

LINKS PLAYERS

DAILY DEVOTIONAL FRIDAY BIBLE STUDY FOR MARCH 29, 2013

HOLY DAYS

One person considers one day more sacred than another; another considers every day alike. (Romans 14:5, NIV)

THERE IS NO GREATER EVENT IN HUMAN HISTORY than the resurrection of Jesus Christ. I know that many people today would read a statement as plain as that and call into question both the bias and historicity in such a claim. But I'm a believer, as they say, so there you have it: my belief—in this case held firm by Paul's discussion of the resurrection in 1 Corinthians 15.

Of course, most of you are believers as well, and you declare with me the wonder and prize of Jesus' resurrection. We place it as the crescendo to what we have for centuries called "Holy Week."

But is the Sunday we call Easter holy to you?

Some of our brothers and sisters in Christ would defend this day as more sacred than any other and commemorate it with meaning-laden traditions, attentive prayers, and committed family time.

Others would argue that too many of these traditions are based in pagan roots, and that we should instead be forging connections with the Jewish Passover celebrations, which point so strongly to the atoning sacrifice of the Messiah, who is Jesus.

In Romans 14, the apostle Paul spoke to those on either side of debates like these. Do, he said, what you will, for "each one should be fully convinced in his own mind." This doesn't mean there aren't rights and wrongs in the world. In fact, this chapter of Romans closes with the powerful general conclusion: "Everything that does not come from faith is sin." Rather, what Paul was saying is that not everything involves a question of right and wrong. When it comes to the traditions of men, one thing may be "right" for a certain set of believers, while something different is "right" for others.

So no matter how you celebrate Easter, or any other Sunday of the year, the key is keeping the main thing main: Jesus rose to conquer sin and death. This is worth celebrating every day. And yes, we can say, it's also worth setting aside one special day to celebrate it with extra attention.

Opening questions: Big days

Do you have days that are particularly special to you each year—Christmas, your anniversary, Masters Sunday? Why do you think we guard traditions in our lives?

The brilliance of the resurrection

Read John 20:1-18. Consider the tremendous emotion and actions of the disciples, including Mary Magdalene. What does this tell you about the significance of Jesus' resurrection in their minds?

Read 1 Corinthians 15:3-8 and 15:12-19. How does Paul's theological explanation add to our understanding of the resurrection's great significance?

The importance of days

Read Romans 14:1-23. What are some non-essential matters that are important to you but not to others, and vice versa? How will you approach these matters differently after reading this passage?
