

April 1, 2023

Faith Builder

Issue #4

A Faith Chapel Newsletter - Special Easter Edition

Scripture of the Month

“For God so loved the world that he gave His one and only Son,
that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.”

John 3:16

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God loves you so much that He sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to be born on earth and die on a cross. Why? We are all sinners, and the Bible says the consequence of sin is death, eternal separation from God. There is nothing we can do to make us “good enough” for heaven. But God made a way. Christ lived a perfect, blameless life and provided the perfect sacrifice for our sins. He died in our place. It is only by God’s grace—His undeserved mercy—that we can have eternal life with Him in heaven. Our role is to have faith, to believe Christ died for us and ask Him to forgive our sins. The simple meaning behind John 3:16 is that you are loved by God and can be forgiven.

Palm Sunday

Palm Sunday is the day we celebrate the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem, one week before His resurrection (Matthew 21:1-11). As Jesus entered the holy city, He neared the culmination of a long journey toward Golgotha. He had come to save the lost (Luke 19:10), and now was the time—this was the place—to secure that salvation. Palm Sunday marked the start of what is often called “Passion Week,” the final seven days of Jesus’ earthly ministry. Palm Sunday was the “beginning of the end” of Jesus’ work on earth. Palm Sunday began with Jesus and His disciples traveling over the Mount of Olives. The Lord sent two disciples ahead into the village of Bethphage to find an animal to ride. They found the unbroken colt of a donkey, just as Jesus had said they would (Luke 19:29-30). When they untied the colt, the owners began to question them. The disciples responded

with the answer Jesus had provided: “The Lord needs it” (Luke 19:31-34). Amazingly, the owners were satisfied with that answer and let the disciples go. “They brought the donkey to Jesus, threw their cloaks on the colt and put Jesus on it” (Luke 19:35). As Jesus ascended toward Jerusalem, a large multitude gathered around Him. This crowd understood that Jesus was the Messiah; what they did not understand was that it wasn’t time to set up the kingdom yet—although Jesus had tried to tell them so (Luke 19:11-12). The crowd’s actions along the road give rise to the name “Palm Sunday”: “A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road” (Matthew 21:8). In strewing their cloaks on the road, the people were giving Jesus the royal treatment—King Jehu was given similar honor at his coronation (2 Kings 9:13). John records the detail that the branches they cut were from palm trees (John 12:13). On that first Palm Sunday, the people also honored Jesus verbally: “The crowds that went ahead of him and those that followed shouted, ‘Hosanna to the Son of David!’ ‘Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!’ ‘Hosanna in the highest heaven!’” (Matthew 21:9). In their praise of Jesus, the Jewish crowds were quoting Psalm 118:25-26, an acknowledged prophecy of the Christ. The allusion to a Messianic psalm drew resentment from the religious leaders present: “Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Jesus, ‘Teacher, rebuke your disciples!’” (Luke 19:39). However, Jesus saw no need to rebuke those who told the truth. He replied, “I tell you . . . if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out” (Luke 19:40). Even as the coatless multitudes waved the palm branches and shouted for joy, they missed the true

reason for Jesus' presence. They could neither see nor understand the cross. That's why, "as Jesus approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it and said, 'If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace—but now it is hidden from your eyes. The days will come upon you when your enemies . . . will not leave one stone on another, because you did not recognize the time of God's coming to you'" (Luke 19:41-47). It is a tragic thing to see the Savior but not recognize Him for who He is. The crowds who were crying out "Hosanna!" on Palm Sunday were crying out "Crucify Him!" later that week (Matthew 27:22-23). There is coming a day when every knee will bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord (Philippians 2:10-11). The worship will be real then. Also, John records a scene in heaven that features the eternal celebration of the risen Lord: "There before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people, and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were *holding palm branches in their hands*" (Revelation 7:9) These palm-bearing saints will shout, "Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb" (verse 10), and who can measure the sum of their joy?

