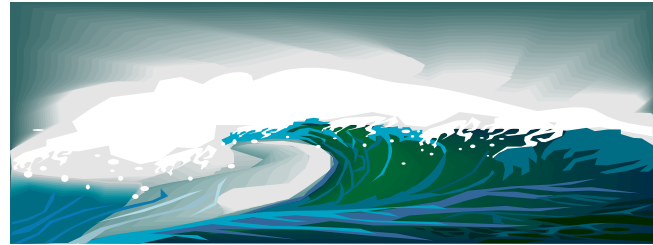




The *April 2018*
Anchor



We have this hope, a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul...Heb.6:19a

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I have been touched this week by the power and the beauty of the greatest story ever told-the miraculous EASTER STORY. It has all the makings of a Hollywood movie! an act of unfathomable cruelty, and then a surprise miraculous ending with the victim getting redemption through a surprise twist. In this case, the true *Easter Story* is much more. Christ not only got redemption as He rose from the dead, but granted all present and future believers true redemption from all past present and future sins. It is the timeless miracle for all believers to take with us **every** day for a lifetime **even** when times are tough and it is hard to see a miracle. We must remember He has a plan for each of us.

So many times, we as Christians tend to question the one set of footprints in the sand. When we suffer it seems like our life tends to have no purpose. We reach out to God and ask Him to be beside us and heal those that are hurting, those that are sick and others in need of prayer. We tend to pray and believe that the answers will come overnight, in a week and in a month. It sometimes seems that our prayers are not answered and we think that God is not listening to our prayers. *Weeks, months or years later, we find out that God WAS listening to our prayers.* Our prayers are not always answered in our time but in God's time. I am reminded by this in **Romans 8:28** "*And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose*". I believe that we are tested in life because of our belief in God. The devil is always trying to pull us down and fill our lives with darkness. With suffering, we have a purpose in our life.

When Jesus was crucified, the people couldn't understand why Jesus had to die. Although He tried to explain, it wasn't until He rose from the dead that people truly understood. *Jesus died to save us from our sins.* There is no other love greater than this. We are able to travel through those rough valleys because God is with us. God can turn around any hopeless situation.

In celebrating Easter, we have hope. We are reminded in **Philippians 4:6** "*Do not be anxious about anything but in every situation by prayer and petition, with Thanksgiving, present your request to God.*" We glorify God by trusting in Him. We celebrate Jesus' victory over death. Let us have a renewing of our mind. We have a living Savior who can heal us and be with us in dark times.

Let us make time for our walk with God. We need to find a positive with every negative. Instead of counting your misfortunes, count your blessings. Smile when you don't feel like smiling. Often **our** smile is the only one that people may see. Let's try to fill ourselves with the warmth of His love. Speak words of love and hope to those around you.

Let us celebrate Easter with the JOY that HE LIVES!!!! Let us bloom into the beauty of our surroundings and be reminded each day of His grace and love.

In Christian Love,
Pastor Mark



As the month of April is upon us, I find myself still reminiscing on Easter and our Savior's glorious resurrection where we begin to see nature come alive, again. What a representation of the season where flowers will soon be blooming, the lawn will grow and need cut, and trees begin to bud and blossom! ***All of nature declares the majesty of our Lord.*** Are we not blessed to be considered worthy of salvation, basking in His glory and wisdom? Speaking of wisdom, I wanted to share my personal desire for wisdom, not for just myself, but for our entire church family. When we adults grow in knowledge of our Lord and Savior, we become better Christians. My heartfelt desire is that we are so filled with the Holy Spirit and love Jesus so much, that we have an unquenchable thirst for wisdom that we can pass onto our children and grandchildren.

The Bible tells us in **Proverbs 4:6-7** ***“Do not forsake wisdom, and she will protect you; love her, and she will watch over you. The beginning of wisdom is this: Get wisdom. Though it cost all you have, get understanding.”***

As we come to learn that Jesus has our backs, we learn to trust His Word. What He says in the Bible, He will do. The scripture was written for our understanding. We all have the gift of applying the scriptures to our lives. When we trust God more than we do ourselves, we have gained wisdom. When we know that God will do as He says, we have gained wisdom. When we know that we are not perfect, but God loves us anyway, then we have gained wisdom. When we realize we are not alone, we have gained wisdom. The point is, many of our children today in the United States are suffering from depression. They see no hope or future. Many have turned to drugs or alcohol, self-mutilation, and even suicide to cope with life. We **must** point these young people toward Jesus.

Wisdom leads to understanding. We all have a role to play as mentors or persons of influence in our young person's life. If there is one piece of advice you can give them, trust Solomon when he said, **“Get Wisdom.”** *Let everyone know that faith comes by hearing the Word of God.* When we hear and read God's word and apply it our lives, we show wisdom and understanding. This spring, let our faith be brought back to life. Let the freshness of spring breathe new life into your witness. Tell someone you love the most important thing they can do at this point in their life is to **“Get Wisdom.”** Then proceed to explain what that means. You can do it!

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In closing, let me update you on our youth programs. First, *let me extend a great job to Liz Stewart for the work with the Easter party at the church.* Captivate provided pizza for the event. I want to thank everyone for their work on the annual Easter play this year. It's a lot of hard work and everyone has put a lot of time and effort in pulling it off.

I do want you to know there will be a *family bowling event April 14* in Parkersburg. Second, there will be day of rocket building and kite flying fun called *õFly High for Jesusö* at Parchment Valley Conference Center for our church youth, their friends and their families. The Deacons will be grilling hotdogs. **If you plan on attending, we will need you to register as we will be purchasing supplies.** Each young person is encouraged to bring a friend. Youth will be paired with adults and or parents to make the day extra special. I will be teaching a lesson before we fly kites and launch rockets. It's going to be a **BLAST!!!** (Weather permitting of course).

Keep working hard for the Lord. Thanks for all you do to make First Baptist Church a special place.

In His service,
Pastor Toby

