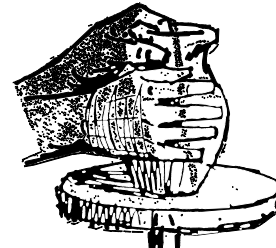


His Workmanship at Westside

*"For we are His
workmanship, created in
Christ Jesus for good works."
—Ephesians 2:10*



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Isaiah 64:8

The Resurrection: All Things New *by Mark Alexander*

Spring seems, on a superficial view, to be the gentlest of the seasons. Yet as poet T.S. Eliot proclaimed, "April is the cruellest month, breeding / Lilacs out of the dead land." Indeed, the new life rising around us is a brittle wonder. As the dormant winter season yields to new spring growth, it reminds us that life can arise from the hard darkness of apparent death, thus bringing great hope to us even in the bleakest of winters. If you've ever lived where the seasons are well defined, you have been treated to the wondrous emergence of new life from the winter cold, and you can marvel at God's expression through the splendid colors on branch and ground where the restoration of life had been awaiting its cue.

But the hope that we Christians have is a hope greater than merely the changing of seasons. The resurrection is the central event and tenet that distinguishes Christ's Way from all other faiths. While other religions require human works for men to approach their gods, only God Himself, through His sacrifice on the cross, could ransom us from our sin-slavery, fulfilling the requirements of the Law. Only God Himself could

then rise from the dead, returning to deliver to His followers the very freedom He had paid for with His life. Christ's sacrifice on the cross was the fusion of perfect love and perfect justice, vanquishing evil in this sense: Because we owe God complete obedience, we



have no means to make restitution (pay) for our sins. Doing what we should in any instance merely zeroes our balance for that particular act; we have no way to repay the negative sum of our accumulated past sins. Only God Himself could rectify that moral debt on our behalf, in a sacrificial act that is simultaneously purely loving and purely just. One death thus gave each human life an incalculable value, because of that exchange.

Jesus further commanded His believers to follow Him in self-sacrifice: *"And when He had called the people to Him, with His disciples also, He said to them, 'Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me,' "* Mk 8:34. *"And he who does not take his cross and follow after*

Me is not worthy of Me," Mt 10:38. Clearly, Jesus calls His followers to lay down the life of this world and follow Him on the road to the cross and resurrection.

What lay behind, in the shadow of the cross, was a barbaric world. Life during Christ's time on earth was cheap, treated as suitable for sport and spectacle. The execution of Jesus by crucifixion typified the cruelty and capriciousness of Roman rule. The Jewish chief priests, arguing for the death of Jesus, clamored, *"We have no king but Caesar,"* Jn 19:15. The Roman governor, Pontius Pilate, knew that Jesus was guilty of no capital crime, for he said, *"I wash my hands of the blood of this innocent man"*—yet, fearing political repercussions should Caesar hear rumors of Jesus as a rival claimant to authority, Pilate permitted the death sentence to be carried out. Innocent life taken for political expediency—does this sound familiar? We daily see such devaluation today, in embryonic-stem-cell research, abortion, euthanasia, terrorism [for example, the new Hollywood movie, *The Company You Keep*,

continued on p. 2

"He is not here; for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead." —Mt 28:6-7

with Robert Redford and Susan Sarandon, glorifies the Weather Underground, whose terrorism killed 7 and wounded 7 over 6 domestic terrorist acts in the 1970s—all treated as justifiable to people who believe in relativism. How grotesque, that the devaluation of human life now runs under the banner of "choice." The question is not whether but what you choose. Among the choices, the hardest path is the road of the cross, following the example of Jesus. Yet if that stony, stumbling course is the hardest, it is also the best.

What swept over the world, after the resurrection, was a vast transformation. The Apostle Paul took up his cross, in a prisoner's chains, and brought members of Caesar's household into the fellowship of Christians—so that they had "no king but King Jesus." No other possibility aside from true resurrection can adequately explain the acts of Christ's followers.

Historically, commemoration of Christ's Resurrection at Easter, as with His birth at Christmas, began with the Catholic Church which adopted various pagan rites. Scholars variously attribute the name "Easter" to derivation of *Eostr*a (a Scandinavian goddess of dawn or spring) or *Ostern* (a Teutonic fertility goddess), both pagan figures honored at festivals celebrating the vernal equinox. *Eostr*a is one of many similar names of Euro-Mediterranean pagan goddesses, with the form *Ishtar* most often associated with the region around Mesopotamia's Euphrates River. Traditions associated with these festivals include the rabbit, a symbol of fertility, and eggs, painted with the bright colors of spring and signifying growth and new life. The Easter holiday took pagan symbols

and also built on the Biblical traditions of the Jewish festival of Passover, or Heb. *Pesach*, which means "to spare, to pass over, to exempt; or the offering itself" (Greek *Pascha*) celebrating the Israelites' deliverance from bondage in Egypt.

