Easter Sunday

(by Kevin Heaton)

A national ‘holiday’ referred to as "Easter" is quickly approaching. It is marked on our calendars. TV commercials have been geared towards this day. Religious groups of the community have been preparing for it, ready with special services. Some folks only go to church on Easter and Christmas. Some only celebrate the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus on Easter Sunday.

What does the Bible say about ‘Easter’? Truth be told, you won't find the yearly celebration of Easter in the Bible. The Easter holiday was in fact started by man. So what DOES the Bible say about the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus and how we should celebrate it?

Let's start in the ministry of Jesus. Jesus, on several occasions, told His disciples about His suffering, death, AND resurrection that would be coming. ***"The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised"*** (**Luke 9:22**).

While Jesus was eating the Passover with His disciples, He gave them a memorial supper to be carried on after His death, burial, and resurrection. ***"And He took a cup, and when He had given thanks He said, 'Take this, and divide it among yourselves. For I tell you that from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.' And He took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to them, saying, 'This is My body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of Me.' And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, 'This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in My blood'"*** (**Luke 22:17-20**).

Paul the apostle wrote to the Corinthian brethren, reminding them of what the Lord's Supper was all about. ***"For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when He was betrayed took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it, and said, 'This is My body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of Me.' In the same way also He took the cup, after supper, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in My blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.' For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes. Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty concerning the body and blood of the Lord. Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself"*** (**1 Corinthians 11:23-29**).

When did the early disciples of the church do this? On Easter Sunday? Twice a year? Once a month?

Notice what the Scriptures say: ***"On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread..."*** (**Acts 20:7**). **1 Corinthians 16:2** also gives special attention to the first day of the week. **1 Corinthians 14** clearly shows that the church gathered together in an official assembly. **Revelation 1:10** talks of the ***"Lord's Day."*** There is enough evidence that shows that the first day of the week, Sunday, was the day the brethren assembled to worship and remember Jesus through the memorial feast.

Do we celebrate the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus? Absolutely! But not just on *"Easter Sunday."* We celebrate it **EVERY** Sunday! Every first day of the week we gather together to partake of the Lord's Supper. Every first day of the week our hearts sing out in praise to God. Every first day of the week we rejoice in the hope we have through the resurrection of Jesus Christ! 52 Sundays a year we thank God for His grace, mercy, love, and power that He has shown toward us through His beloved Son.

***"For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that He was buried, that He was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, and that He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. Then He appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. Then He appeared to James, then to all the apostles. Last of all, as to one untimely born, He appeared also to me"*** (**1 Corinthians 15:3-8**).

***"Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: 'Death is swallowed up in victory.' 'O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?' The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain"*** (**1 Corinthians 15:51-58**).