

How has the birth, death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ affected your life?

April 20, 2014

Today is Easter Sunday and it is a day that we should all rejoice and be thankful for the work of the death on the cross and the resurrection of Jesus Christ proclaims the power that is in the name of Jesus. He conquered death, hell and the grave and because He lives, we can live also.

Jesus spoke plainly to his disciples when the Passover time had come and it was time for him to offer himself as the Lamb of God that would take away the sins of the world. John the Baptist had proclaimed this when Jesus had come to him to be baptized. No one really understood how this was going to happen, but in Matthew 20:17, as Jesus was going up to Jerusalem, his disciples were with him and he spoke clearly of how this journey would end. In verse 18, Jesus is speaking to the 12 men. "Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priest and unto the scribes and they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock and to scourge, and to crucify him and the third day he shall rise again."

In Matthew 26, we read where Jesus went to pray in the Mount of Olives and he took Peter, James and John with him and asked them to watch and pray with him. He went a little ways from them and prayed and when he returned, he found them asleep. He asked Peter "Couldn't you watch with me one hour? Watch and pray that you enter not into temptation for the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak." He left them again and when he returned, they had fallen asleep again. When he returned he told them to sleep on and take their rest for the hour has come for the Son of man to be betrayed by sinners. Rise and let us be going; behold he is at hand that will betray me."

While he was still speaking, Judas, one of the 12, came with a great multitude with swords and staves from the chief priest and elders of the people and had told them that the one that he kissed would be the one they were looking for. With that he came towards Jesus and said, "Hail, master, and kissed him." Jesus was taken to the judgment hall and Caiaphas the high priest and scribes and elders were assembled there. False witnesses testified against Jesus and notice in verse 63, the authority of the high priest. Jesus refused to defend himself so the high priest answered and said to him, "I command you by the living God that you tell us whether you are the Christ, the Son of God." This high priest used his priestly authority that God had entrusted him with to command Jesus to answer his questions. Jesus said, "You have said. Nevertheless I say unto you. Hereafter shall you see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power and coming in the clouds of heaven." The high priest took those words to accuse Jesus of blasphemy and they all agreed he was guilty of death. From this time, they spit on him, they mocked him and smacked him with the palms of their hands and demanded that he tell them who had struck him. They demanded that he prophecy to them and they made fun of him saying

he was Christ. The following morning they brought him before Pontius Pilate, the governor with the hopes that he would be condemned to die by crucifixion.

Pilate was suspicious of the motives of the Jewish leaders right from the beginning. In chapter 27:18, it says that he knew it was because of envy that they had delivered Jesus to him to condemn. When he asked what the charges were against Jesus, he was told that he was a criminal. Pilate offered to free Jesus and to condemn Barabbas to death.

In verse 19, as he sat down on the judgment seat, his wife sent unto him saying, "Have nothing to do with that just man; for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him." Verse 20 reveals that the chief priest and elders persuaded the multitude that they should ask for Barabbas to be released and that Jesus should be condemned to die. Pilate asked Jesus if he was a king. Jesus said that his kingdom was not of this earth and it was obvious as he had no servants to prevent his arrest or any armies to challenge the kingship of Rome. Pilate understood that Jesus was not a political enemy that the Jews made him out to be. In John 19:10, Pilate declares that he has found no fault in Jesus. Even as Pilate ordered him to be flogged and then crucified, he declared again that he found no fault in him. The Jews declared that they had a law and by their law, he needed to be put to death because he made himself the Son of God. When Pilate heard that saying he was more afraid. He went out to ask Jesus "Whence art thou?" Jesus wouldn't answer him. Pilate then said, "You are not going to speak to me? Don't you know that I have power to crucify you and I have power to release you?" Jesus said, "You could not have any power at all against me except it was given to you from above. Therefore he that delivered me unto you has the greater sin." Pilate continued to try to release him, but he had compromised too much and he ended up feeling powerless to follow his heart's conviction. Pilate's authority was an illusion compared to the will of God. Judas' part in the betrayal of the master was an illusion for when he saw that Jesus was condemned, he could not face the guilt of betraying an innocent man. He went back to the chief priest and tried to return his reward money, but they wouldn't accept it. He threw it down and went and hung himself. The chief priest authority that he used to condemn Jesus was an illusion for he used God's law to condemn his Son. He will also face the judgment at the last day. It appeared that Satan had won the victory as Jesus hung on the cross of shame and gave his life. Pilate had a sign placed above Jesus head that read, "Jesus of Nazareth, king of the Jews." When people tried to get him to say that Jesus claimed to be the king of the Jews, he refused to change the wording. Jesus' body was placed in a garden in a new sepulcher which had never been used. It was a tree that tempted Eve and brought sin into the world. It was a garden that they were driven out of because of their disobedience to God and their sin of turning over their inheritance to the evil one. Jesus gave his life on the tree and his body was placed in a sepulcher that was in a garden. On the third day, the powers of hell could not keep Jesus in the grave. In John 20, Mary Magdalene went early to anoint Jesus' body; she found the stone taken away and Jesus had risen! Praise God!