

Blue Ridge Brandmarks

“...I bear on my body the brandmarks of Jesus” - Gal. 6:17

Volume 5

April 3, 2011

Number 4

What About Easter?

One of our Bible correspondence students recently sent in this question.

QUESTION: “Is it true that Easter is really a pagan holiday and we shouldn’t be celebrating it?”

ANSWER: The pagans had celebrations corresponding to the time of our modern Easter holiday. The Jews also had a holy day, Passover, that corresponds to the same time. The modern Easter holiday is a mix of the traditions of several cultures with an effort to remember the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus.

From the aspect of the private observance of Easter by a Christian, it is clear that each individual should follow their conscience and not judge another. In Romans 14:5-6 we read, *“One person esteems one day as better than another, while another esteems all days alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind. The one who observes the day, observes it in honor of the Lord. The one who eats, eats in honor of the Lord, since he gives thanks to God, while the one who abstains, abstains in honor of the Lord and gives thanks to God.”* As long as the activities are not sinful in themselves, we

should each do as our conscience directs.

However, when it comes to the corporate worship of the church, to celebrate Easter as a religious observance is troublesome on three counts, 1) It is not authorized by Scripture, 2) It supplants the memorial God has chosen for Christ’s death, burial and resurrection, and 3) It causes division in the church:

1) It is not authorized by Scripture. There is no passage of Scripture that instructs Christians to gather together to celebrate Christ’s death, burial and resurrection once a year in Spring. This is in contrast to the Law of Moses, where very specific instructions were given for annual feast days. They are absent from the New Testament and to add them is an act of presumption. If they are there, we **MUST** observe them, if they are not, we **MUST NOT** add them.

2) It supplants the memorial God has chosen for Christ’s death, burial and resurrection. Before He died, Jesus instructed his disciples to partake of the unleavened bread and the fruit of the vine, *“in remembrance*

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Why I Left the Christian Church

1. The Christian Church has women Counselors, Directors and Lecturers; the church of Christ does not (1 Tim. 2:11, 12; 1 Cor. 14:34).

2. The Christian Church has Educational Directors, Associate Ministers and Youth Directors; the church of Christ has elders, deacons, evangelists and teachers (Eph. 4:11; Phil. 1:1).

3. The Christian Church has Missionary, Benevolent and Educational Organizations to execute the work of the church; the church of Christ does not (Eph. 4:4; Eph. 3:10, 21).

4. The Christian Church celebrates days of heathen worship, such as Easter, Mother's Day and Christmas; the church of Christ does not (Gal. 4:10).

5. The Christian Church fellowships various denominations in their activities, leaving the impression that all are brethren; the church of Christ does not (2 John 9-11; Gal. 1:6-10).

6. The Christian Church seeks to get crowds with Youth Meetings, Campaigns for Christ, Rallies, Drives and Promotions; the church of Christ does not (Rom. 1:16; Rev. 22:18, 19).

7. The Christian Church emphasizes society and the physical man by appealing to the carnal nature, with church carnivals, bands, plays, choruses, dramatics, church kitchens, church camps, and elaborate fellowship halls; the church of Christ does not (1 Cor. 10:7; Rom. 14:17; 1 Cor. 11:22,34).

8. The Christian Church elevates its preachers above the rest of the members

by using such titles as Pastor, Superintendent, President and Doctor, but the church of Christ does not (Matt. 23:5-12; Job 32:21, 22). Also, the Christian Church has forced its ministers into the denominational "Pastor System" by hinting, suggesting, complaining, and even demanding that its preachers run after the members, taxi the people here and there, and hold hands of the sick. The church of Christ does not expect this and God does not expect this sort of treatment from those who have been called to preach the gospel. Acts 6 points out that it is not scriptural for ministers of the gospel to leave the word of God and serve tables. The church has women servants and has deacons who are supposed to take care of the physical needs of the congregation. And the church has elders who are entrusted with the "souls" of the members. And the preacher is left free to study, meditate, pray and carry on an unhampered work of preaching the gospel to the lost (Acts 6:4; 2 Tim. 2:15; 4:1-5). And if a church does not have elders, etc., it can no more scripturally introduce the "Pastor System" than it can introduce the piano because it has poor singing.

9. The Christian Church misuses the name "Christian," which is a noun, by speaking of "Christian nations," "Christian schools," and "Christian Church." The church of Christ does not (Acts 11:26; 26:28; 1 Peter 4:16).

