



Chaplain's Notes

April 2003

"life is for us"

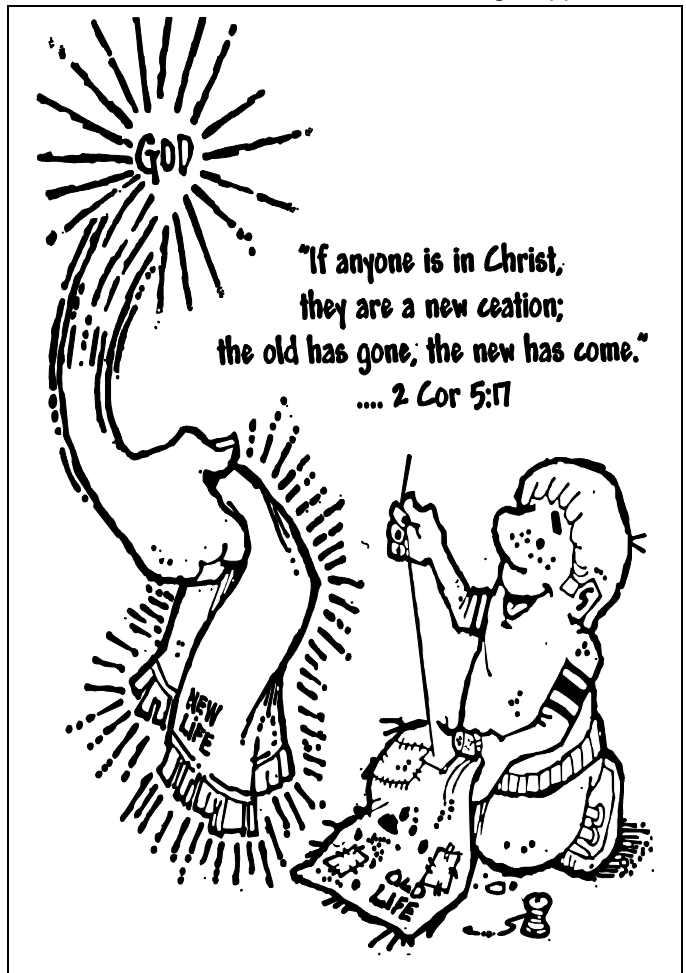
Why Easter?

I don't know if you looked up in the sky on Easter Sunday (20th April), but at midday there was sky-writing which read "JESUS LIVES" and "HE IS RISEN". This is the first time in my memory that this has happened in Melbourne!

But I'm sure that many people don't really know the significance of why Jesus died on Good Friday, and just what is so special about Jesus rising again from the dead on Sunday. Allow me to share with you something of what it means for our lives today.

1. Jesus died to pay the penalty for our sins. Not one of us has lived a perfect life. I'm sure you would agree with that. We have all done wrong things, bad things, whether deliberately or without us realizing it, and the Bible calls this 'sin'. Sin is defined as 'falling short of God's standard for our lives.' The Bible says "all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God."¹

But you might ask 'Does sin really matter?' Well, the Bible says "the wages of sin is death."² Sin really does matter because sin causes death, and we all hate that. It causes death in our souls. The reason so many people in the world can't find lasting happiness,



(1) Romans 3:23. (2) Romans 6:23.

peace, and joy in their souls is because of sin - it damages relationships.

Sin also causes physical death. The Bible teaches that the reason we experience physical suffering and death is because of sin.³

But sin also causes spiritual death. It separates us from God, the source and giver of life. God is holy and he hates evil and wickedness. A sinful person like me cannot hope to live in the presence of God now, let alone for eternity. The Bible teaches "our sins have separated us from God and hidden His face from us."⁴

But God is also love.⁵ Because God loves us so much, He did something for us so that our sin could be removed from our lives, so that guilt and shame could be washed away. God sent His Son, Jesus, to pay the penalty for our sins and to wash us free from our guilt.⁶ We wash our dirty clothes with Omo and White King, but our lives are cleansed from the filth of sin by the death of Jesus and the blood that He shed on the cross.⁷ The Bible says "without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness."⁸ The Bible also says "Jesus became sin for us so that in union with Him we might become the righteousness of God."⁹ The death of Jesus Christ on the cross on Good Friday was on your and my behalf! Christ died for us¹⁰, instead of us!

