

He is Risen. He IS Risen Indeed!

By Kevin FitzPatrick

I tend to think that Christians have lost sight of the true meaning of this phrase. In fact, I will go so far as to say that there are many who are reading this document who has never heard this phrase before!

As Christians, we have many responsibilities that are required of us, commands if you please, that Christ left for us to follow and more importantly, obey, until He comes again or we go and reside with Him in Heaven for all eternity.

One of these commands is to remember Him. CORINTHIANS 11:26 states "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come." This does not mean we simply remember or think about who Christ is and then start skimming thru the Bible stories that we are familiar with. But we are to remember and think about what Christ did for us on the cross. Can you picture the suffering that He went through?

Have you ever done a study on what exactly takes place during a crucifixion? Or even a scourging? With all the issues people have had with the movie, The Passion, the one thing that it portrays very well is the absolute cruelty of this process. These so called punishments that were inflicted on the condemned were meant to be a warning to all those around of what might be awaiting them if they cross the line with the Romans. To put it simply, it is a horrible way to die.

The Romans were very good at making this process as painful as possible. This was to act as a deterrent for anyone who might get have ideas about rebelling against Roman laws or the stability of the Roman occupation.

Although not many ever survived the 'process', it was still a very long and tiring ordeal. It was not only tiring for the victim being put to death; it was difficult and tiring for the Roman guards. Sounds sort of funny, does it not? So the Roman solders inflicted as much pain and suffering on the victim as possible before the actual crucifixion. The goal in most cases was to kill the person before they ever got to the cross.

When you look at scripture it tells us that He was beaten and whipped to the point where He no longer resembled a human being. ISAIAH 52:14 reminds us that "As many were astonied at thee; his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men:"

I simply cannot imagine what He went through. Imagine the physical shape that Christ was in, in order to endure this type of abuse?

As I ponder these thoughts, the one thing that brings tears to my eyes, is that while Jesus was enduring all this, the beatings, the scourging and finally the crucifixion, is that He could have stopped the whole thing. But He did not however because of ME! That is

how much He loved me and how much He loves you!! That is how much He wants you and me to be with Him in eternity!

Praise the Lord that He is a personal God. He thinks about me! And I am embarrassed to say that He thinks about me more than I think about Him. He did all He did for me! For you!

But all this would be for not if Christ did not rise from the grave on the third day. On my Resurrection Day sermon, I talked about the different theories that exist about how Jesus could have 'come back to life'. These range from Him not being actually dead, but in a sort of a comma. Then with the coolness of the tomb and the quick preparation of the body for burial actually acted as a healing agent and revived Him from His sleep. People even choose to believe the ridiculous thought that Jesus is still in the tomb to this day.

In having so many documented witnesses as scripture states that there were, and yet people still do not believe. Funny how in today's world, having two or three eye witnesses is enough to condemn a person to life in prison, yet having over 500 witnesses to Christ's resurrection is simply hearsay. Go figure!

I guess it all comes down to the simple fact that either Christ is Lord over you or He is not. A lot of people will tell you that they have accepted Christ as their personal savior, yet in the same breath take the Lord's name in vain three different ways in the very next sentence. There are going to be a lot of surprised people when they meet Christ!

All that matters is Christ! We are nothing and we have to learn that we must put our desires away and more importantly our pride in order to make sure that Jesus Christ gets all the honor and glory that he deserves. I TIMOTHY 1:17 says "Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, [be] honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen." We mean nothing. Our reputation means nothing if in the process we damage God's!

We are slaves to Christ, our risen Lord. And as slaves we have no rights to even ourselves. We need to freely give them up in order to serve Christ to our fullest. This is by no means an easy act and, at least for me, requires a conscious, continuous effort. Pride always gets in the way, and Satan will always make sure that we second guess ourselves.

So remember Christ and all He did on the cross. He did it all for you. And the next time you hear someone say, "Christ is Risen", you can safely and with confidence reply, "Christ IS Risen Indeed".