Good Friday

For those not familiar with Good Friday, this day remembers when more than 2,000 years ago Jesus Christ died for the sins of the world. The events kicked off at the beginning of Holy Week when Jesus rode into Jerusalem. Mid-week, Judas Iscariot, one of Jesus' followers, agreed to betray him to the temple leaders. Jesus had been making, in the eyes of the religious leaders, uncomfortable claims about being God (John 8:48-59). They saw this as blasphemy and wanted to put him to death for it. After Jesus shared a Last Supper with his disciples, he prays in the Garden of Gethsemane (Matthew 26:36-56). There, Judas leads a mob to arrest Jesus. Jesus stands trial late in the night—certainly not the proper legal practice. False witnesses can't seem to get their story straight (Luke 22). Nevertheless, Jesus is tortured and presented to the Jewish people. They call for his death (Luke 23:21). Jesus is sentenced to die via

crucifixion, a Roman punishment reserved for criminals (most often, insurrectionists). He is nailed to the cross on Golgotha, where those who travel via the road nearby jeer at him (Luke 23). Jesus cries out seven times, and then he gives up his spirit. He perishes. After a stab wound from a Roman soldier (John 19:32-34) confirms his death, Jesus is taken down from the cross. And Joseph of Arimathea has Jesus' body prepared for a tomb (Matthew 27:57). The meaning of Good Friday marks the death of our Lord Jesus Christ. Though he lived a perfect, unblemished life, he dies for the sins of mankind. So that, through his Resurrection on Easter Sunday, that we may have a way of salvation through him (John 3:16).

Easter

When we look at the history of Easter we will find that the word Easter was substituted for the word "Pesach" which really is more correctly translated as Passover. For centuries, Passover foreshadowed the death of Jesus. Easter mentioned here in Acts 12 had nothing to do with Sunday. Passover is actually tied to a calendar day in the year, not a specific day of the week. What should be noticed is that the Jews did not have a ceremony for remembering the future resurrection of Jesus. The focus was on the great sacrifice God would make on that particular Passover day of the future. Not only that, there is no Biblical command to commemorate or memorialize the day of His resurrection. The silence of the New Testament on this topic should be noted, considering most of its books were written many years after Christ's death and resurrection. Let's look at the Bible to find the meaning of Easter and how it relates to the resurrection of Jesus. Romans shows us that baptism instead of Easter was given as a symbol of Christ's death, burial, and resurrection. Romans 6:3-5 says, "Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore, we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection." What we see is

that the true meaning is more than just a memorial for the resurrection one day a year with a church service. We can even celebrate the resurrection as we allow Christ's resurrection to become a reality in our lives as we live anew victoriously. Christ's death and resurrection is a daily hope of how the good will of God can overcome the forces of evil, of how truth will prevail and unmask the lie, of how love will triumph over sin, and how the blessed hope of eternal life will even put an end to death one day.

Jesus' Crown of Thorns

Thorns are associated with curses, death and dying, pain and sorrow, and sin. Placing the crown of thorns on Jesus' head would not have been a normal part of crucifixion during His time. Crucifixion was used by the Romans as a punishment. In the documentation of Jesus' crucifixion, found within the Gospels, a crown of thorns was placed on his head by the soldiers. Jesus had told Pilate that his kingdom was not of this world. The soldiers draped a purple robe around Jesus, put a crown of thorns on his head and shouted, "Hail, King of the Jews" (see John 19:2-3). They did this to make a mockery of Jesus and belittle him. The crown of thorns symbolized the royalty and majesty of a king and was used as part of their futile attempts to humiliate him. They did not realize that Jesus was offering up his own life in accordance with the will of his Father to save the world. The crown of thorns that was being used as a way to hurt and mock Jesus and his claims of being a king has instead become a powerful reminder of exactly who Jesus is and what he went through to save the world.

Jesus' Illegal Trial

Taken from an article by Harold Rhodes

During the time of Christ, most trials involving criminal procedure took weeks, if not months, to complete. But all the trials Jesus was subjected to were completed within nine hours of His arrest! And they were done in private, secretly. Also, consider this: Who made up the mob that arrested Jesus? The answer to this question brings us to the first error in the conviction of Jesus.

