

- C) The cost for salvation in the life of the receiver is faith which leads to repentance from sins and new life (2nd Peter 3:9). This is God's will, that we repent & follow Him!

- D) This is the message of Jesus Christ, that He has come to establish a "New Day" in our lives EVERY DAY (Romans 6:4). The story doesn't end at Easter! It is just the beginning!

- E) How will you respond to Jesus Christ? What will you do with the truth of His life, death, and resurrection? Will you respond to His promise of a better future, His payment for sin, His fantastic resurrection, and His plan for life which never ends (Romans 6:23)?

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If I were to ask you to describe Easter without words, only using punctuation marks, which punctuation marks would you choose to describe Easter for yourself? Maybe this Easter is a comma for you. It makes you stop, pause, think, and listen, but that's about it. Perhaps today is a downer -- a big bold period. You thought you'd feel excited, but instead it seems to be more like empty ritual. You feel like you're not on the inside, but on the outside... an onlooker.

It was a day when life felt like a period for Jesus' disciples. He was dead. He was buried. An end to expectations. But wait -- news of an empty tomb... the period is no longer a period, it's a question mark. That's worse than a period! Now they're beginning to doubt. Where is He? They're perplexed. The guards are gone, the stone is rolled away. He is not there. And if not there, then where?

An angel speaks, "Why do you seek the living One amongst the dead? He is not here, but He is risen. Remember how He spoke to you while He was in Galilee, saying that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and how He must be crucified, and the third day He must rise again?" Of course they remembered! The periods are gone. The questions marks are removed. There is one massive exclamation point!

*That's what Easter is all about... an exclamation of gratitude and of praise for the resurrection of Jesus Christ and for the salvation His victory over death brought to us.
(Joe LoMusio, **If I Should Die Before I Live**)*

A New Day

Long Beach Alliance Church • Easter Sunday • April 8th, 2007 • Pastor Chris Lankford

**...LET US RUN WITH ENDURANCE THE RACE THAT IS SET BEFORE US, FIXING OUR EYES ON JESUS, THE AUTHOR AND PERFECTER OF FAITH, WHO FOR THE JOY SET BEFORE HIM ENDURED THE CROSS, DESPISING THE SHAME, AND HAS SAT DOWN AT THE RIGHT HAND OF THE THRONE OF GOD. FOR CONSIDER HIM WHO HAS ENDURED SUCH HOSTILITY BY SINNERS AGAINST HIMSELF, SO THAT YOU WILL NOT GROW WEARY AND LOSE HEART.
~HEBREWS 12:1 B-3 (NASB)**

1) Promise Of A Better Future

- A) From ancient days, the hope of Israel was that God would come and relieve His chosen people of their oppression (Isaiah 40:9-11).

- B) The 'Triumphal Entry' (Matthew 21:1-11) was the exuberant celebration and attempted inauguration of Jesus Christ as the 'Promised One' (Isaiah 61:1) who had come to save Israel (Hosanna!) from oppression (Psalm 118:25-26).

- C) However, Israel had largely forgotten that it was their sin and rebellion which had caused their oppression (Romans 3:23).

- D) Israel had become intoxicated with the signs related to the arrival of a powerful King (Mark 13:4). They wanted the cure, without diagnosing the disease.

- E) Jesus did not come to provide Heaven alone, but came to provide a cure for sin (John 10:9-11). This is the message of the Triumphal Entry, that Jesus is the promise for a better future! However, this promise doesn't come without a cost.

2) The Cost Of The Cure For The Giver

- A) From the beginning, the cost for sin has been death (Genesis 2:17; cf. Romans 6:23). God established that the life-blood of sacrifice was necessary for the forgiveness of sins (Leviticus 4:4; cf. Hebrews 9:22).

- B) From the beginning, God had a plan for releasing mankind from the death-grip of sin (Genesis 3:15; Isaiah 53:12) which would be accomplished through the sacrifice of His Son, Jesus Christ (Ephesians 1:7).

- C) The cost of sin is death, and the payment for sin (the sacrifice) was provided in Jesus Christ (Matthew 26:28). This is the message of Good Friday, that the payment for sin has been made!

3) The Assurance Of "Full Payment" Made

- A) Christ's payment for sin is fine, but did God accept His payment? This is the real question! Did His death "work?"

- B) The resounding answer from Scripture is YES! Jesus' sacrifice for sin was accepted by God! How do we know this? We know that Christ's sacrifice was good and acceptable because He was resurrected (brought back to life) by God (1st Corinthians 15:17, 20-22).

- C) Jesus' death paid for sin (once and for all, cf. Hebrews 10:12, 14, 18), and His resurrection seals that His sacrifice was sufficient and good (1st Corinthians 15:56-57).

- D) This is the message of Easter Sunday, that complete payment for the sins of many has been made and that Jesus is not dead, but alive! He is Risen! He is Risen INDEED!

4) The Cost Of The Cure For The Receiver

- A) From the beginning, God had a plan for saving people from sin's death-grip (Acts 2:22-24, 32-33, 36; cf. Psalm 32:1 & Romans 4:7-8). But how?

- B) The only way to take hold of salvation from sin is to have faith (trust) in Jesus Christ (Ephesians 2:8-9). What are we having faith in? Simply, it's faith in Jesus. More completely:
 - i) It is faith that what the Bible says about God's plan for sin, salvation and Jesus Christ are true (Romans 10:9 & 17; Galatians 3:2).

 - ii) It is faith in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ and its complete sufficiency in providing forgiveness (1st John 1:9; Acts 10:43).

 - iii) It is faith that only Jesus can save (John 14:6).

 - iv) It is faith that Jesus is in control of your life now, that we belong to Him (Galatians 2:20; cf. Romans 6:11-14).