

Northside Church of Christ

“God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.”
John 4:24



Northside Church of Christ
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Meridian, MS 39301

Place
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Here

Remembering His Resurrection Annually?

By Richard Thetford

The calendar reads “Easter Sunday.” As a result, many people throughout the world will be attending the “church of their choice” to remember the resurrection of Jesus. It won’t be the “normal” service, but rather a “special” service of remembering the resurrection of our Lord that no doubt will include different plays, skits, and dramas. The world calls this day “Easter Sunday”, the day of our Lord’s resurrection from the grave. But is it really?

I don’t recall reading anywhere in the Bible of the day nor the special celebration of the resurrection mentioned. Yet many “good intentioned people”, honestly believing that they are commemorating the resurrection of Christ, celebrate this “holy day” having no biblical authority whatsoever for the practice. Because of tradition, most people today believe that Easter has always been observed from apostolic times and is authorized in the scriptures. But how could they get such an idea?

There is an unfortunate translation in the King James Version of the New Testament which has, perhaps, led some astray. The Greek, pascha, is translated by the word, “Easter” in Acts 12:4. This same word is properly translated in other versions and in every other passage where it is used in the King James Version, as Passover. Undoubtedly it was mistranslated here in Acts. And even if the word was properly translated, there is still no authority here for the observance of anything. That is why Easter, as we know it, is celebrated without proper Bible authority. The text of Acts 12:4 was in regard to the apostle Peter when he was put into prison during the days of Unleavened Bread or Passover as the NKJV, ASV, NASV, & NIV indicates. It is obvious that this passage of scripture is referring to the seven-day Passover festival. There is no place indicated in the New Testament that a yearly celebration of the resurrection of Jesus Christ was ever practiced. Yet today, thousands of people remember Him only this one day per year and they make it a grand festival.

Continued on next page...

<p>SUNDAY MORNING</p> <p>Triple E Edify, Exhort, Evangelize 8:30 AM</p>	<p>SUNDAY BIBLE STUDY</p> <p>Thru the Bible in 52 Weeks - Philippians 9:30 AM</p>	<p>SUNDAY WORSHIP</p> <p>Worship Service 10:30 AM</p>	<p>WEDNESDAY NIGHT</p> <p>Matthew 27:38-66; 28:1-15 Mark 15:25-47; 16:1-20 Luke 23:35-56; 24:1-47 John 19:28-42; 20:1-29 Jesus dies Jesus is Alive! 7:00 PM</p>
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“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

2 Timothy 2:15

Remembering His Resurrection Annually?

By Richard Thetford

It comes as a shock to many that we in the churches of Christ do not celebrate Easter Sunday. This fact makes us seem strange to many. It causes them to think that we are something other than Christian. For them, this Sunday is one of the most important on the calendar. People will come out in groves to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

Let us first establish why we do not celebrate “Easter” Sunday. The New Testament teaches that everything that we do is to be done “in the name of,” or, “by the authority of” Jesus Christ. “And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, to all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him” (Col. 3:17). Not one verse in the New Testament exhorts us to celebrate a particular Sunday as “the” resurrection Sunday. Not one time do we ever read of the church of the first century holding “Easter Services.” Since we desire to pattern ourselves after the New Testament church, we do not hold Easter Services either.

It is true that Jesus was raised from the dead on the first day of the week. One of this writer’s favorite texts is Mark 16:2-6. “And very early in the morning, the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun...And entering in to the sepulchre, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment; and they were affrighted. And he saith unto them, Be not affrighted: ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: he is risen; he is not here: behold the place where they laid him.” It is this day, the first day of the week that has been authorized for Christian worship (Acts 20:7; I Cor. 16:1-2; Rev. 1:10). Therefore, members of the church of Christ celebrate the resurrection of our Lord every first day of the week. It is not a “one-day-of-the-year affair” for us. We remember our Lord’s victory over the grave fifty-two times a year.

Because members of the Lord’s church do not celebrate Easter, we are often unfamiliar with some of the terminology that is used by our denominational friends when they discuss this event. In the remainder of this article we want to set before you a few of the words that are used during this time of year as well as their definitions.

Easter: The name given to the most important religious feast in the “Christian” liturgical year...The term developed from the Old English word Eastre (or Easte), which refers to the goddess of Anglo-Saxon paganism originally of the dawn. In pagan times an annual spring festival was held in her honor.

Lent: The 40-day long liturgical season of prayer and fasting before Easter which represents the 40 days Jesus fasted in the wilderness. In Western “Christianity,” Lent begins on Ash Wednesday and ends on Holy Saturday...The purpose of Lent is the preparation of the believer through penitence, prayer, self-denial, and almsgiving.

Ash Wednesday: The first day of Lent, which occurs 40 days before Easter. Ash Wednesday is so-named from the practice undertaken by “Christians” to show repentance of their sins. They kneel before a priest who makes the sign of the cross in ashes upon their foreheads. As he does this, he recites the words: “Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return.”

Holy Week: The week before Easter and the last week of Lent. During Holy Week the events of the last week of Jesus’ earthly life are remembered.

Palm Sunday: The name given to the Sunday before Easter, which commemorates the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem on a donkey in the days before His passion.

Good Friday: The name given to the Friday before Easter, which commemorates the crucifixion of Jesus Christ and his death at Golgotha. It is termed “good” because without it there could have been no resurrection.

