

Why Easter Changes Everything

April 22, 2006

If Christ has not been raised, then our faith is useless, and we are still guilty of our sins.

1 Corinthians chapter 15 verse 14 (879)

For when we died with Christ we were set free from the power of sin. And since we died with Christ, we know we will also live with him. We are sure of this because Christ was raised from the dead, and he will never die again. Death no longer has any power over him. So you also should consider yourselves to be dead to the power of sin and alive to God through Christ Jesus.

Do not let sin control the way you live.... Romans chapter 6 verses 7 - 9, 11 - 12 (861)

- If I focus on my sin, I make it the focal point & thus keep thinking about the very thing I am trying to stop thinking about!
- When I focus on Jesus, I stop thinking about my sin!

God has given us everything we need for living a godly life. We have received all this by coming to know Christ, the one who called us to himself by means of his marvelous glory & excellence. 2 Peter chapter 1 verse 3 (938)

- God - not Rob, not a priest, God!
- has given - tells us this was done to us, we had nothing to do with it
- everything - the whole, complete
- living a godly life - tells me I can live this out, not just conceptualize it or think about it
- by coming to know Christ - refers to full knowledge of, total recognition of
- I get to "know Christ" by spending more time with him, by learning more about him, by hanging out with those who love him

My responsibility in living a godly life is to get to know Christ more!

- reading the Bible
- learning the Bible
- being obedient to God
- building worship into every aspect of my life
- being a part of true biblical community
- building godly accountability in my life

And because of his glory & excellence, he has given us great & precious promises. These are the promises that enable you to share his divine nature & escape the world's corruption caused by human desires. 2 Peter chapter 1 verse 4 (938)

- notice it's 100% Jesus & 0% me!
- glory - weight, substance
- excellence - manliness, valor
- again, notice who does the giving & who does the receiving!!!

(over)

Just Some of God's Promises to Me...

- As a Christ-follower, I will NEVER be condemned by God for my sin
Romans chapter 8 verse 1 (862)
- As a Christ-follower, God has freed me from sin - *Romans chapter 6 (861)*
- God promises to transform me when I become a Christ-follower...the old is gone!
2 Corinthians chapter 5 verse 17 (884)
- God promises a way out of EVERY temptation in my life
1 Corinthians chapter 10 verse 13 (876)
- God promises that he will empower me to do EVERYTHING he asks of me
Philippians chapter 4 verse 13 (901)
- God promises that the troubles in my life will NEVER be enough to crush or destroy me
2 Corinthians chapter 4 verses 8-10 (884)
- Jesus promises to give me peace of heart & mind - *John chapter 14 verse 27 (824)*
- Jesus promises to give me rest - *Matthew chapter 11 verse 28 (742)*
- I have been given the mind of Christ - *1 Corinthians chapter 2 verse 16 (871)*

In view of this, make every effort to respond to God's promises. 2 Peter chapter 1 verse 5 (938)

- These are the promises that enable you to share his divine nature & escape the world's corruption caused by human desires!

My responsibility in living a godly life is to get to know Christ more!

- How many of these are already a regular part of my life?
- How many more will be in the near future?
- To the extent that I get to know Jesus better, I live out God's promises in my life

Some closing thoughts:

- EVERYTHING changed because of Easter! Jesus conquered death & set me free!
- Focus on knowing Christ, NOT my sin struggle! (*Stop thinking about the pink elephant...*)
- I worship what I focus on! So don't be fixed on my fear or sin struggle, because if I do, it becomes bigger than God & God's power in my life!

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Next Sunday: Guest speaker Michael Franzese will be speaking at both services

“At the height of his mob activity, Michael was one of the biggest money earners the mob had seen since Al Capone, and the youngest individual on Fortune magazine's survey of ‘The Fifty Biggest Mafia Bosses.’” Vanity Fair Magazine

Michael has been a featured annual guest at the NBA and MLB rookie camps, featured on several ESPN shows, Fox Sports, HBO Real Sports, as well as NPR's "All Things Considered," Armed forces Radio, CNN and Fox News. He was recently a guest for the 3rd time on the Jim Rome show (radio and TV), and returned to ESPN for The Pulse, Quite Frankly, and Outside the Lines. He was featured in the March 10, 2006 USA Today cover story about the Mafia today and the Sopranos. He was interviewed on the Abrams Report on MSNBC about the season premiere of Sopranos and the state of the Mafia today.