Thought for the month

*Many people are so concerned with
making a living
That they are unable to make a life*

2. Jesus rose to life to give us power over sin. But there's more to just Jesus dying on our behalf and taking our place. If he had just died and stayed dead, what use is that? Yes, our sins would be forgiven, but we would not be changed as people. We would still be doomed to be trapped in the endless cycle¹¹ of:

- a) knowing what is right
- b) trying to do what is right
- c) failing in doing what is right
- d) asking for forgiveness
- e) go back to a)

This is where the significance of Jesus rising from the dead really stands out. The Bible teaches that because Jesus rose from the dead, if we believe in Him and trust in Him, He actually comes to live inside of our lives by His Spirit, giving us power to live what is right, and so be free from the endless cycle of sin.¹² Jesus says "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him and he with me."¹³ When you believe in Jesus, He comes into your life, and you become "a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come."¹⁴ You can have a new life!! Jesus said "If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing."¹⁵

This, my friend, is the secret and mystery of being a Christian. We can have and live eternal life because Jesus, who rose from the dead, lives inside of us. WHAT A MIRACLE! You and I now can live a life that pleases God, is totally good and wholesome for us, and blesses other people, because

(3) Genesis 2:15-17; Romans 5:12. (4) Isaiah 59:2. (5) 1John 4:8. (6) John 3:16. (7) 1John 1:7. (8) Hebrews 9:22. (9) 2Corinthians 5:21. (10) Romans 5:6-8. (11) Romans 7:14-24. (12) Colossians 1:26,27; 2:6,7. (13) Revelation 3:20. (14) 2Corinthians 5:17. (15) John 15:5.

Jesus gives us power over sin!¹⁶

The Bible from beginning to end talks about the necessity of a sacrifice to pay the penalty for our sins, and the necessity of God's power dwelling within us to be able to live the life God wants us to live. At Easter time, God enabled both to become a reality in our lives. I really hope and pray that you come to experience this! This is living indeed!

Let us pray:

"Dear God,

thank you that I can be free from my sins. Thank you that you sent Jesus to take the penalty for my sins, to wash away all my shame and guilt, and to give me a new life.

Jesus, I would really like this new life. Please come into my life. I want to follow You and have your power to live the way I know I should.

Thanks so much.

Amen."

**I KNOW I'M
SOMEBODY**



**'cause God don't
make no junk!!**

My Answer

Q: "Dear Chaplain, what is the real cause of evil in people?"

A: The Bible reveals that the wrong we do stems from an interworking of three issues^a: (1) covetousness (or greed) - desiring to have what we should not; (2) pride - thinking better of yourself and your opinions and putting others down; (3) unbelief - not trusting what God says.

Consider the following table:

Surface problems wrong clothes, broken vows, profanity, dishonesty, disrespect, debt, runaways, wrong music, bad habits, arguments, seduction & flirting
Surface causes inferiority, anger, fear, worry, rebellion, envy, jealousy, boredom, insecurity, guilt, frustration, depression
Root problems 1. Bitterness 2. Temporal values (greed) 3. Moral impurity
Root causes <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Resisting God's grace midst experiences of rejection.• Violating principles of life.• Believing the devil's lies.
Root issues covetousness, pride, unbelief

But imagine if instead of those three negatives, people were (1) content, (2) humble, & (3) had faith and trusted what God says. Can you picture a person living like that doing evil? I can't! And that's exactly how Jesus wants to help us to live!^b

News & Events

* **CELEBRATION SUNDAYS!**

You are invited to our first
Community Worship Service.

When: Sunday May 18th

Time: 5pm - 6.15pm (followed
by supper)

Where: Preston Nth East
Primary School Hall

- Great live music & singing!
- Stay to enjoy supper afterwards!
- Everyone is welcome, from children to grandparents.
- Come along and get to know others in our community!

*Mark this date in your
calendars now!*

* **Sunday worship.** Currently every Sunday at 11am I meet with a few people in my home or theirs, and we sing, talk, pray, and have Holy Communion together. If you would like to join with us, your are welcome! Please ring me for more details.

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A ministry supported by Regent Baptist Church,
West Evangelical Christian Church, and LinC
Northern Region

* **Youth Group** Term 2 of the Junior High Youth Group, called LITE4 (Leader-In-Training-E4) begins this Friday, May 2nd at 6.30 pm. Term 1 was great, and new youth are also welcome to join! Contact me for more details.



* **Radio 89.9 LIGHT FM.** If you haven't done so already, tune into 89.9 FM and see what you think! It might make a pleasant change to what you normally listen to!

* **Questions?** If you have any questions you'd like me to address in the "My Answer" column of this newsletter, please ring me, or write to the address below.

* **Prayer for Healing.** If you would really like some people to pray for you, or others you know, about problems in life, whether physical, emotional, mental, or spiritual, there are people who are willing to do just that. Please contact me about this.

* **FREE Booklet!** If you would like a copy of my free booklet "Building a better life: a pocket-guide for Christian living", just call me! It addresses the six core aspects of human living, and gives the Bible's answers for how to live well.