1. Jesus was arrested illegally.

Those who were involved in Christ's arrest included the priests and elders—His judges! Among them were also the very ones who bribed Judas. Moreover, Jesus was arrested secretly, by night. He was not arrested on the formal charge of any crime. There was no charge presented. There was no warrant for His arrest, no statement of what He had done. They just simply took Him. There was no legal basis on which Jesus was arrested. No one had presented testimony or evidence of guilt to the Sanhedrin whereby they could have requested His arrest.

2. It was a private night proceeding.

The first step in Jesus' trial was a preliminary examination in a private night proceeding. No session of the Court was to take place before the offering of the morning sacrifice. No night meetings were permitted. The law allowed such an investigation only upon daylight.

3. The Sanhedrin illegally proceeded to hold its trial of Jesus before sunrise.

The preliminary investigation before Annas brought forth no evidence whatsoever. Instead of dismissing the case, they proceeded to hold an illegal court. Why was it illegal? "Criminal cases can be acted upon by the various courts during daytime only, by the Lesser Synhedrions from the close of the morning service till noon, and by the Great Synhedrion till evening" The trial of Jesus was begun at night in the hours of early morning, without any witnesses to defend Him.

4. The Sanhedrin was illegally convened to try a capital offense on a day before an annual Sabbath (holy day).

"No court of justice in Israel was permitted to hold sessions on Sabbath or any of the seven Biblical holidays. In cases of capital crime, no trial could be commenced on Friday or the day previous to any holiday, because it was not lawful either to adjourn such cases longer than overnight, or to continue them on the Sabbath or holiday" The opponents of Jesus violated their own law by arresting Jesus on the day before an annual Sabbath—the First Day of Unleavened Bread.

5. The trial of Jesus was illegal because it was concluded in one day.

Jewish law states, "A criminal case resulting in the acquittal of the accused may terminate the same

day on which the trial began. But if a sentence of death is to be pronounced, it cannot be concluded before the following day” This was to allow sufficient opportunity for any witnesses in support of the accused to present themselves. But the court did not allow Jesus this opportunity.

6. *The indictments against Jesus were false or unproven.*

The court pronounced sentence on Jesus with no real supporting evidence. The only evidence presented by witnesses to the court was given by false witnesses. But their testimony was not even used by the court in sentencing Jesus to death. Here is what happened: Two false witnesses testified that Jesus said, “I will destroy this temple *made with hands*, and within three days I will build another *made without hands*” (Mark 14:58). The religious leaders used this statement as an indictment against Jesus. But this piece of evidence was not what Jesus said. He didn’t say the words “*that is made with hands.*” Jesus was not referring to the physical temple of Herod, erected by human hands, but to His own body, which would be raised in three days after His death. Jesus was indicted on the false charge that He would destroy the *physical* temple and rebuild it in three days’ time. But the court condemned Him on another matter altogether. The high priest demanded, “Tell us if You are the Christ, the Son of God!” Jesus said to him, ‘It is as you said. “Then the high priest tore his clothes, saying, ‘He has spoken blasphemy! What further need do we have of witnesses? Look, now you have heard His blasphemy! Jesus was indicted on one charge, tried on another and immediately condemned on His own testimony. Most important, Jesus truly was the Messiah, the Son of God, so His testimony was true—not blasphemy.

