

Looking Back At Easter

David Halbrook

When you look back at Easter, how far back can you look-- a few days ago or back to your childhood? Have you ever looked back at Easter of the distant past?

If you look back to the seventh century (500+ years after Jesus' resurrection) you would find that the observance of Easter was just becoming uniform. Now ask yourself why the observance of Easter wasn't already uniform.

If you look back to 325 A.D. (300 years after Jesus was raised), a human council decided when Easter would be observed. Ask yourself why the date was not already set, and why neither Jesus nor the apostles set the date for Easter.

Finally, look back to the time when the apostles taught what Christ commanded (Mt. 28:20). Here, there is no "Easter." Christians remember Jesus' resurrection when they worship Him on the day He arose--the first day of the week (Matt. 28:1; Mk. 16:2; Acts 20:7; Rev. 1:10).

Today, Scripture thoroughly equips us to honor Jesus' resurrection, without human tradition, by worshiping God in spirit and truth each Lord's Day (2 Tim. 3:17; Col. 3:22). We assemble each week for this purpose and invite you to come.

Editor's Note: Some of this information was given during last week's evening lesson. It is almost 100% certain that you know someone who does not know some of these facts about Easter. Will you give them an opportunity to learn? Among the simplest of ways you can do that is to help them find our article in *Arkansas Weekly*. Then, take your efforts to help them a step further and ask what they thought about it.

Simple opportunities to teach the lost and assist each other.

Pray for: Janice White, The Ledgerwoods, Novela Puckett, Samuel Southall, others with ongoing trials, our brethren who are travelling, and new Christians among us.

The list for preparing the Lord's Supper needs just a few more names. We continue to need people to offer a few minutes to post a short verse on the signboard. Can you?

We assemble each Sunday at 10AM, 10:45AM, 5PM & Wednesday at 7PM

Church of Christ—Quail Valley
4104 E. Harrison St.
Batesville, AR 72501
Office- (870) 793-6700

Evangelist:
David Halbrook 569-4491

The Exhorter

Acts 11:23 *Exhorted them all... cleave unto the Lord*

Church of Christ--Quail Valley

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If We Love- We Will Obey

Richard Thetford

In the family relationship children who love their parents will obey their parents. Children that purposely disobey their parents don't love them as they should. Children are commanded to obey their parents (Eph 6:1), and they will gladly do so when they truly love them. The same is true in the realm of religion. When one says that they "love" Jesus then they will show that love through obedience to Him.

In John 13:34-35 Jesus said: "*A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.*" Jesus taught that man MUST love one another to be accepted by Him. In these two verses He showed that in three ways: 1) By a command: "*That ye love one another*". We have no option when it comes to love if we are to practice true Christianity. We must love one another. 2) By an example: "*As I loved you, that ye also love one another.*" Jesus showed us what love is all about through the life He lived. He loved us so much that He died for us. We must also show and practice this kind of sincere love for our brethren. 3) By necessary inference: "*By this shall all men KNOW that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.*" When we love one another the way Jesus expects us to, then others will KNOW that we are His disciples.

We have heard the old saying that "actions speak louder than words". This is absolutely true. Lip service will not get an individual very far; it certainly did not impress Jesus as He called the Pharisees hypocrites saying: "*This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men*" (Matt 15:8-9). Jesus KNEW that if they truly loved Him then their actions proving so would follow. But what happened? Their heart was not set on following Jesus but after the commandments of men. Does this sound familiar? Many today say

they "LOVE" Jesus, yet do not do as He says, but will follow the doctrines and commandments of men!

"If ye love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15). This is especially important to understand in view of the fact that Jesus also said: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Matt 7:21). Many precious souls are going to be lost because they did not OBEY the commandments of Jesus. The apostle Paul addressed this in his second Thessalonian letter when he stated: "In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;" (2 Thes 1:8-9). It would sure seem to me that when one says that they "love" Jesus then they would WANT to do everything that Jesus asks them to do. Our eternal destiny depends on what we DO with our life while we live on this earth.

In John 15:10 Jesus said: *"If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love."* The only way that we can abide in Christ is to do what He has asked of us. Do you really "love" Jesus Christ? If so, then you will obey Him, knowing that it is only through Him that you will receive eternal salvation (Heb 5:9). If you have not obeyed Jesus' command to be baptized (John 3:5), then you must ask yourself "Do I really love Jesus?" Remember, love is demonstrated through ACTION of obedience.

<http://www.jamestowncoc.com/media/articles/if-we-love-we-will-obey>

"I Don't Want To Grow Up"

Jimmy Michaels

Sylvia and I were watching America's Funnies Videos one night a few months ago. They had two young boys, about five or six years of age, being interviewed by one whom I believe was a teacher. They were each asked what they wanted to be when they grew up. One of the little boys thought for just a few seconds, and then he said, "I don't want to grow up." This was a very cute and funny video that we both laughed about. Yet, the more I have thought about this, the more I think it really and truly expresses the attitude manifested by many Christians today. They don't want to grow up spiritually. It seems they wish to remain babes in Christ. Certainly, they would not express such with words, but their actions or lack of is a clear indication of such a desire.

Do you study your Bible? If not, it is an indication that you don't want to grow up. How much time each week do you spend reading and meditating upon the word of God? Paul told

the young evangelist Timothy to spend time reading, studying, and meditating on the Scriptures (1 Timothy 4:13,15; 2 Timothy 2:15). Listen to the Psalmist's description of the law of the Lord, *"More to be desired are they than gold, Yea, than much fine gold; Sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb"* (Psalm 19:10). If you want to grow and be strong in the Lord, study and meditation is an absolute necessity (Psalm 1:2; Acts 20:32).

Do you attend Bible class? Is your absence a sign that you don't want to grow anymore? Surely you would not contend that you already know it all, and there forth, there is no need to attend. It would be wonderful if every local church was filled with people like Cornelius. Notice what Luke recorded in Acts about this man. *"So I sent to you immediately, and you have done well to come. Now therefore, **we are all present** before God, **to hear all the things** commanded you by God"* (Acts 10:33). Even some of those who are present, do not study and prepare their lessons. In Romans 12:11, the writer says, *"not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord."* Do you think if all followed these instructions given by the apostle, more would attend Bibles classes and more would be prepared when they attended? I think so! Want to grow? Why not come to class prepared to study?

Do you attend gospel meetings? These meetings provide opportunities for members to sit at the feet of men who have studied and prepared lessons that will instruct, encourage and even rebuke those that will come and listen. When Paul and Barnabas had completed their first preaching trip into Asia Minor (Turkey), they return to Antioch of Syria. The church there was gathered and these men reported what had happened while they were away preaching. *"Now when they had come and gathered the church together, they reported all that God had done with them, and that He had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles"* (Acts 14:27). Do you think the church at Antioch was eager to gather and hear what these two men had to say about the Lord's work? How God had worked through them, opening the door of faith so that the Gentiles could be saved. When these things were reported to this church, not only were they made aware of what God did through these men, they were also being taught that grand scheme of redemption the Lord planned for all men. There seems to be a great lack of excitement and enthusiasm among the people of God to come together and hear good sound gospel preaching and teaching. Some do not want to grow up.

Do you want to grow up? Peter said, *"as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby"* (1 Peter 2:2). There is a difference between the young boy in the funny video and the Christian who does not want to grow. If this child continues to eat and exercise he will grow, whether he wants to or not. He will grow up. The Christian, by their actions, who do want to grow will not. They will die lost, not for a lack of food, but because they have no appetite (Matthew 5:6).