10. The Christian Church takes up collections at services other than on the first day of the week, and uses unscriptural means such as suppers, property rentals and special collections to

Easter - from Page 1 ►

of Me” (Luke 22:19-20). The early Christians did this “*on the first day of the week*” (Acts 20:7). In many religious groups, an annual holiday has supplanted the weekly observance of the “*communion of the body and blood of Christ*” (1 Cor. 10:16) and as a result, they fail to “*proclaim the Lord’s death till He comes*” (1 Cor. 11:26).

3) It causes division in the church.

Whenever man adds religious traditions and observances of his own to the worship of the church, division results. Some will object to the pagan origins of some of the holiday’s traditions. Others will argue about which day the right day to observe Easter is. Some will dispute whether a sunrise or sunset service is more appropriate or whether the Easter eggs should be free-range or not. A large church in Seattle a number of years ago caused a stir when they announced that they were planning to

sacrifice a lamb as part of their Easter observance. Opinion was much divided about that, as you might imagine! Some will refuse to participate in a religious tradition that has no basis in Scripture. What is the solution to all this religious division? Private observance of whatever “special days” the individual Christian believes will be most suitable for him, and reservation of corporate worship for actions that are authorized by book, chapter and verse from God’s word.

To sum up, for an individual to decorate and hunt Easter eggs, or set aside a special day or days to remember the death and resurrection of Christ is up to that individual and their conscience. However, to bring those observances into the group worship of the church and esteem one “Lord’s day” above another would be a violation of the New Testament blueprint of doctrine and worship and would cause division among God’s people.

The Christian Church - from Page 2 3:15).

raise money for the church; the church of Christ follows 1 Corinthians 16:1,2 by having each member lay by in store on the first day of the week. This is its only way of raising money.

11. The Christian Church owns and operates Publishing Houses, Radio Stations, Hospitals, and other Benevolent Societies; churches of Christ build nothing but churches (Eph. 3:21).

12. The Christian Church owns, supports and operates schools for secular education, through theological schools; the church of Christ does not (1 Tim.

13. The Christian Church has a compromising spirit, will not defend its doctrine, is nothing but a man-made denomination, has no regard for the authority of the Bible, bases its practice on the silence of the scriptures, and appeals to the traditions of the elders rather than to the simple unadulterated gospel of Christ. The Christian Church is not part of the New Testament church and should not be regarded as a friend of Christ nor of the truth.

◄Floyd Decker, a former Christian Church pastor ►

MARCH 2011 DUTY ROSTER

Weekday	SUN	WED	SUN	WED	SUN	WED	SUN	WED	SUN
Date	4/3	4/6	4/10	4/13	4/17	4/20	4/24	4/27	5/1
Opening Prayer	Don H.		Bill A.		Matt M.		Kevin H.		Matt M.
Morning Message	Leo R.		Randy F.		Larry P.		John M.		Don H.
Announcements	Matt M.	Jimmy F.	Don H.	Jonathan L.	Brad F.	Randy F.	David T.	David T.	Jimmy F.
Leading Songs	Larry P.	Eric B.	David T.	John M.	Charlie K.	Matt M.	Bill A.	Alan M.	Alan M.
First Prayer	Jimmy F.	Ed M.	Leo R.	Eric B.	Jerry D.	Larry P.	Jonathan L.	Kevin H.	Randy F.
Lead at Lord's Table & Contribution	Jerry D.		Charlie K.		John M.		Jimmy F.		Larry P.
Assist	Kevin H.		Matt M.		James M.		Ed M.		Charlie K.
Assist	Ed M.		Larry P.		Eric B.		Jeremy P.		Jerry D.
Assist	David T.		Jeremy P.		Jonathan L.		Jerry D.		Cody M.
Read Scripture	Brad F.		James M.		Jeremy P.		Eric B.		Leo R.
Preaching	Brent P.		Eric B.		Brent P.		Brent P.		Brent P.
Wed. Exhortation		Charlie K.		Leo R.		Jonathan L.		Don H.	
Closing Prayer	Randy F.	Kevin H.	Brad F.	James M.	Bill A.	Alan M.	Alan M.	Jimmy F.	James M.

ALL ARE WELCOME!

Sunday

9:15 - Morning Message

10:00 - Bible classes for all ages

11:00 - Worship

Wednesday

7:30 - Bible Classes for all ages

Elders:

Jim Fields, Alan Moeller & Leo Rodrigue

Deacons:

Eric Bridge & John Malloy

Evangelist:

Brent Paschall

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class material at

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