7. *The condemnation of Jesus by part of the Sanhedrin was illegal because those who might vote against His condemnation were not there.*

Notice what took place at Jesus’ trial before dawn, according to Mark’s account: “You have heard the blasphemy! And they all condemned Him to be deserving of death” (Mark 14:64). It was unanimous by all those who had gathered for the meeting. There was no investigation, no examination to see if He did or did not blaspheme. They just used His testimony against

Him without further investigation. They all did it immediately, instantaneously, and simultaneously. Where all suddenly agree on conviction, does it not seem that the convict is a victim of conspiracy, and that the verdict is not the result of sober reason and calm deliberation? The verdict against Jesus was simultaneous and unanimous, although the law required at least one of the council to serve as a defense counsel, but no one did. Furthermore, the high priest tore his clothes at the trial (Mark 14:63; Matthew 26:65). The high priest was forbidden to tear his clothes: “He who is the high priest among his brethren, on whose head the anointing oil was poured and who is consecrated to wear the garments, shall not uncover his head *nor tear his clothes*” (Leviticus 21:10; 10:6).

It seems the high priest tore his outer garment to stir up emotion—to prejudice others. Isaac Wise’s book *Martyrdom of Jesus*, explains the law on this point, “If none of the judges defend the culprit, *i.e.*, all pronounce him guilty, having no defender in the court, the verdict of guilty was invalid and the sentence of death could not be executed.” So, Jesus was condemned contrary to their law. It is interesting to note which members of the Sanhedrin were apparently missing during the trial. After Jesus was crucified, we read, “Now behold, there was a man named Joseph, a council member of the Sanhedrin, a good and just man. He had not consented to their decision and deed” (Luke 23:50-51). Since the consensus to condemn Jesus was unanimous, Joseph must not have been included in this illegal meeting. Neither is there a record that Nicodemus agreed with the decision. Remember, he said, “We know that You are a teacher come from God” (John 3:2). It seems the opponents of Jesus wanted to make sure these two men were not there to defend Jesus.

8. *The sentence against Jesus was pronounced in a place forbidden by law.*

Jesus was brought into the house of Caiaphas, the high priest. The trial of Jesus wasn’t even held in a court of law! “Having arrested Him, they led Him and brought Him into the high priest’s house” (Luke 22:54). According to Jewish law, “A sentence of death can be pronounced only so long as the Sanhedrin holds its sessions in the appointed place.” But the court building wasn’t legally to be opened until after sunrise. A sentence

of death could be passed only in a legal court, not in a private home, as occurred in Jesus' case.

9. Most Sanhedrin members themselves were legally disqualified to try Jesus.

Some of the judges were elected unfairly. Men such as Caiaphas, Eleazar, Jonathan, Theophilus, Matthias, Ismael, Simon, John, Alexander and Ananias were, according to Josephus, recipients of bribes and appointed by members of the family who themselves had no right to sit on the Sanhedrin. They bought their offices and were disrespected by their own people. Many of the judges were Jesus' enemies! They even paid bribe money to have Him betrayed. Under no circumstances was a man known to be at enmity with the accused person, permitted to occupy a position among his judges. Everybody knew that the Sadducees and Pharisees hated Jesus. Yet they permitted themselves to try Him.

10. They illegally switched the charges against Jesus from blasphemy to treason before Pilate.

They had to make this trial look legal, so as soon as it was day, they led Jesus into their council for a mock trial. They asked, "Are You then the Son of God?" Jesus answered, "'You rightly say that I am.' And they said, 'What further testimony do we need? For we have heard it ourselves from His own mouth.' Then the whole multitude of them arose and led Him to Pilate" (Luke 22:70-71; 23:1). Their trial, which had been illegally conducted in the private home of Caiaphas at night, was outwardly legalized. But instead of taking Jesus out to be stoned for blasphemy, they switched the charges after the court was dismissed! So, the Jewish leaders did not charge Jesus with blasphemy before Pilate. Had they done so, Pilate would have told them not to bother him, but to deal with Jesus according to their own law by stoning Him. But the religious leaders were afraid of their own people because Jesus was popular with the common people. So, they trumped up new charges against Jesus when they took Him to Pilate. They charged Him with treason. Matthew picks up the story: "When Pilate saw that he could not prevail at all, but rather that a tumult was rising, he took water and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, 'I am innocent of the blood of this just Person. You see to it'" (Matthew 27:24). Pilate wasn't innocent; he had his part in

the injustice. He was just afraid of losing his job. And this is where the trial of Jesus abruptly broke off. There was no justice here at all! An innocent man was condemned by mob violence. What a mockery of justice it all was! And, though He was completely innocent, **Jesus endured all of this suffering to pay the penalty for my sins, your sins and the sins of the whole world.**

