



Matthew 28:5-6

5 The angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. 6 He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay."

Easter 2019 is fast approaching. Noticed that I mentioned the year 2019. I mentioned it because I am wondering if the meaning of why we celebrate Easter this year will be different from last year or from ten years ago. Do you remember how you celebrated Easter ten years ago? Maybe or maybe not...but what is important, is to think deeply why we celebrate. Easter as described in the New Testament occurred on the third day of Jesus Christ's burial after his crucifixion by the Romans at Calvary c. 30 AD.

The Easter narrative can be found in all of the four Gospels (Matthew 28:1-8, Mark 16:1-8, Luke 24:1-12, and John 20:1-13). *"He is not here, he is risen!"* The Savior's declaration that He will rise on the third day actually happened. He kept His promise. He kept His word. This is already something to celebrate. Jesus is not playing jokes on us. Jesus is a man of his words.

During Easter we celebrate the Son of God and His victory over death. Jesus' resurrection signifies the gift of eternal life for all who believe Him. It is a clear reminder for us to *never lose hope, to continue to believe, to have faith and to have a complete trust in God*. Easter is a sign of never giving up in spite of whatever battles we are facing. Easter is a sign of God's full assurance that we can rely in God. Easter is a sign of God's illuminating light when we walk in darkness. Easter is a sign of God's unending love to us despite of our wickedness and unfaithfulness. Easter is a sign that we can rise up from our own deathbed of frustrations and exasperation and look forward to a new beginning with Jesus Christ. Easter is a sign of an everlasting life.

Nelson Thomas Wright (or N.T. Wright), a retired Anglican Bishop and is an English New Testament scholar said, "The resurrection completes the inauguration of God's kingdom. It is the decisive event demonstrating that God's kingdom really has been launched on earth as it is in heaven. The message of Easter is that God's new world has been unveiled in Jesus Christ and that you're now invited to belong to it." An invitation of belonging. It means we are a part of Jesus' resurrection as well. Another powerful reason why we we need to celebrate Easter!

I pray that Easter 2019 will be more meaningful to all of you. I pray that you will be able to find the fortitude, inspiration and strength that you need to face your daily lives.

Celebrate Easter with us on April 21, 2019. I invite you to join during the following services.

Easter Sunrise Service

at Campbell's Scottish Highlands Golf Course, 79 Brady Ave, Salem, NH 03079

(Time will be announced at a later date)

9:00AM at Pleasant Street United Methodist Church

8 Pleasant St., Salem, NH 03070

11:00AM at St. Luke's United Methodist Church

63 E Broadway, Derry, NH 03038

Happy Easter!

I am longing and praying to serve an inclusive Church.

Pastor Nory Vedan Leachon

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