

Easter Sunday

There is no such thing as "Easter Sunday" in the Bible. Many people have been led to believe that there is a special day, set aside by God, called "Easter Sunday". The religious world has been taught that this is the day that Christ resurrected from the dead and that we are commanded to observe the Lord's Supper that Sunday in remembrance of that occasion. Let's take a Bible look at this.

1) Use of the Word Easter in the Bible.

The word "Easter" does occur in the King James Version of the Bible. "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" (Acts 12:4).

2) Easter Refers to Passover.

The word translated 'Easter' in Acts 12:4 is translated 'Passover' 28 times in the New Testament. Only this one time did the translators render it 'Easter.' The American Standard Version renders it properly - 'Passover.'

3) No Example of Observance.

Read the Bible as much as you will, you will not find one command, or example, of Christians observing a special day called "Easter". We do read of early Christians meeting on the first day of the week to break bread (Acts 20:7). We find them being told to "lay by in store" upon the first day of the week (1 Cor. 16:1-2). But no where are we told to meet for an "Easter Service"!

4) The Resurrection of Jesus.

The Bible teaches us to remember the death of Christ. As we partake of the Lord's Supper, the death and resurrection of our Lord is remembered (1 Cor.11:23-26). This is to be done weekly, not just once a year! Remember Paul said, "Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain" (Gal. 4:10-11).

- by Johnie Edwards

Make No Provision For The Flesh

How do we win the fight against fleshly lusts? Several answers come to mind. Pray. Fill your heart with God's word. Fill your time with spiritually beneficial activities. Associate with people who will influence you for good. In Romans 13:14 Paul identifies another key: "But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts."

To make provision for something is to think ahead, to make plans, to provide opportunities. Paul's word literally means forethought. Its other occurrence is in Acts 24:2, where the lawyer Tertullus praised Felix, the governor, because through his "providence" beneficial reforms had been planned and were occurring throughout the land.

Obviously, making no provision for the flesh requires that we not plan ways of fulfilling illegitimate carnal lusts. But it goes beyond that. It requires that we think ahead and, when possible, avoid even the opportunity for such conduct. Here is the principle in action.

Teens, when you are planning a date, make no provision for fleshly lusts. Do not go to movies that glorify sensuality and fornication, and thereby arouse desire. Stay away from dances for the same reason. Be selective about parties; skip those where alcohol is featured. Avoid dark, lonely sites that provide the occasion for unchaste behavior.

Parents, when arranging your homes, make no provision for fleshly lusts. It may make me unpopular in some circles to say so, but when you allow your kids to have televisions, phones, and internet-connected computers in their bedrooms, you are providing a world of possibilities for wrong conduct.

Families, when you are purchasing in-home entertainment, make no provision for fleshly lusts. If you don't subscribe to cable or satellite channels which air nudity and "adult" content, there will be no opportunity for any family member to watch it. If you refuse to listen to profanity, you will be much less likely to speak it.

Shoppers, when you are choosing your clothes, make no provision for fleshly lusts. Plenty of modest choices exist for those concerned about such things. Err on the side of caution. Don't underestimate the appeal of exposed or accentuated flesh.

Brethren, when you place membership at a congregation, make no provision for fleshly lusts. Realize up front that you won't always get your way, that others may be more talented than you, that we are all working together for the same cause. Remind yourself of that often and give thought for your brethren.

If you want to know what this last point is doing here, read Paul's illustrations of fleshly conduct in Romans 13:13. Let's not deceive ourselves into thinking that strife, jealousy, and bickering are any less carnal or any less sinful than drunkenness or fornication. No matter the sin, make no provision for fleshly lusts.

- by Frank Himmel

"There's No Use Talking To Him. It Won't Do Any Good."

Some said that he was "stubborn," "hard-headed," and "mean-spirited." Lots of folks told of run-ins with him and almost everyone knew of his reputation. "It won't do any good to talk to him." Others added, "He'll just get mad, and you DON'T want to make him mad!" That's what people thought about him.

Are we talking about someone you know? Maybe a person who has shown absolutely zero interest in spiritual things? No! Actually we have in mind the apostle Paul. Prior to his conversion (when he was still known as Saul of Tarsus) he had a truly bad reputation. At that time he was actively persecuting the church. He was personally responsible for putting many Christians in prison, and when some were put to death, he said, "I gave my voice against them" (Acts 26:10).

Are you surprised that Ananias reacted negatively when the Lord told him to go see Saul? "I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done!" (Acts 9:13). His argument was basically: 'It won't do any good.' "But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way; for he is a chosen vessel unto me" (vs. 15).

Even to this day we hear people excuse themselves from their duty by saying, "he's too stubborn," or "it won't do any good." We have two responses to such statements:

1) How do you know this person is so "stubborn"? How can you be sure "it won't do any good?" Have you ever tried to talk to the individual? Be careful about making unfair and harsh judgments (Mt.7:1,2).

2) Even if your impressions are accurate, it still does not excuse you from fulfilling your God-given duty. No one ever had a better excuse than Ananias, but the Lord said "go thy way. . . ." We need to do the same!

No one can predict how much good can result when we do what needs to be done. Look at Paul's life! Let's get busy!

- by Greg Gwin