

Easter Memories & Activities

My earliest recollection of celebrating Easter as a boy was rising before dawn to join my mom for the citywide sunrise service in my hometown of Austin, Texas. Since my dad and siblings preferred to sleep in before our family went to the Easter services at our church, it would be just Mom and me in those early hours. Maybe that is why it is so memorable to me now.

I also remember many of the traditional ways we celebrated Easter in my family. Easter egg hunts, chocolate bunnies, my sister's yellow and green dresses, smart bow ties for me and my brother, fuzzy white bunnies, and even a few baby chicks in all kinds of colors. Do they still do that?

There were also the age-appropriate Easter stories that I will never forget: Jesus being betrayed, beaten, crucified, and buried in a tomb. Then, three days later the tomb was empty, His body was missing, and angels were announcing that He had risen from the dead, just as He said!

Years later, as a young husband and father of three sons, my wife and I started many new Easter memories for our family. She would make a "cross cake" made of German Chocolate cake (it looks like wood, right?) for us to share after our Good Friday service at church. We would also gather our boys in the backyard to erect two three-foot crosses and one four-foot cross between the first two. We'd circle the crosses and sing Amazing Grace and thank the Lord for His work on the cross as we prayed together.

On Easter morning we would put flowers at the foot of the center cross to signify the Lord's resurrection; go to the sunrise service and Easter worship services I led as a young pastor; and enjoy an Easter feast at home with "tomb rolls" and multiple small "crown cakes" that the boys could individually decorate to celebrate our resurrected King!

Our Easter egg hunt would follow with plastic eggs filled with a treat and a blessing for the children to read aloud when we went back inside. Finally, loving to do crafts with our kids (and now our grandchildren), Lindy would help them create a diorama of the empty tomb with pebbles, rocks, sticks and moss to round out our Easter festivities and memories.

But here is the most cherished memory that we tried to create at the core of all the Easter activities with our family and the church families that I pastored over the decades. The Easter message of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is not just a story. Nor is it just some kind of poetic or artistic metaphor. It is an actual, historic, and supernatural reality. It is a profound proof of the transcendent, transformational, and resurrection power of Almighty God. And it is something that He still does today.



Resurrection is what He does best.

He can resurrect our broken lives... crushed hopes... dying marriages... wounded hearts... fading dreams... breached relationships... and so much more.

However, He doesn't force it on us.
He gave us free will. So, we must ask.

He loves for us to come to Him.
He yearns for us to come to Him.

We have all kinds of opportunities,
especially through our dark times.

That's when we realize our desperate need.
That's when we seek Him, truly seek Him.

Please, Lord. Help me. Heal me. Take me as your own.
Save me. All of me. And guess what? He will say: Yes.

He will resurrect your dead spirit and life.
He will transform you and see you as His child.

His love letters, the Bible, tell us: "If anyone is in Christ, they are new creations. Old things have passed away; behold all things have become new." Becoming a new creation by His resurrection power is extraordinary to me. Way better than a new yellow dress or a smart bow tie, right? (Though those are still fun.) So, have a memorable Easter!

Remembering Him with you,
Pastor Mark