

MARS HILL BAPTIST CHURCH

April 9, 2020

Mini Newsletter



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Scripture Memory Challenge

Luke 24:6-7 (ESV)

He is not here, but has risen. Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men and be crucified and on the third day rise.



OUR PRAYER REQUESTS

<u>MEMBERS OF MHBC & SS</u>	<u>FRIENDS OF MHBC</u>	<u>MISSIONARIES</u>	<u>PLACES & EVENTS</u>	<u>OTHERS</u>	<u>MILITARY</u>
Daniel Berry	Gene and Judy	Baptist	War on	Good News	Our Service
John and Gloria	Akin	Missionaries	Terrorism	Club	Men & Women
Best	Ericka and Jack	Melanie Edwards		Lost persons	
Mary Carolyn	Davis	Harley Grafton	COVID - 19	you know	
Bishop	Carolina	Matt Foshee &	crisis	Caregivers-esp.	
Denver Corley	Garrett*	Family Utah		Family	
Brandon Davis	John Garrett*	Sam & Melody		Members	
Gene Deitz	Jacob Jones	Harrell		OCIM	
Hunter Frazier*	Leila Morris	Peggy T. Johnson		Our Elected	
Bettie Harrison	Ross Oliver	David Platt		Officials	
Marty Melvin	Hank Rhoden			Our Police and	
Nick Mincey*	Sharon Rhoden			Law	
Drew Mincey*	Adam Rosy			Enforcement	
Beth Oliver	Elsie Stanford			Officers-Chapel	
Evelyn Perry	Kathy			Hill	
Rusty Wagoner	Wilkerson*				
Bob Wilson	The Family of				
Roy Wilson	Keith Dorset*				
	The Family of				
	Sheila				
	McGhee*				
	The Family of				
	Anna Lee Gross				
	The Family of				
	Hubert Bishop				
	The Family of				
	Roy Berry				

The Incalculable Riches of Christ

(3) For we are the circumcision, the ones who serve by the Spirit of God, boast in Christ Jesus, and do not put confidence in the flesh— (4) although I once also had confidence in the flesh. If anyone else thinks he has grounds for confidence in the flesh, I have more: (5) circumcised the eighth day; of the nation of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrews; regarding the law, a Pharisee; (6) regarding zeal, persecuting the church; regarding the righteousness that is in the law, blameless. (7) But everything that was a gain to me, I have considered to be a loss because of Christ. (8) More than that, I also consider everything to be a loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. Because of Him I have suffered the loss of all things and consider them filth, so that I may gain Christ (9) and be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own from the law, but one that is through faith in Christ—the righteousness from God based on faith. (10) My goal is to know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, (11) assuming that I will somehow reach the resurrection from among the dead. (12) Not that I have already reached the goal or am already fully mature, but I make every effort to take hold of it because I also have been taken hold of by Christ Jesus. -- Philippians 3:3-12 (HCSB)

On the south shore of Nova Scotia, Canada there is a tree-covered island called Oak Island. Not to be confused with the Oak Island that our youth go to each summer where Fort Caswell is located. This island is about 140 acres, privately owned and is best known for various theories about possible buried treasure or historical artifacts, and the associated exploration.

Oak Island has been the subject for treasure hunters ever since the late 1700s. Rumors abound as to the many different treasures buried there including the treasure of Captain Kidd. Since 1856 stories have been documented and published about the search for treasure and from those searches various theories have developed about other treasures that might be buried on Oak Island including religious artifacts, manuscripts, and Marie Antoinette's jewels.

Currently, there is a reality TV show called “The Curse of Oak Island,” which has aired on the History channel since 2014. While countless attempts have been made to recover treasure from this Island, to this date nothing of incredible significance or value has been found on the Island. No treasure trove of gold or cache of jewels has been found. At most, a few artifacts have been found on the island which has continued to fuel the passion of those that believe treasure exists somewhere underneath the ground of the island.

Sadly, there are those that have lost their lives in pursuit of a treasure they fully believed was there. With no evidence of valuables after millions of dollars have been poured into finding the

treasure and countless man-hours have been spent searching the sad reality that, barring something bordering on the miraculous, there is no treasure on Oak Island and all those that are looking for this wonderful treasure are looking in vain.

Wouldn't that be bad? To go almost your whole life searching and pursuing something only to find that it was a pipe dream, that it never was there or obtainable in the first place.

