

I Believe In The Resurrection!

By Casey Head

As I sit down to write this article, we are in the midst of the “Easter season.” There are signs all over town advertising Easter services and Easter pageants. Religious people everywhere are decorating their homes in pastels. Parents are hiding plastic eggs and children are waiting anxiously for the big day to arrive so that they can eat a massive amount of candy. Some are preparing for “sunrise services” and Easter luncheons. This is one of the busiest times of the year, and many are saying “it is a beautiful season.”

Of course, we know that the focal point of the Easter holiday is the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Good Friday celebrates His death while Easter Sunday celebrates His resurrection from the grave. I remember playing the role of Jesus in the Easter play presented by the Jeffersontown Baptist Church in Louisville, Kentucky. There was a time when I believed in the religious observance of Easter, but now I do not.

When people discover that I do not celebrate Easter, they immediately assume that I do not believe in the resurrection of Christ, as that is the focal point of the holiday. They could not be any more wrong! I certainly affirm that Jesus died on Friday and was raised on Sunday morning, three days later. What I disagree with is the transformation of this event into an annual religious holiday. Please, let me explain.

As I read the New Testament, I never find the early Christians celebrating Easter. Never did they have “sunrise services” or Easter pageants. Despite the fact that they knew nothing of the Easter holiday, they certainly affirmed the resurrection of Christ, as I do. Paul wrote to the church of Christ in Corinth in 1 Corinthians 15:3-4, “For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that He was buried, *and that He rose again the third day,*” and then in verse 17, “And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins.” As you can see, they believed in the resurrection.

If the early Christians never observed the Easter holiday, and if we never find any command or example pertaining to Easter in the New Testament, then how can we label it as right or scriptural? We are told in 1 Peter 4:11 to “speak as the oracles of God,” but God has not spoken regarding Easter. That is why I do not celebrate it. There is no authority for it. Again, I believe in the resurrection, but that does not mean that I have to observe the *Catholic* holiday known as Easter.

Paul tells us in Galatians 4:10-11, “Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you, *lest I have bestowed upon you labor in vain.*” The celebration and observance of unauthorized religious holidays is sinful. This verse is here for a reason, and we cannot overlook it in an effort to maintain church tradition.

Easter is a holiday invented by the Catholic church, and it finds its origins in Paganism. After all, the word “Easter” is derived from “Eastre,” the Germanic goddess. Look up the origin of “Easter” in an encyclopedia. It will only confirm the points that I have been making.

Please understand that a person does not have to celebrate Easter in order to believe in the resurrection of Christ. I have my reasons for abstaining from this holiday, and those reasons are based on scripture.