Jesus Christ crucified is likened to Passover's sacrificial lamb: *"He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, He opened not His mouth,"* Is 53:7; and *"[Y]ou were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot,"* 1 Pet 1:18-19.

Pope Victor I (c. 189-198) standardized Easter to a Sunday holiday, and in 325 A.D. the Council of Nicaea set Easter's date in relation to the paschal (Passover) moon. The Gregorian calendar correction of 1582 put Easter as the first Sunday after the full moon following the vernal equinox, between 22 March and 25 April. "Holy Week" often coincides with the Jewish Passover, and both Eastern (Gregorian) and Western (Julian) Orthodox church celebrate Easter on the same day.

Easter occurs in spring when the US Civil War began and ended, and when the War for American Independence began in earnest: In April we commemorate the Battles of Lexington and Concord. One culmination of the infusion of Biblical respect for life into human beliefs was the Revolutionary War rationale that mankind was given liberty by God. In parts of colonial America, Easter was a two-day celebration, over Sunday and Monday. Current-day customs in the U.S. were

set soon after the end of the Civil War, mingling religious elements with commercial ventures. By 1870, Easter was a holiday for new spring fashions, flowers, and special confections, including sugary eggs and chocolate bunnies. (The White House Egg Roll, dating to 1878, is on Easter Monday.)

We know well that the world is a harsh place. As we survey its poverty—both fiscal and moral—or the damage and suffering caused by natural disasters such as Hurricane Sandy, or the man-caused disasters (i.e., "solutions") men inflict upon other men, we're reminded of the brokenness of this world. Indeed, Christ didn't die on the cross for a world that didn't need Him. He died for one that did and does.

Ironically, perhaps, that's where the resurrection brings the greatest hope. **At the far end of the road to the cross lies the empty tomb—the promise of resurrection and eternal life.** Christ conquered death when He rose from the grave that Sunday morning so long ago so that He can save us and return to right all wrongs. Even today, the empty tomb beckons, and we Christians remember it every Sunday, looking inward, examining ourselves; outward, proclaiming His death for sin; backward, remembering His sacrifice; and forward, looking to His return and our resurrection, "til He come." Will we travel the way of the cross today, or take another road?

He said, *"Behold, I make all things new,"* Rev 21:5. Our ultimate hope is in the renewal that will come, as He promised. Our hope will not wax or wane with each new government, because this world is not all that there is. For that we are truly thankful, and we look forward to the day when all things *are* made new.



Psalm 133:1



Fill your can-teen in 2013

“May you be filled with all the fullness of God.”

—Ephesians 3:19

Walking with the Wise by Erin Davis

Has anyone ever said something like this to you: "Birds of a feather flock together." "If your friends jumped off a cliff, would you?" Since we aren't birds and our friends are unlikely to go cliff jumping, the message of these phrases can get lost in translation.

Perhaps a few words from a juvenile court judge can clear the matter up. The judge's email was about prayer, but he wrote a few sentences at the beginning about friends. "As a juvenile court judge, I often told young people who entered my court, 'Show me who you are hanging around with, and I will show you what you are going to become like.'" Scripture puts it this way: "Whoever walks with the wise becomes wise, but the companion of fools will suffer harm," Pr 13:20.

You don't have to enter a juvenile court room for these words to have meaning. The judge and Proverbs are preaching a simple message that all of us would be wise to remember:

1. When you spend your time with wise people, you will become wiser yourself.
2. When you spend your time with unwise people, you are guaranteed to get hurt.

I'm sure the judge could tell lots of stories of young criminals whose feet were set on the wrong path simply by choosing the wrong friends. I can tell stories from my own life when I got

Discipleship Here At Home

REJOICE! Janice Spagnola was baptized into Christ last week. She is the 86-year-old mother of **Gina Elliott**, who was baptized last Oct. 31. Janice lives next to Gina at 12533 E. 31st Ave, Aurora, 80011, 303-766-7687.

Bereaved A memorial service for **Gail Storatz**, Gary Boyd's sister, is planned for 4/12 or 13. Send cards to her son: **Zac Storatz**, 7420 E. Quincy Ave, Unit 305, Denver 80237.

burned because I let myself be a "companion of fools." I bet you have some of those stories, too. Certainly, we should be friendly to non-Christians and are free to spend some time with people who might fall into the category of being "unwise." But our closest friends—the people we spend the most time with—should be wise. That means they should fear God—the *fear of God is the beginning of wisdom*, Ps 111:10; Pr 1:7; 9:10.. And they should know and seek to live out the wisdom we find in God's Word. We should notice that when we're around them, we become wiser ourselves.