Sadly, that is where most of our world finds itself.

It is not a new phenomenon. People have been pursuing and valuing false religions and idols almost back to the beginning of time. We have countless examples of this in the Scriptures. In Exodus 32, Moses' visit upon Mount Sinai was taking a long time. Because of that the people of Israel called on Aaron to make a golden calf for them to worship. They pursued and valued a false God rather than the true God.

In Judges chapter 10, even after God had rescued and fought for the people of Israel, they turned their backs on God and pursued a false god once again.

The people of Israel again did what was evil in the sight of the LORD and served the Baals and the Ashtaroth, the gods of Syria, the gods of Sidon, the gods of Moab, the gods of the Ammonites, and the gods of the Philistines. And they forsook the LORD and did not serve him.
-- Judges 10:6 (ESV)

Today people still pursue and cherish worthless idols and gods. As they do the belief is that whatever it is they are pursuing will bring them peace, prosperity, and whatever they view salvation to be. The idols of today are not carved from wood or stone but take many different forms.

Money, health, careers, and philosophies are all in the mix as well as fame, notoriety, and skills. Though none of these things on their own are sinful and bad, it is the worship and reliance on these things which make them idols. Though many might trust in them, they hold no hope or power to save a single soul from hell.

Rather than any of these things moving someone closer to God, they push us away from trusting and relying on Him to be the Savior of our souls.

In the New Testament we see a man who would fit the bill of pursuing and trusting in the things around him and in him quite well. When he is first introduced in Scripture he is called Saul of Tarsus. He is a zealous man who was as religious as you could be in the Jewish community. He

trusted in His heritage, knowledge, and lifestyle. Those things were his treasure and he pursued them passionately in his life.

However, in the book of Acts he changes or rather he is changed by Someone he met, Jesus Christ. Jesus meets Saul on the road to Damascus and changes his outlook and what he treasured in life. Not long after this time Saul of Tarsus would begin to use a different name, Paul the Apostle. He was one that pursued a different treasure, that of the incalculable Riches of Christ.

In Philippians Paul is commending the church at Philippi for their generosity to him and their ongoing faith in Christ. Here in this passage Paul talks about two things, those things which were his past treasures and things which are now worthless to him, and those things which he now values more than anything.

First, let's look at those things which are worthless to Paul. In verse 7 we read *"But everything that was a gain to me, I have considered to be a loss because of Christ."* Gain and loss both are both accounting terms. The word gain in the Greek is Kerdos. It means accumulating. The idea behind the word is accumulating or gathering in wealth or profit. Contrasting that is the word loss. In the Greek it is zemia. This word has the meaning of loss, damage, or hurt. It has behind it the image of a destructive liability.

So what was Paul convinced was a destructive liability. He mentions several things in this passage. The first of which is religious rituals. Verse 5 says this "circumcised the eighth day." In this time circumcision was an essential rite in Judaism. Literally Paul said I am an eighth dayer. What he was getting at was when it came to the rituals I was supposed to do, I did them.

Paul probably took part in more religious ceremonies than we could ever fathom, however Paul counted them as a loss and a liability. The reason for this was it did not help him gain salvation, or draw Him into a closer relationship with Christ. Because of that, all the rituals and ceremonies he took part in were nothing more than a liability in his life.

The same can be true of us today. We can participate in countless ceremonies at church or home but without Christ as the center of what we do, the ceremony has no real meaning. Even more dangerous is trusting in rituals and ceremonies to be the conduit in which you would come into a relationship with Christ. We can never get to heaven through a ritual, only a relationship with Christ.

Notice what else Paul looked at as without value when compared to His relationship with Christ, family heritage and social status. Verse 5 continues *"of the nation of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin."* What was Paul saying? To be born of the nation of Israel meant that he was born as

one of God's chosen people. Paul could trace his lineage back and show how he had ancestors which God helped and carried through the wilderness and was given special favor by God Himself. Not only that Paul was of the tribe of Benjamin which meant he could trace his lineage back to the child that Rachel and Jacob had in the promised land. Not only that but the very first king of Israel was from the tribe of Benjamin. Paul had a premium pedigree but he looked at it like a crumpled newspaper.

