

Trends

"The History and Origins of Easter. Easter, which celebrates the resurrection from the dead of Jesus Christ, is a holiday actually based on an ancient Pagan ritual. ... The exact origins of Easter are unknown, but some sources believe that the word "Easter" is taken from the Teutonic goddess of fertility and spring – Eostre ..."

via Google

Luke 6:46: "But why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord' and do not the things which I say."

Sentence Sermons

"I still believe in Santa, the Easter Bunny, the Tooth Fairy and true love. Don't even try to tell me different."

—Dolly Parton

Matthew 15:8-9: "These people draw near to Me with their mouth, And honor Me with their lips, But their heart is far from Me. 9 And in vain they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men."

News & Notes

Pray that the excellent preaching we experienced at our recent gospel meeting continues to influence all of us for good! We extend our sincerest thanks to Stacy Crim for his excellent preaching!

Please pray for Zachary Wallace. He is not faithfully attending services as he should (Heb. 10:24-25). "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." (Jas. 5:16)

Please keep sister Wilma Cardwell in your prayers. She is an encouragement to all of us!

Pray for all our members who do not attend regularly. Try to encourage them!

Pray for all the lost souls, especially those in the greater Bloomington area. Pray that Westside might be an influence for good in this community.

Pray for the all of our students: elementary, secondary and college. Our young people face many trials and temptations at school.

There are many needy saints, including preachers! Can you help?! Let me know.

Please let us know of any in need of our prayers! We'll announce it and post it.

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Editor: Craig Thomas (812-320-9569); craigthomas82000@gmail.com

Please direct questions and comments to the editor.

Words of Life

Westside
church of Christ

"Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life."

John 6:68



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Easter: "From heaven or from men?"

Matthew 21:23-27 records a challenge to Jesus' authority by the chief priests. Jesus turns the tables on them establishing a vital truth concerning religious authority: Is it "From heaven or from men?" These are the only two choices: Will we teach and practice what God revealed or what man invents? Today, April 21, 2019, millions will observe a religious holiday man calls "Easter". Is "Easter" of heaven or of men? Let's consider what we learn about "Easter" by reading God's word the Bible.

1) **"Easter" is not in the Bible.** Anyone who reads the Bible accepting it as a divine guide and the only rule of faith and practice would never know that April 21, 2019 is "Easter." By following the Bible alone one cannot learn even one thing about "Easter." "Easter," as celebrated by Catholics or Protestants, is unknown to the New Testament (NT). No annual day to celebrate the Lord's resurrection is found in the NT. But the NT does specify a day to remember the Lord's death (1 Cor. 11:23-26; Acts 20:7). So, is "Easter" of heaven or of men?

2) **But, "Easter" is mentioned in the King James Bible.** True, in the King James translation of the Bible, Acts 12:4 reads: "And when he had apprehended him, he put him in prison, and delivered him to four quaternions of soldiers to keep him; intending after Easter to bring him forth to the people." The word the King James translators chose to translate "Easter" is the Greek word *pascha*.

The word *pascha* appears 29 times in the Greek text of the New Testament. In every other occurrence the King James translators properly translated it into the English word *passover*. Hence, *pascha* is mistranslated in Acts 12:4 by the King James translators. Every other well-recognized translation (e.g., American Standard, New King James, New International, New American Standard) properly translates *pascha* in Acts 12:4 as *passover*. So, is "Easter" of heaven or of men?

"If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God."

1 Peter 4:11

3) **No “Easter” services in the Bible.** Great pomp and pageantry will be staged on April 21st. But, none of it will be patterned after what is found in the NT. Despite the fact God requires all to “worship

“And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.”

Colossians 3:17

in spirit and truth” (Jn. 4:24), according to the same rule (1 Cor. 1:10; 4:17; Phil. 3:16-17), and in conformity with NT teaching (Matt. 28:20; Jn. 16:13; Eph. 3:1-5; 2 Tim. 1:13); no church today can worship and celebrate “Easter” according to the inspired NT

pattern, for no such inspired NT pattern exists for “Easter.” So, is “Easter” of heaven or of men?

