

He is Risen

Easter is a declaration of life after death. A life more real & never ending. Recently I read that 67% of Americans view Easter as a religious holiday but only 42% view it as a celebration of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Also that Americans spend \$2.1 billion annually on Easter candy, which amounts to 120 million pounds of sweets, including 90 million chocolate Easter bunnies.

But the real reason to celebrate Easter; is Jesus Christ died for our sins according to the scripture, was raised from the dead on the third day and is coming back to take believers to be w/ Him for all eternity. Why not this Easter season commit or recommit your life to Him as Lord and savior.

When world conqueror Alex the Great saw his friend & philosopher Diogenes in a field studiously looking at a pile of bones, he asked what he was looking for? Diogenes said 'I'm searching for the bones of your father Phillip the Great but I can't distinguish them from the bones of his slaves.'

Death is the great divide this life & the next also the great equalizer. On a **gravestone in England** *'Pause stranger, when you pass me by, as you are now, so once was I. As I am now, so you shall be, so prepare for death and follow me.* Scribbled in chalk underneath: *'To follow you is not my intent until I know which way you went.'*

Heavens message for you & me this Easter is **Jesus**: death, burial & resurrection. Prior to His crucifixion & resurrection He declared & proved He has authority over death & the grave.

Jn 5:25 Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear shall live.

Day of Jesus resurrection Matt 27:52-53 and the tombs were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; and coming out of the tombs after His resurrection they entered the holy city and appeared to many.

Jesus set the stage for this event after His friend Lazarus died. ***Jn 11 'Why did you not come when we called....your brother shall live again...I am the resurrection and the life he who believes in Me shall live even if he dies and everyone who lives and believes in Me shall never die...do you believe this?'***

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The question divides us between those w/ hope & those who have no hope. Ours is a living hope.... ***1Pet 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead***

Jesus told them to *remove the stone...by now he stinks (4 days)...I say if you believe you shall see the glory of God. Lazarus come forth...Unbind him.*

Jesus said *'he who has ears to hear let him hear...My sheep hear my voice and follow me...'* ***"I don't want Pastor Bill in here"***. My prayer is you hear God's voice & make a decision to follow Him. Heavens message for us this Easter is Jesus..Died on cross for sin-Buried in tomb-Risen from the dead 3rd day

God has a divine purpose for you—only know what & why when come to Him.

All he ever wanted in life was more. He wanted more money, so he turned inherited wealth into a billion dollar pile of assets. He wanted more fame, so he broke into the Hollywood scene & soon became a filmmaker & star. He wanted more sensual pleasures, so he paid handsome sums to indulge his every sexual urge. He wanted more thrills, so he designed, built & piloted the fastest aircraft in the world. He wanted more power, so he secretly dealt political favors so skillfully that two US presidents became his pawns. All he ever wanted was more. He was absolutely convinced that more would bring him true satisfaction. But, history tells a different story. How did this man who seemingly had it all according to the world's standards, finish his life? Emaciated; colorless; w/ sunken chest; fingernails inches long in grotesque corkscrews; rotting, black teeth; tumors; innumerable needle marks from his drug addiction. Howard Hughes died a billionaire junkie, insane by all reasonable standards, believing the myth that life consist in having more.

But some give up believing life is futile, only existing, hopeless & w/o purpose. But nothing is further from the truth. **[We created in image of God to know God](#)**

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Others look for instant happiness & fulfillment by using some product, having a certain look w/ latest clothes, hair, make-up, body shape. If I just had this image then I'd be happy. We'd all like to have instant success, happiness, body beautiful.

An old farmer brought his family to the big city for the first time. They'd never seen buildings so tall or sights so impressive. The farmer dropped his wife off at the department store and took his son w/ him to the bank. It was the tallest of all the buildings. As they walked into the lobby they saw something they'd never seen before, an elevator. To them it was remarkable. Two steel doors opened, a rather large and elderly woman walked in & the doors closed behind her. The lighted numbers above the doors flashed to the right, stopped, then flashed back to the left again. This time when the door opened a beautiful young lady came walking out. The farmer wide-eyed was amazed & turned to his son & said wait right here, I'm gonna go get your mother & run her thru that contraption.

Instant change will come *'Behold I tell you a mystery we shall not all sleep but we shall all be changed. In a moment in the twinkling of an eye at the last trumpet for the trumpet will sound and the dead will be raised imperishable and we shall be changed. 1 Cor 15:51,52*

To live life & ignore Easter & the resurrection is to live in a never ending search for meaning & purpose **or** resigned simply to exist---waiting to die.