Why was this? Did Paul not value his family and the rich history that he had. No, I bet Paul was proud of his family tree and the rich history it contained. He looked at it this way because Paul knew that the only relationship that really had any value was the personal relationship one has with Jesus Christ.

His family background did not guarantee his acceptance into God's family. He did not get a pass into heaven because his great great great grandfather was good and godly in their life. What mattered to Paul was his personal and present relationship that he had with Christ.

Paul did not get special treatment because he was of a kingly tribe. It didn't matter to God how many crowns were on his family tree. What mattered was Paul's heart.

For us today that is great but also sobering news. It means that our background and family history does not matter one bit when it comes to our relationship with Christ. It doesn't matter if we come from money, poverty, or wicked or saintly parents. Jesus Christ looks at each of us as we are and accepts and forgives us personally. There is nothing that any member of your family can do to bar you from having faith in Christ.

However, the opposite of that is true as well. No matter how good your mom, or dad, or grandmother is it will not get you into heaven. It doesn't matter if your grandfather is the most godly man on the planet, it will not get you into heaven. That only comes by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone. That is why Paul said that his family heritage and status was not worth anything when compared to the relationship he had with Christ.

Along with his family heritage Paul also named his religious upbringing and religious rank as being of no worth when compared to the riches of Christ. Verse 5 ends with these words, "a Hebrew born of Hebrews; regarding the law, a Pharisee." What Paul is indicating here is a pure and strict religious upbringing that ranked him among the top religious persons of his day. Many scholars believe that when Paul says that he is a Hebrew born of Hebrews meant he grew up in a strict household where Hebrew was actually spoken allowing him to read the ancient text, something many of the Pharisees could not do in their original language. Simply put, Paul had the gold standard for religious upbringing.

Not only that, though, Paul was schooled as a Pharisee by the very knowledgeable and well respected Gamaliel. Paul had an amazing education and high religious status but he looked at it as nothing because it didn't establish a relationship with Christ.

Truly, there is no amount of degrees, no certificate, or diploma any university or college can bestow on anyone that will grant them saving faith in Jesus Christ. For this reason Paul looks back at all of those things in his life and says compared to Christ that are simply not worth anything.

Finally, Paul talks about his passions in life. Verse 6 says, *“regarding zeal, persecuting the church; regarding the righteousness that is in the law, blameless.”* In verse 6 Paul reveals that when it came to his convictions and passion about doing what he thought was right and good he couldn't be beat.

Paul said that he was so passionate about being a good Jew and preserving their religion he persecuted the church by going out and throwing Christians into prison. He goes on to speak about how his life was so dedicated to the law that he was blameless towards it. Basically Paul was showing that he was fully committed and passionate about following and protecting his religious beliefs. All of those things though, he counted as a loss in his life. Paul knew the simple truth that actions and good works or even passionate and zealous things can get you into heaven. Only Christ can do that.

Let us remember that no amount of good deeds that we might do for God, self, country, or family will ever make us right before Him. Our actions, good or moral as they might be, don't have the power to justify us before a holy God or raise us up one millimeter towards heaven. The reality in which we exist does not work in that manner. We are by nature sinful before God in need of a cleansing that can only be accomplished by a power and One greater than ourselves.

The One Who can do this is the One Who died for us and took our place upon Calvary's cross, Jesus Christ. The Apostle Paul knew this and that is why after he tells of all the things he counts as loss in his life he focuses on Christ and exalts His worth as priceless.

He writes in verse 8, “More than that, I also consider everything to be a loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord.”

He goes on to give 5 precious things Paul valued and pursued in his life. 5 objects which had indescribable value to him.

The first is the knowledge of Christ. The verse 8 and the beginning of verse 9 say this, *“More than that, I also consider everything to be a loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. Because of Him I have suffered the loss of all things and consider them filth, so that I may gain Christ 9 and be found in Him,”*

All the things Paul had worked for and strived for in his life he threw them into the trash in order to know Christ. All the rituals, all the works he had done to try and merit salvation with God, Paul counted them as filth. Interestingly that work translated as “knowing” means knowledge greater than mere facts.

What Paul was speaking of here was deep intimate knowledge found only through relationship and experience. This knowledge had faith and trust interwoven into it. This is a perfect picture of conversion, of someone that throws away all their man made ways of trying to get to God and embracing Christ.

