

The Reminder

The weekly newsletter of the church of Christ in Bellaire, TX

“A Look At Easter”

Today millions of people around the world celebrate Christ's resurrection from the dead, by observing the holiday called “Easter”

The word “Easter” comes from “Eastre” the Anglo-Saxon name of “Ostara,” the pagan Teutonic goddess of Spring and fertility. As the rabbit was sacred to this goddess, it appears there was a custom among ancient Egyptians and Romans to give eggs as presents at this time of the year. This practice was carried out to insure that the recipient would have a fertile and productive year.

Many of the customs associated with Easter illustrate this and other pagan connections. The yearly observance soon included Palm Sunday, Ash Wednesday and Lent. Assimilation of this pagan practice into “Christian” observances became quite common. The egg, was simply borrowed as a symbol of the Christian holiday. Some were dyed red to represent Christ's shed blood.

The word “Easter,” is found only once in the King James Bible in Acts 12:4 KJV, and is a mistranslation. The Greek word translated Easter is “pascha” and is correctly rendered “passover” in later translations (cf. Acts 12:4 ESV; Acts 12:4; Acts 12:4 NASB). It is obvious that the King James translators used this term in a passage where the context clearly shows that a Christian holiday is not being discussed at all, but the killing of James, the brother of John by Herod (Acts 12:1-2).

The practice of a yearly observance of Easter began early in the form of a so-called “Christian” Passover. Many Jews continued to keep their Jewish customs and religious holidays after their conversion to Christ. Even Paul was not adverse to observing Jewish customs when expedient (Acts 18:18-21), but his teaching indicates they were to be kept on an individual basis (Romans 14:5-6) and should not be bound on others (Gal. 2:3-5). Paul condemns observing certain days set aside by man in a religious sense (Gal. 4:8-11), and yet, shortly after the death of the apostles, some of the Jewish festivals began to be observed as Christian festivals. Easter was officially recognized by a church sliding into apostasy in A.D. 325 at the Council of Nicea.

The Bible is **silent** regarding any “yearly” observance of Christ's resurrection, and thus “Easter” is **based upon human tradition** — not God's Word (Mark 7:1-13). Traditions of men are wrong when **(1)** they become matters of doctrine (Mark 7:6-8); **(2)** when a practice is bound upon all (Matthew 23:3-4), or **(3)** when they displace the commands of God by the keeping of the tradition (Mark 7:9-13).

Our Lord instituted His Supper as the proper memorial to commemorate His death (Matthew 26:26-29; Luke 22:14-20; 1 Corinthians 11:23-36). Both biblical and historical evidence indicate that this was a **weekly observance** (Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:2) — **not** a yearly one.

Mike Riley- El Paso church of Christ

SUNDAY
APRIL 5, 2015

BELLAIRE

church of Christ

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Schedule of Services

SUNDAY:

9:30 AM Worship

11:00 AM Bible Study

5:00 PM Worship

WEDNESDAY:

7:30 PM Bible Study



“God Is Not Useful”

Morning Lesson

“What DID David Mean?”

Jack Smith

Evening Lesson

Singing

News and Notes:

Continue praying for those of our number who have on-going health issues. Deb Haley, Janice Kimbrough, Jan Cooper, Curby Stech, Laura Claburn and Don Hurd.

I guess the big news today is the number we have out of town. Quite a few are gone over the holiday weekend. Hope travel is safe and everyone enjoys their trip.

Not much "new" on the health front. The Knapps grandson in Dallas did have surgery a week or so ago. All went well. There will be more to follow, but good for now. Also continue to remember all those with serious ailments. And count your blessings for good health and good medical facilities.

Anna Meikle has gone to West Virginia for a while. She has a house there. I'm trying to find out if it's just a vacation trip or if she has moved home. I'll post more when I find out.

Congratulations to Mike Pharris on his retirement from AT&T.

The third commandment says, "You shall not make for yourselves a carved image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above or that is in the earth beneath..." This prohibition against idolatry is too often limited to worship of physical objects. Idolatry isn't just elevating created things as gods, but also devaluing God as merely a created thing. Augustine defined it this way, "Idolatry is worshipping anything that ought to be used, or using anything that is meant to be worshipped."

Sadly many religious people view God as merely a device to be used - a tool to achieve their dreams and desires. They see Him as an idol to employ, and therefore their worship is transactional. They honor Him merely for what they hope to receive in return.

Unlike idolatry that is fueled by superstition, divination and fear; true faith does not worship God with a utilitarian goal in mind. It is never transactional. It is not useful. Worship is an impractical and beautiful act of adoration that flows from a heart transfixed by the beauty of God. True worship never seeks to use God, it's only goal IS God. As David confessed: "One thing have I asked of the Lord, that will I seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord."

author unknown

ASSIGNMENTS

MORNING SERVICE

Announcements - M. Pharris
Hymn Director - R. McDonald
Scripture Reader - T. Walker

John 15:13-14

Opening Prayer - J. Knapp

Closing Prayer - M. Pharris

EVENING SERVICE

Hymn Director - L. Williams

Opening Prayer - Z. Kelsey

Closing Prayer - M. Pharris

EVANGELIST

Jack Smith

Steve Garrett

ELDERS

Mark Mann

Matt Miles

Mike Pharris

Jack Smith

DEACONS

Scott Clanton

David Davila

Dan Kimbrough

Jesse Knapp

Alex Morolez

Gregory Williams

BIBLE CLASSES

- World Religions
- John and Romans
- Graded Classes for Children