So let me join the judge in asking you, do you have wise friends? If so, you get a gold star. Even more important, you get the promise that those friends will help you grow in your own walk with Christ. On the flipside, are your closest friends non-Christians? Or maybe they're Christians who consistently make unwise choices or disregard the wisdom found in God's Word. Be warned! Those friends are likely to cause you harm or to encourage you to do harm to yourself. (Ah! So that's what all that bridge jumping talk is about!) The choice is simple, but not always easy. Choose wise friends, and gain wisdom. Choose unwise friends, and gain trouble and pain. So go on, and take the judge's advice. Show us who you are hanging around with. Your answer will inevitably show us where you're destined to end up.

PRAY FOR healing, protection, help, and comfort here & away

Samantha Harrod—recovering from surgery Wed fore pilonidal cyst
Madge Wallace—lung cancer; radiation ended; suffering severe pain in side
Madge's granddaughter, Amanda Carmichael—kidney infection, passed stone
Mark Campbell—full recovery expected from "brain bruise"; respiratory testing at Nat'l Jewish after pneumonia complication
Matt Reames—VA unable to insert shunt to drain fluid from his brain (hydrocephalus), the cause of Matt's headaches and blurred vision; pray for VA speed
Judy Strand's son Joe Huff—recurrence of neurological symptoms, black-outs, from brain injury he suffered in a 2007 car accident
Mina Gonzalez's uncle Charles Hawkins—colon cancer

CHRONIC CONDITIONS

Logan Corray; Rocco Sangellino Jr; Addison Tope; Pat Wilkes—asthma
Pearl Chapman—leg pains; pancreatitis
Nell Free—heart; spinal pain
Autumn Hadders—epilepsy
Kirk Johnson—worsening MS; house-bound in cold weather and needs help
Menards—age; **Lloyd**, diabetes;
Virginia, now legally blind from rapid macular degeneration; high BP
Cheryl Reames—diverticulitis; fibro
Lynda Szymanski—COPD, lung

Job concerns Andrew Tope and Frank Savarese are seeking jobs. **The Menards' son** is out of work.

Expecting Marie Carlson—July 1 girl
Traveling Pat Campbell is in AR caring for her parents: **Ruth Hice** fell and broke her arm last weekend; **Delmar Hice** has pneumonia. Cards to: 28345 Highway 69 W, London, AR 72847-8129. **Brett Witherington** leaves for MD Monday for work. **Stacey and Lisa Ward** are in CA for spring break and a friend's wedding.



Exposing current thoughts & trends

University Apologizes over "Jesus Stomping" Case

These days it can be difficult to live as a Christian on college campuses. At Florida Atlantic University, it is especially difficult for students whose grade point average depends on their willingness to stomp on Jesus. Ask Junior Ryan Rotela. When Rotela refused to participate in a classroom assignment that would involve jumping on a sheet of paper bearing Jesus's name, as a way to "discuss the importance of symbols in culture," he was immediately suspended from class and brought up on academic charges after reporting this activity to university officials. Rotela did not want to participate in the exercise because it violated his religious beliefs.

FAU finally backed down last Wednesday, but only after Liberty Institute threatened legal action and Fox News reporter Todd Starnes brought this latest incident of religious persecution to the attention of millions. Liberty Institute, which represented Rotela, declared victory in this case, as officials from the University apologized and removed the academic charges from his record. Hiram Sasser, Director of Litigation at Liberty Institute, was thankful. "Decades ago, the Supreme Court ruled that students do not leave their First Amendment rights at the school house gate: That is still true today."

In addition to that victory, Florida Governor Rick Scott has asked the state's university system to look into this incident and to ensure that this type of lesson will not take place again. Scott said, in a letter to the chancellor, "The professor's lesson was offensive, and even intolerant, to Christians and those of all faiths who deserve to be respected as Americans entitled to religious freedom." Bravo to the student and the governor for standing firm to protect the faith even in the face of harassment and threats. Their courage inspires millions to stand firm for their Biblical beliefs and First Amendment rights.

Memory verse: *"Oh, sing to the LORD a new song! For He has done marvelous things; His right hand and His holy arm have gained Him the victory. The LORD has made known His salvation; His righteousness He has revealed in the sight of the nations. He has remembered His mercy and His faithfulness to the house of Israel; all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God."*

—Psalm 98:1-3

Westside church of Christ

meets at
13789 W. 8th Avenue
Golden, Colorado 80401
(303) 233-5683

Pastors

Larry Campbell (303) 462-4987

DeWayne Howell (303) 973-7283

Preacher

Jim Reingrover (303) 973-5102

Assembly Schedule

Sunday

| | |
|--------------------|----------|
| Bible classes | 9:00 am |
| Morning assembly | 10:00 am |
| Afternoon assembly | 1:30 pm |

Wednesday

| | |
|---------------|---------|
| Bible classes | 7:30 pm |
|---------------|---------|

This morning: *"The Crucifixion: Why Did Jesus Die?"*

by Jim Reingrover

This afternoon:

Grounded in Authority Series

"The Work of the Church:

Benevolence" by Larry Campbell