4) **The Bible does not reveal “Easter’s” time.** Why April 21st? Men can calculate the date on which Easter will fall for any given year. To which Bible passage do they turn that reveals this information? (cf. 1 Pet. 4:11; Isa. 8:20) None! It can only be learned from human tradition (Matt. 15:8-9). So, is “Easter” of heaven or of men?

5) **The Bible does not reveal “Easter’s” purpose.** Why do men and churches celebrate Easter? What is “Easter’s” stated purpose in the Bible? Since the Bible is our only authority in religion (1 Pet. 4:11), and we

“Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son.”

2 John 9

are to observe only those things commanded by the risen Savior (Matt. 28:20; Col. 3:17; 2 Jn. 9), what passages of Scripture tell us the purposes and promises of celebrating

“Easter”? So, is “Easter” of heaven or of men?

We expect many to disagree, disapprove and denounce this article. However, “if any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God” (1 Pet. 4:11; Prov. 30:6). The Bible is silent about the observance of “Easter.” “Easter” is entirely an invention of man. Let us submit ourselves only to what God revealed and not make our worship “vain” by “teaching as doctrines the commandments of men” (Mk. 7:7). “Whatever I command you, be careful to observe it; you shall not add to it nor take away from it.”

Deuteronomy 12:32

“Whatever I command you, be careful to observe it; you shall not add to it nor take away from it.”

“Easter” is entirely an invention of man. Let us submit ourselves only to what God revealed and not make our worship “vain” by “teaching as doctrines the commandments of men” (Mk. 7:7). “Whatever I command you, be careful to observe it; you shall not add to it nor take away from it.” (Deut. 12:32) Let us worship and serve God according to His word and remember that “If [we] do not speak according to this word, it is because there is no light in [us].” (Isa. 8:20) Do you follow heaven or men? (Gal. 1:10) Is

there light in you? Come, join with us in returning to the Bible alone!

Easter Sunday!

Larry Hafley

Plays, parades, and pageants will be the order of this day, Easter Sunday. Easter egg hunts, an innocent amusement in the home, will be part of many religious services. Sadly, even some churches of Christ will succumb to the allure of this vain world’s empty traditions and celebrate Easter “like the denominations round about us” (Cf. 1 Sam. 8:5, 20).

What is terribly ironic is that our brethren who are so quick to criticize “our traditions” (weekly Lord’s supper, weekly giving, singing), readily adapt and adopt traditions of men, such as Easter! In other words, they berate and belittle us for “binding” the Lord’s supper “upon the first day of the week” (Acts 20:7). They contend that it was invented by “our fellowship” to exclude “other Christian fellowships” (Baptists, Methodists, etc.). So, they deride an apostolic practice-- the breaking of bread “upon the first day of the week”--as an unworthy tradition, while they participate in the trappings of the Catholic tradition of Easter! Amazing irony!

Beneath beautiful bonnets, innocent little boys and girls will bask in the sunshine of adoring parental smiles as they celebrate “this holy day of resurrection,” Easter Sunday. Services will be at once solemn and entertaining. Tears, smiles, even smatterings of applause, will burst and beam forth. Stage hands and coordinators will have their hands full making sure that it all comes off in a reverent but “fun” manner.”

All these things, and more, will be done, and they will all be done without the authority of Christ (Matt. 28:20; Lk. 6:46; Col. 3:17). They will be done, and articles like this will be reviled (not answered, but resented, for they cannot be answered). Again, though, catch the awful irony! The traditions mentioned above, borrowed from denominational religion (and they are borrowed, for they are not original with our erring brethren), are extolled and indulged in while the ordinances of God are spurned and disdained with impunity and impertinence! It is a deadly, dangerous game they are playing (Matt. 7:21-27; 15:8, 9, 14; 28:20; 2 Jn. 9).

Brethren, are we better than they? In no wise. We are all bound under Christ, unto Christ, in Christ. There is no worship, no true worship, without its being prescribed of God (Matt. 21:23; Jn. 4:24; Acts 17:23). As was true 3,000 years ago, so it is still true that “it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps” (Jer. 10:23). Let us, therefore, “hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man” (Eccl. 12:13). Remember that as you show his death, in his appointed way, this Lord’s day (1 Cor. 11:26).