How often in our own life do we see or even participate in the exact opposite. How quick this world is to discard the simplicity of the Gospel in search of some deeper truth or some alternate pathway to God. How often is the Gospel abandoned for an aimless search when God Himself has come down to find us.

Let us not forget at this Easter time that the empty tomb cries out so much but one of those cries is that God Himself came down into this world that He might know us and redeem us. God came searching for His lost sheep. Our greatest pursuit then is to find Christ.

Paul cherished the knowledge of Christ but he also cherished the righteousness of Christ. The rest of verse 9 states this, *“not having a righteousness of my own from the law, but one that is through faith in Christ—the righteousness from God based on faith.”* Don’t forget, Paul gave his credentials just a few verses before. He claimed to be the cream of the crop best of the best when it came to human behavior. He was educated in the law, adhered to the law, and was zealous to the point of going out and throwing other Christians in prison in defense of what he believed.

What did he say under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit? Paul said “not having a righteousness of my own.” Paul looked at himself and said I have no righteousness in myself. If Paul had no righteousness then what hope do we have?

The hope we have is in the One who is righteous and the One that Paul had hope in Jesus Christ. Paul said that through faith in Christ the righteousness was attributed or given to him. When we come to Christ in faith that is a wonderful part of salvation. All of the righteousness of Christ is

transferred over to us. All the good that Christ is, that goodness is transferred to us that we might be righteous before the eyes of God.

We cannot obtain it through good works or a good heritage. Our parents cannot give it to us, we cannot buy it, nor can we obtain it through mystical or magical ways. We can, however, through faith in Christ, the unobtainable. Paul knew this and cherished the righteousness of Christ in his life.

Another cherished object of Paul's life was the sanctifying power of the resurrection. What a very fitting verse for this Easter season. Verse 10 states *"My goal is to know Him and the power of His resurrection."* At Easter we celebrate the empty tomb but we also celebrate all the truths that come along with the fact that Jesus was raised from the dead. We know that as Christ rose from the dead he defeated sin and death and because of that, Christ's victory can be our victory too.

When we receive Christ as our Savior we receive new life in Him. We are alive and empowered spiritually and because of that we are able to gain victory over sin in our lives and begin the process of becoming more and more holy. This is what Paul said he wanted, that power reigning in his life bringing him to a place where he had a holy and righteous life. That is the power of the resurrection working in the hearts and lives of believers.

Let us not forget that Easter is a time where we celebrate Christ's victory over death and the salvation available to all, but let us also remember that salvation also empowers us to live for God each and every day and to live in victory over the sins that so easily ensnared us before we knew Christ as Savior.

The next to last precious object that Paul cherished is his fellowship with Christ. Look at what verse 10 says, "and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death." For Paul one of the cherished pursuits of his life was to have fellowship with Christ and a life like Christ's.

The life of the believer is called to be the exact same way. We are called to pursue and enjoy our life with Christ and to cherish it. Just as we develop and strengthen earthly bonds with friends and family so much more should our bond be with Christ.

Paul wanted a life that was distinctly Christian in every facet. How about us? We want lives filled with so many things. We want fame, success, fortune, and happiness. How about a life filled with things that paint a clear picture of a life that is in fellowship with Christ and is distinctly Christian.

Finally Paul said he cherished the fact that he would one day be in heaven. The last two verses say this. “Assuming that I will somehow reach the resurrection from among the dead. Not that I have already reached the goal or am already fully mature, but I make every effort to take hold of it because I also have been taken hold of by Christ Jesus.”

Paul was saying this, I know I’m not already there but Jesus Christ has gotten hold of me, therefore I’m going to live the life I am given showing everyone that heaven is where I am going.

How about you today? What is it that you cherish? When people look at your life, what would they say is really important? Let us, as Paul did so long ago, depart from the worthless things of this life and press forward cherishing and clinging to the incalculable riches of Christ made possible through the loving heart of God and the great work of Christ on Calvary and the empty tomb of Easter.



Christ Arose

The story behind the hymn.

*Up from the grave he arose
with a mighty triumph o'er his foes;
he arose a victor from the dark domain,
and he lives forever with his saints to reign.
He arose! Hallelujah! Christ arose!*

Robert Lowry (1826-1899), the Philadelphia-born author and composer of this hymn, was a popular Baptist preacher and educator who served churches in Pennsylvania, New York City and Plainfield, N.J.

