won and the parents lost. Can you imagine that? A boy whose mom would spend five hours a night sitting on him in his bed because he refused to go to sleep at bedtime! Now the boy is in the "driver's seat."

I don't like to brag but one night with me and the little rascal would be going to bed at the right time, eating the right things (or not eating at all, the doctor is right, he will not starve), speaking politely and minding his mommy and daddy. Oh yes, minus the swearing.

Oppositional Defiance Disorder indeed! How about deliberate disobedience, or better yet rebellion? Both of which are as old as mankind.

What does God think of this type of behavior?

I Samuel 15:23a

For rebellion *is as* the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness *is as* iniquity and idolatry . . .

Is that what we want for our children? Certainly not! Now I'll tell you why I was so stunned. Because I couldn't get over how stupid these people (including our good doctor) had become. But isn't that true for society in general? The answer sadly is a resounding YES!

This is what happens when you reject the Word of God and replace it with the doctrines of men. Today we are told that we cannot discipline our children as directed biblically as it might harm their tender psyche. Oh puleeezee!!! They say if you administer discipline you teach the child that violence is the right way to deal with problems. I guess they

haven't been around our little ODD boy. Have they? After all he wasn't being disciplined yet he knew how to kick, punch, cuss and spit. How strange! Or is it? Sounds like old man sin nature to me.

Here's what needs to be done with our youngsters. That is, if we love them.

Proverbs 22:15

Foolishness *is* bound in the heart of a child; *but* the rod of correction shall drive it far from him.

Proverbs 23:12-14

Apply thine heart unto instruction, and thine ears to the words of knowledge.

Withhold not correction from the child: for *if* thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die.

Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell.

Discipline is given out of a heart of love and should never be confused with child abuse or punishment. Both of which are the product of anger which is a result of the frustration that is bound to happen when you deal improperly with a child.

A person who is too lazy to discipline their child or too fearful can become angry, frustrated and overwhelmed. The child is sure to suffer as a result. There's no need to be angry. You are in charge and you should be grateful for that. I can discipline my children with a smile on my face. Just ask them, they'll tell you. Why? Because I love them. God disciplines us because He loves us. We discipline our kids because we love them.

Furthermore, we love our fellowman and wish to be fair to all. Nothing is more intrusive and rude to bystanders than an out of control child!

The answer is discipline. This comes as consequence to disobedience and as incentive for obedient behavior.

Dear reader you just have to know the great value of consequence. Nothing is quite as effective a teacher and you know it.

Will they cry when you use your authority? Yes, if you use it properly. The alternative to crying is laughing at you. Which would you prefer?

Proverbs 19:18

Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying.