Easter Vigil: The first official celebration of the Resurrection of Jesus. The worship service is held in the hours of the darkness between sunset on Holy Saturday and sunrise of Easter Sunday. This is celebrated by the Catholic Church.

Sunrise Service: A worship services on Easter practiced by some Protestant churches, replacing the traditional, ancient Easter Vigil. The service is held early in the morning and is timed so the attendants can see the sun rise during the service. The event commemorates the time of the day that Jesus rose from the dead on the first day of the week.

Eastertide: Also known as Easter Season or Paschal Time. The name was given to the 50 days from Easter Sunday to Whitsunday (Pentecost)...Eastertide is important in the “Christian” calendar as it celebrates the risen Christ with his teachings and appearances, as well as the beginnings of the “Christian” church.

These are some of the main terms that are used by our religious friends during this time of year. There are other terms that are used such as Maundy Thursday, but these are not as common. In order to speak to our friends about spiritual things, we must have a working knowledge of what they believe. Too, we never want to misrepresent anything they believe and teach. Thus, we must spend some time learning about the things they believe. It is interesting that not one of these terms is found in the New Testament of Jesus Christ. This might be something that we could point out to those who use these words. Every one of these beliefs and practices are of man-made origin. There is nothing divine about them (See Matthew 15:7-9).

Where Did Easter Come From Anyway?

The word “Easter” is derived from the Anglo-Saxon word Eostre, the name of the goddess of Spring. Sacrifices were offered in her honor at the first full moon that came at the time of the vernal equinox. By the 8th century, the term came to be applied to the anniversary of Christ’s resurrection [ISBE, Vol 2, page 6]. There has been much controversy about the time of this celebration. The Jewish Christians and Gentiles could not agree on a set date. But as time passed an increasing number of people celebrated the anniversary of the resurrection on the first day of the week annually. By the 7th century the practice of religious groups had become universally uniform. The agreed upon time is now the first Sunday following the full moon that comes on or after the vernal equinox and that date was set as March 21st. This is why there is a variation in Easter dates from March 22nd through April 25th. There has even been talk among the different religions as setting the date permanently on one Sunday between March 21st and April 25th.

The Proper Remembrance Of Jesus

I’ve filled you in on the history of this word “Easter” so that you will understand that it originated as a pagan holiday festival and later became a yearly festival to remember the resurrection of Christ among different religious groups across the world.

The Lord’s church does not celebrate Easter. Members of the Lord’s church celebrate the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ on the first day of every week as we are instructed in the New Testament. We can turn to the book of Acts and read: "Now on the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread" (Acts 20:7). We have an approved example from this text that lets every Christian know when one is to partake of the emblems which represent Christ’s shed body for us. It says the first day of the week. It does not say "The first day of the week, once a year!" In I Corinthians 11:23-29, we can further understand the significance of this memorial feast that we partake of weekly. We learn that it represents the body and blood of Jesus and it says: "For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes." Again, how often should a Christian eat the bread and drink the cup? The first day of the week! There are many religious denominations out there today that do not partake of the Lord’s Supper once per week. Some will do it bi-monthly, others monthly, still others just once or twice per year. Any individual that is striving to do "all the oracles of God" (I Peter 4:11), must understand that God sets the standard (rules) that we must go by today - not man (Acts 5:29). The New Testament is our standard. I urge you to examine the Bible, and then look at what you may be practicing in your religion, and then determine whether it is from God or from man.

Prayer Requests This Week

- Pray for all those with ongoing health ailments (Maxine Powell)
- All those affected by COVID-19
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Communion Preparation

- Sign up sheet for 2021 is in foyer
- April - Juliano
- May -
- June -

Announcements

- Ladies’ Baby Shower honoring Kylie Joiner, Sunday April 11 immediately following worship service

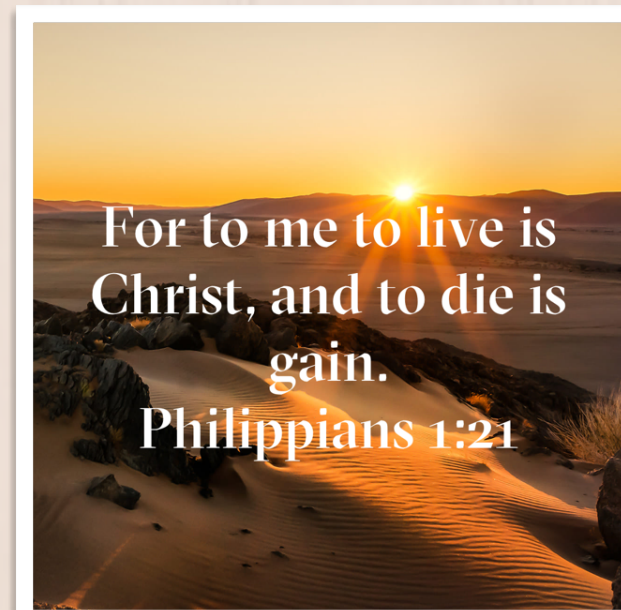
April Birthdays & Anniversary’s

- None

Every Sunday Morning

@ 8:00 AM

on WTOK-TV



Sermon Notes

Men to Serve

Announcements/Opening Prayer - Shay Cooper

Scripture Reading - Philippians 1:20 - 26

Lead Singing - Chuck Rowell

Head of Lord’s Table - Don Potts

Assist on Lord’s Table - Mark Potts

Scripture Reading - John 20:1 - 16

Closing Prayer - Larry Montgomery

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Comcast Cable	431
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