Lowry studied theology at the University of Lewisburg (now Bucknell University), graduating in 1854 and teaching literature there from 1869-1875. He became known for his gospel songs while ministering in Brooklyn, collaborating often with William H. Doane in producing gospel song collections.

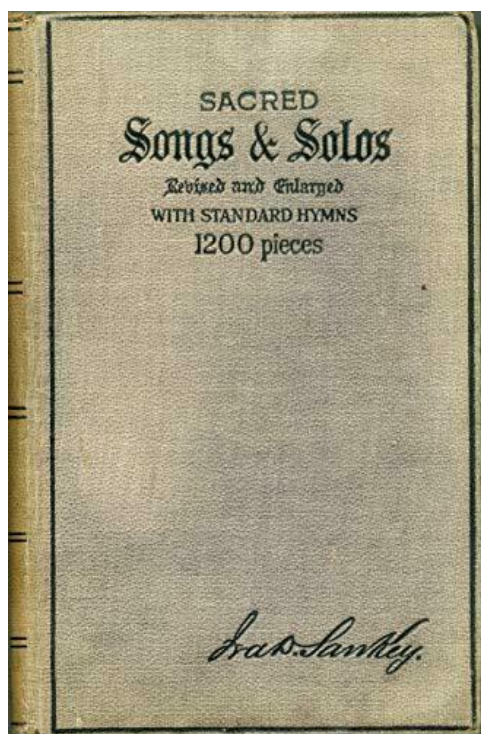
Among his most famous gospel compositions are “*Nothing but the Blood of Jesus*” and “*Shall We Gather at the River*.” He also composed tunes for other’s texts, such as “*Marching to Zion*”, a camp meeting version of Isaac Watts’ text, “*Come, We that Love the Lord*,” and “*Need*,” a tune for Annie Hawks’ hymn, “*I Need Thee Every Hour*.”



Hymnologist Kenneth Osbeck notes that “Lowry was recognized as a most capable minister of the gospel, possessing keen insight and administrative ability. He became known as a thorough Bible scholar and a brilliant and captivating orator; few preachers of his day had greater ability to paint word pictures and to inspire a congregation. Music and a knowledge of hymnology were his favorite studies, but always as an avocation.”

When William Bradbury, another well-known gospel songwriter, died, Lowry was selected by the Biglow Publishing Company in 1868 to be its music editor. In this capacity, he published more than 20 Sunday school songbooks. *Pure Gold*, considered to be his most successful publication, sold more than 1,000,000 copies.

When asked about writing a hymn, he said, “It must be readily apprehended by the Christian consciousness, coming forth from the experience of the writer, and clothed in strong and inspiring words.”



“Low in the Grave He Lay,” called *“Christ Arose”* in many hymnals, was composed in 1874 while Lowry was the pastor of the First Baptist Church of Lewisburg, Pa. It first appeared in the collection *Brightest and Best* (1875) under the title *“He is not here, but risen—Luke 24:5.”* When it was included in music evangelist Ira D. Sankey’s *Sacred Songs and Solos* (1875), the song became very popular in the Moody-Sankey revivals. From that point, it appeared in a number of 19th-century British and American hymnals.

Mr. Osbeck records this account of the composition of the gospel song: Following his reflection on the resurrection as recorded in Luke 24:6-8, “. . . Lowry found himself seated at the little pump organ in the parlor of his home, and, in a very spontaneous fashion, there came forth the music and the words, giving expression to the thoughts that had been uppermost in his mind.”

The centerpiece of the song is the textual and musical contrast between the stanzas and the refrain. The dirge-like stanzas in block chords with a melody that plods in a stepwise fashion give way to a rhythmic refrain that surges up like a trumpet blast. Like many gospel songs, the three stanzas basically say the same thing in three different ways. Each stanza ends with “Jesus my Lord!”—reminiscent of the early Christian affirmation “Jesus is Lord.” (Romans 10:9-13)

Within the Western 19th-century gospel sound, the music of this song captures perfectly the spirit of the transition from Good Friday to Easter Sunday.

Low in the grave he lay, Jesus my Savior, waiting the coming day, Jesus my Lord!

Vainly they watch his bed, Jesus my Savior, vainly they seal the dead, Jesus my Lord!

Death cannot keep its prey, Jesus my Savior; he tore the bars away, Jesus my Lord!

