

WHAT'S THAT ABOUT EASTER?

MARCH 28, 2020

Sometime last week I decided that watching the daily press conferences was too stressful for me. I am a numbers person, I am a science person, but I am also a person of hope. The press conferences seemed to share trends that made me anxious, and that was not how I wanted to feel. I stopped watching until I heard, after the fact, that the President hoped we could restart the economy and have packed churches for Easter. The medical community quickly opposed this idea, but I thought it was interesting to think this mass quarantine, shut down closure, could come to an abrupt end in the next two weeks, by April 12, 2020. I do believe God can stop the spread of the virus, but I don't think God operates on our timeline. I don't think God will stop this virus simply because we are sore about the economy. The comment about packed churches on Easter, though, really made me think.



Annually, churches [report](#) their greatest attendance on Easter Sunday with Christmas a close second, but Christmas is not always on a Sunday. Many churches must put out extra seats for the Easter Sunday crowd. There are people who only attend church on Easter Sunday. Google reports an uptick in searches for "church" or "nearby church" as Easter approaches each year. Why is this? According to the Pew Research Center, "Among those who attend no more than a few times a year, about three-in-ten say they do not go to religious services for a simple reason: They are not believers." This response makes me wonder, well, *why go on Easter?* Could it be that largely they do not believe the Gospel message, but there is a small part of them that believes the Gospel *could, maybe, potentially* be true so they go on Easter Sunday to hear about it again, in a different presentation, to help them decide if it is worth believing - maybe.

I don't believe we will have packed churches for Easter, or Resurrection Sunday, as many call it on April 12, 2020. It will be quite a different experience this year to have virtual church services on the day that we celebrate the foundation of our faith. We must remember that the church is not a building. The Church is the people who believe. Although we will be socially-distanced on Resurrection Sunday 2020, we will be spread among the non-believers who only attend church once or twice a year - those who want to believe but aren't sure. So, Church, the pressure is on you to share the Gospel message this year. And you can share the gospel from a 6-foot distance, so no excuses! Then watch the [YouTube video](#) to see how it can be done.

You have neighbors who don't believe, and you will see them between now and April 12. Right now there is great anxiety and uncertainty, and people want something good to believe. People want to believe there is a good God who can bring this virus situation to a close. It's on you and me this year to BE THE CHURCH. If that means sitting on your porch waiting for a non-believing neighbor to come strolling by because they needed some fresh air, or if it means clipping some flowers out of your yard to give to a neighbor with a Scripture attached, it is on you and me to prepare the Gospel message for 2020. † Please see below for some helpful tips.

How do you [share the Gospel](#)? Some of the items below will become talking points as you share the Gospel.

1. **Know God for yourself. Know the importance of Jesus' death and resurrection.**
God the Father is the Creator of all things. It is His earth, not ours - His plan, not ours - We are to live for His glory, not ours. Life's instruction book is the Holy Bible - God's Holy Word.
2. **Know that sin is an offense against God.** Everyone sins. We are born sinners. Sin separates us from God. If we remain in our sin, when we physically die we will be eternally separated from God, in hell. There is no such thing as a good person.
3. **Jesus is God's one and only Son.** God sent Jesus to live on earth as a man and to experience life as man experiences it. Hebrews tells us that Jesus was tempted in every way, but did not sin. Jesus, who never committed any sin bore the sins of the world. Jesus was tortured and crucified on the cross to pay the penalty for all of the world's sins.
4. **God raised Jesus from the dead.** (Easter) On the third day, God raised Jesus from the dead demonstrating His mighty power. He defeated death. By Jesus's resurrection, we know that God is all powerful. Through Jesus's resurrection sin and death are defeated. Believing in Him, our sin and death are defeated, too. When we die, we won't pay the penalty for sin, we will live a resurrected life, in heaven with Jesus.
5. **Questions we must ask:**
 - 1) Do you believe God is the Creator of all things?
 - 2) Do you believe you are a sinner?
 - 3) Do you believe Jesus was the Son of God, sent to redeem you, and all mankind, from the penalty of sin?
 - 4) Would you like for God to forgive you of your sins, through the blood of Jesus?
 - 5) Will you accept the truth of God into your heart today?
 - 6) Will you begin to read and study your Bible so that you will grow in your Christian Faith?
6. **Give them a hug (or air hug), and tell them the angels are rejoicing at their decision.** Invite them to come back and visit you, or you visit with them, to discuss their faith in more detail. Invite them to your church, once church resumes weekly meetings. Tell them you will meet them and you will sit with them. If you have an extra Bible, give it to the person. **You are the Church. Be the Church.** 💜 †

What if they say, “nah, I’m good.”

- That’s their decision. Leave it alone. Don’t feel as if you were rejected, they rejected God, not you. You did what you were supposed to do. Don’t push. You planted the seed, maybe it’s there for the next person to water it. It’s your job to share, it’s their job to accept it. Pray for this person.

What if they say - Why would a good God not stop this virus?

- He could be punishing us for sin. There is certainly lots of sin in the world.
- He could be subduing people’s actions so that the Earth can heal.
- He could be answering our prayers! We always pray about not having enough time - now we have time to spend with our children, our spouse, time to plant that garden we’ve been talking about, time to talk rather than just text, time to clean house, time to start reading our Bible.

I’ve lost my job because of the Coronavirus - why would a good God allow that?

- We don’t know the plans God has for our lives, but Jeremiah 29:11 says, “‘For I know the plans I have for you,’ declares the Lord, ‘plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.’”
- We have to believe that God’s plans for us are good.
- Maybe He is going to give you an even better job after this is over.
- Maybe He is giving you the opportunity to develop one of the creative talents He gave you so that you can use that once this is over and work will no longer seem like work.

So, what’s that about Easter?

The Church has to step up and be the Church!

Amen!

Have an awesome week! (Please be sure to watch this week’s [video!](#))

Kim