April Services

- April 2nd - Palm Sunday 10:00am
Message by Tim Dressellhaus
- April 7th - Good Friday 6:00pm
- April 9th - Easter Sunday 10:00am
Message by Richard Dressellhaus
- April 16th - Message by Pastor Josiah Elias
- April 23rd - Message by Tony Orlando
- April 30th - Family Service

FC Sunday Nights

- April 2nd - Prayer Night at 6:00pm
Come join us as we come before the Lord in corporate and individual prayer for our church, for people and for the world around us.
- April 9th - - Easter - No activity.
- April 16th - The Chosen
- April 23rd - The Chosen
- April 30th - The Chosen

Legacy Builder's Outing

Summer's Past Farms & Grand Old BBQ - Friday April 28th. Leave church at 10:00am. Return to church at 3:00pm. (Cost \$5.00)

Legacy Builder's Meet to Swap

On March 24th about sixty of the Legacy Builders gathered to eat, worship and swap. During spring it is a tradition to clean. With the things they cleaned out of their homes, the Legacy Builders shared their unwanted/unneeded items with others who found them as their new treasures. For each bag of treasure collected, a Legacy Builder donated \$5 or more. This event was their second Meet to Swap. The first was held in August of

2022. With the funds collected from this first swap the Legacy Builders, along with help from the FC Men, were able to buy new parents, Aubrey and Christian Plascencia, a stroller. Close to \$500 was collected from the March 24th swap with these funds supporting scholarships for those going to Youth Camp. Bonnie Hernandez and Travis Clingforth, who were part of Faith Chapel as young people, heard the call from the LORD to be missionaries at church-Bonnie at 14 and Travis at 18. The Legacy Builders are happy to invest in the future of Faith Chapel's youth.

Church Membership

Membership in the church is a very important part of belonging to Faith Chapel. Church membership is a way of identifying oneself with a local body of believers and of making oneself accountable to proper spiritual leadership. Church membership is a statement of solidarity and like-mindedness (see Philippians 2:2). Church membership is not required of Christians. It is simply a way of saying, "I am a Christian, and I believe this church is a good church." If you would like to become a member, please contact one of the church elders or inquire at the church administrative office.

Connect Classes

Please Note: There will be no Connect Classes on Easter Sunday.

The purpose of a connect class is to provide a variety of scripture-based lessons to enhance the spiritual journey of those who attend. Classes begin each Sunday at 8:30am and end at 9:30am. Below are the scheduled classes for the beginning of 2023.

- "Expedition" - A 10-week journey through the Bible offers a panoramic view of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. Presented by Dr. Timothy Dresselhaus in the Hospitality Suite.
- "The Epistles of Peter, John and Jude" - Growing and maturing in Christ as a

community of believers. Presented by Eric Madril in LL4.

- "The Book of Exodus." Presented Rose Necochea in room C215.
- "A Blessed Life" - Based on Pastor Robert Morris' bestselling book, "The Blessed Life: Unlocking the Rewards of Generous Living" Presented by Richard Dinnen in room C214
- "The Book of Matthew" presented by Marsha Streiker each Sunday from 12:00pm to 1:30pm in room C214.

Volunteer Opportunities

There are many ways to serve and use your Spiritual Gifts here at Faith Chapel. Sunday nursery and children's ministry, ushering, greeting, worship, production and media, special projects and hospitality are some of the ways you can get plugged in and use your talents and gifts to serve the body of Christ. If you would like to volunteer for any of these areas, contact the church office for more information.

Easter Trivia

Easter always falls between which two dates?

Answer: March 22nd and April 25th

How many jellybeans do Americans consume each Easter?

Answer: 16 million

When was the first White House Easter Egg Roll?

Answer: 1878

Faith Chapel

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