God made you, loves you, Bible His love letter to you & He has a custom designed plan for your life. Jesus said *I've come to give life & that more abundant*. A supernatural empowered life....Gods life in our life

Jesus speaks of His death and resurrection...*If I go away I will come again...I will not leave you as orphans...It is to your advantage that I go away for if I do not go the Helper shall not come to you but if I go I will send Him to you. But when He, the Spirit of truth comes He will guide you into all truth for He will not speak on His own initiative but whatever He hears, He will speak & He will disclose to you what is to come. Jn 16:7—*

Jesus arrested in Gethsemane, He endured six trials. **Illegal** for Sanhedrin to meet at night—but they did. If a man condemned needed to wait two days to reflect—but they didn't. **Trials:** 1 Annas; 2 Ciaphas; 3 Sanhedrin; 4 Pilate; 5 Herod; 6 Pilate. **3 Jewish, religious trials, 3 Roman, political trials.**

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Jesus delivered up out of **jealousy**. Jews had no right of crucifixion so intimidated Pilate to do dirty work. False witnesses contradicting. Finally ***'He destroy temple and raise in 3 days'***. Pilate a weak leader, ***'everyone of truth hears Me....what is truth?...***Wife a dream ***'have nothing to do w/ this righteous man'***... **Politically expedient**--fearing Jews, bad report in Rome...wanting to keep his job...tries squirm out of doing right...Custom to release... Barabbas or Jesus?.....Chief priest stir crowd...B...what do w/ J...crucify

Scourges ***'Is 53:5 But He was pierced thru for our transgressions He was crushed for our iniquities the chastening for our well being fell upon Him & by His stripes we are healed'***.

Flagrum short sturdy handle, long leather thongs, sharp bone, lead woven in—bruises, cuts skin, ***deeper subcutaneous tissue, oozing blood from capillaries and veins, finally spurting arterial bleeding from vessels in underlying muscles—til back torn open w/ skin hanging in long ribbons until unrecognizable mass of torn bleeding tissue. AMJ***

Centurion monitor soldiers blows to determine how close to death for maximum suffering ***Is 52:14 Just as many were astonished at you, so His appearance was marred more than any man & His form more than the sons of men***

Crown of thorns, scarlet robe – ***Ps 22:6 I am a worm and not a man a reproach of men and despise by the people. Is 53:5 He was crushed for our sins. Towla*** worm-crushed crimson liquid to die royal robes. Blindfold, beat, spit upon.

Then marched to be crucified. **Cicero** Roman philosopher 106 BC—***'The most cruel and hideous of tortures'***. Carried crossbeam Pa tibu lum 125 lbs or whole 300 lbs – slow death for max suffering. At Golgotha heavy uprights anchored—wine w/ myrrh a narcotic, Jesus refused.

Thrown ground on back, arms out, nailed to pa tibu lum w/ 7” iron spikes sq shaft, driven wrists, wooden forks either side w/ 2 soldiers hoisting victim to upright post, feet nailed.

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Taunting began, dividing, gambling for garments ***Ps 22:18 They divide my garments among them and for my clothing they cast lots.*** 9 am – 3 pm Forgive, Mother, Paradise, Eli (noon/dark), Thirst, finished, Commit spirit—**Veil torn**, hardened soldier praising God S of G.

Place of crucifixion a garden w/ new tomb—Joseph of A to Pilate & Nico pull nails, in tomb, stone rolled, Roman seal, 16 guards. 1st day week women to tomb w/ spices, earthquake—guards like dead men—stone rolled not let Jesus out but disciples & skeptics in.

Angel ***'why seek living among dead He is risen as He said go tell disciples'*** Ran fear & great joy....Disciples said nonsense....Strongest evidence they not predisposed to believe—not power of suggestion—but empirical evidence—appeared 11 times for 40 days—500 at one time.

First appearance to Mary Magdalene—7 demons God's love demonstrated to what others might deem hopeless—God forgiveness extends to down & outer & up & outers. He draws us by His kindness

A wealthy Hindu boarded a ship at Bombay loaded down w/ chains; he could only move about w/ the help of servants & could never know peace or comfort. Squatting on deck in the midst of chains, he explained that while still a young man, he had vowed to put on a link of chain for every sin he committed; he was now helpless under the burden of 600 lbs of chain.

God's forgiveness frees us from chains of sin, burden of guilt, shame & condemnation. ***To whom the son sets free they are free indeed.*** This morning trade sin for salvation – old life for new – life of existing-waiting to die **for** the abundant life Christ offers. Must humble, repent—**look up to Jesus**

There is a life-sized granite sculpture of Jesus by a Danish artist named **Thorvaldsen** sculpted the body of Christ in such a way that you can't see His face from a standing position. Next to the statue is a sign that reads, "If you want to see the face of Jesus, you must sit at His feet." Sure enough, if you get down at the foot of the statue, you can look up & clearly see the face of Jesus