**Up from the grave he arose;
with a mighty triumph o'er his foes;
he arose a victor from the dark domain,
and he lives forever, with his saints to reign.
He arose! He arose! Hallelujah! Christ arose!**

5 Minute Theology

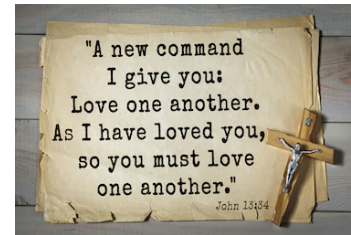
What is Maundy Thursday / Holy Thursday?



Maundy Thursday, also known as “Holy Thursday,” is the Thursday of Passion Week, one day before Good Friday (the Friday before Easter). Maundy Thursday is the name given to the day on which Jesus celebrated the Passover with His disciples, known as the Last Supper. Two important events are the focus of Maundy Thursday.

First, Jesus celebrated the Last Supper with His disciples and thereby instituted the Lord’s Supper, also called Communion (Luke 22:19-20). Some Christian churches observe a special Communion service on Maundy Thursday in memory of Jesus’ Last Supper with His disciples. Second, Jesus washed the disciples’ feet as an act of humility and service, thereby setting an example that we should love and serve one another in humility (John 13:3-17). Some Christian churches observe a foot-washing ceremony on Maundy Thursday to commemorate Jesus’ washing the feet of the disciples.

The word Maundy is derived from the Latin word for “command.” The “Maundy” in “Maundy Thursday” refers to the command Jesus gave to the disciples at the Last Supper, that they should love and serve one another.



The question often arises among Christians as to whether or not we should observe Maundy Thursday. Is this a day in which we should gather and worship together. The simple answer is that the Bible neither commands nor forbids celebrating Maundy Thursday. It is a good thing to remember the Last Supper and Jesus’ sacrifice on our behalf. It is a good thing to remember the

Lord’s example of humility and the command that He gave that we would love one another. However, just as with all religious observances, we must avoid making any observance a ritual that is simply done out of tradition. All worship services, regardless of when they are, should always be focused on God, our Worship of Him, and our relationship with Him.

Easter Bunny Funnies

- **What's the best way to make Easter easier?**
 - Put an "i" where the "t" is.
- **What kind of bean can't grow in a garden?**
 - A jelly bean.
- **What happens if you get married on Easter?**
 - You live hoppily ever after.
- **What do you call a rabbit with fleas?**
 - Bugs Bunny.
- **How does an Easter Bunny keep his fur looking so good?**
 - Hare spray.
- **What's the Easter Bunny's favorite restaurant?**
 - IHOP.
- **Why was the Easter Bunny so sad?**
 - He was having a bad hare day.
- **How does the Easter Bunny stay in shape?**
 - He eggs-ercises.
- **What do you call an Easter Bunny who gets kicked out of school?**
 - Egg-spelled.
- **What's the Easter Bunny's favorite sport?**
 - Basket-ball.
- **What kind of rabbit tells jokes?**
 - A funny bunny.



A 7-DAY CORONAVIRUS PRAYER GUIDE



PRAY FOR THE SICK

Pray for those who are sick, and their families, that the Lord would heal and comfort them.

PRAY FOR HEALTHCARE WORKERS

Pray for those on the frontlines treating those who are sick, that the Lord would protect and strengthen them.



PRAY FOR THE VULNERABLE

Pray for those who are especially vulnerable to disease, that the sickness would pass over them and that they would rely on others for help.

PRAY FOR THE UNEMPLOYED

Pray for those who have lost work, that God would provide through their families and communities.



PRAY FOR OUR LEADERS

Pray for national and local government leaders, that they would have wisdom to do what is best for all.

PRAY FOR STUDENTS & FAMILIES

Pray for students who are out of school, and their families, that the Lord would give them patience and discipline.



PRAY FOR CHURCHES

Pray for churches and ministry leaders, that they would know how to best show the love of Christ in this time.

"Peace I leave with you. My peace I give to you. I do not give as the world gives. Don't let your heart be troubled or fearful."

JOHN 14:27

LifeWay

He is Risen

DEATH COULD NOT HOLD HIM.

Rejoice in the resurrection of

Jesus Christ.



WISHING YOU A BLESSED AND JOY FILLED EASTER!



A LOT CAN HAPPEN IN **SEVEN** DAYS