

What is so good about Good Friday?



His Life

Jesus Christ, who is fully God, left His throne in Heaven to be born as a human baby.

At 30 years old He began His ministry. He revealed God, cured those who were lame, paralyzed, blind, and deaf. He raised some from the dead and fed thousands on a few scraps of food.

But rather than adoration and gratitude He was refused adequate quarters at birth, hunted as a newborn, anonymous throughout His childhood, vilified as a fraud, accused of being aligned with demons, rejected by His family and friends, denied, mocked, spit upon, and tried as a criminal. Finally, he was scourged with a whip, spikes hammered into His hands, and ultimately crucified on a cross.

But after three days Jesus rose from the dead fully alive and forty days later He ascended back into Heaven.

The Reason

Jesus did not have to endure that terrible suffering. As God He could have done whatever He wanted. So then why did He choose to suffer?

An indisputable truth is that all of us—from presidents to priests; from the rich to the wretched—have committed a crime against God. Every country has laws and when someone is caught committing a crime he must be punished. God, too, has laws and when one of those laws is broken then we, too, must be punished.

We break God's laws every time we lie, steal, lust, envy, become drunk, are angry, bitter, or unforgiving. Anything that we do wrong, no matter how small, is disobeying God.

Another way of breaking God's laws is to not do what we should. Do we help the opposed, read our Bibles every day, pray regularly, and attend church faithfully?

Breaking God's law is called sin. Society and culture may change but God does not, and what was true 2,000 years ago in Romans 2:5-6 is still true today, "But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who will render to each person according to his deeds." Justice requires that we be punished for each and every sin.

But how is that punishment determined? Can we say a few prayers and be done with it? Can we be a little better next week and breathe easier? Punishment is determined not just by the degree of the crime but by the object against which it is committed. If we smash a rock we generally suffer nothing. If we kill a man we go to jail because a man is more valuable than a rock. But if we disobey God, who is of

infinite value, then our punishment is likewise infinite. If I kill a man the judge will not be impressed by me proclaiming, "But look at all of the people that I haven't killed!" Justice is still required for that one crime. Likewise a good life does not balance out even one sin. We each deserve infinite punishment, but since none of us are of infinite value we must pay with infinite time. That is why Hell is eternal.

When Jesus, as infinite God, died on the cross He paid for every sin of every person. 2 Corinthians 5:21 says, "He made Him who knew no sin to be on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." Good Friday is good because Jesus' death allows that we might be completely forgiven of all of our sins.

What is Easter?



His Resurrection

On Easter Sunday Christians celebrate the resurrection of Jesus. But is the resurrection a story made up by the Apostles to valid their new religion?

First consider that eleven of the twelve Apostles were killed for their faith. Simon Peter, Andrew, James and Simon were crucified. James was beheaded. Bartholomew was flayed to death. Would so

many people die for what they knew was a lie?

Second, over 500 people saw the risen Christ and several touched Him. He cooked food and spoke to many.

Third, non-Biblical writings give evidence to the resurrection. Flavius Josephus who lived in the first century and was perhaps the greatest Jewish historian ever (and who was not a Christian) wrote, "Now there was about this time Jesus, a wise man, if it be lawful to call him a man; for he was a doer of wonderful works, a teacher of such men as receive the truth with pleasure. He drew over to him both many of the Jews and many of the Gentiles. He was [the] Christ. And when Pilate, at the suggestion of the principal men amongst us, had condemned him to the cross, those that loved him at the first did not forsake him; for he appeared to them alive again the third day; as the divine prophets had foretold these and ten thousand other wonderful things concerning him. And the tribe of Christians, so named from him, are not extinct at this day." (Jewish Antiquities 18,3,3).

Tacitus, an early Roman historian, also writes of Jesus.

What does this mean to us?

Because Jesus Christ died on the cross we can be forgiven of our sins.

Because Jesus Christ rose from the dead He conquered death for us.

There is a community of Christians ready to offer support, encouragement, and friendship.

Our lives can have eternal hope and meaning.

What is our response?

God gives us a promise in Romans 10:9, "That if you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved." Though Jesus made full payment for our sins we must personally believe in and accept that payment.

Salvation (being born-again) means that you believe that Jesus Christ is God, that He died for our sins, and that He rose from the dead and that you make Him Lord and Savior of your life.

Then Easter will be much more than chocolate and bunnies; it will mean a personal relationship with a living God.

If you would like more information then please contact us.

**Jesus was
tortured and murdered.
So why do we call it
Good Friday?**



What is sin and why did someone have to pay for someone else's sins?

Why should I believe in the resurrection of Jesus Christ?

What does any of this have to do with me?