

April 2012

Dear neighbours,

It's that time of year again!

Spring with its definitely warmer days - for the most part!

The clocks going forward to give us lighter evenings.

For Christians, the additional pleasure of Easter, inviting us to recall the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. We would like everyone to feel the same pleasure, of course.

“Oh that the world might taste and see the riches of His grace”

as one great hymnwriter wrote.

Easter is a pleasure because of the outcome. By His death (commemorated on Good Friday) and resurrection (commemorated on Easter Sunday) Jesus overcame the sharpness of death for all believers.

The first gospel writer, Matthew, allots just over a quarter of his gospel (chapters 21–28) to the events of the last week of the Lord Jesus' life. Mark, just over a third (chapters 11-16); Luke, begins midway through chapter 19 of his 24 chapters; and John spends nearly a half of his gospel on these events (chapters 12 to 21).

30 chapters in total. It wouldn't take you long to read them all and refresh your mind concerning what Christians believe to be the most significant week in the world's history.

It is, of course, a matter of faith. The events either happened or they didn't. If they did, Jesus was either right or wrong. You must come to your own conclusion.

If you are drawn to consider the whole scenario favourably this is what you would be taking on board:-

That the Bible is true in its presentation that “all have sinned and come short of the glory of God” (Romans 3.23). “There is none righteous, no not one” (Romans 3.10). “But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” (Romans 5.8).

That Jesus came to make an atonement for sin.

That God is holy and cannot permit sin where He lives in glory. That God does, in fact, grant, people to live with Him in His glory for ever, after this life.

That this life is a time of testing, to decide that final destiny. It all turns on faith in Jesus Christ who said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me” (John 14.6).

That the atonement for sin which Jesus came to fulfil was so that all who trust Him might be purged from their sins, upon repentance, being identified with Him.

That Jesus never sinned, so that He is a fit person to make that atonement.

That Jesus was, in one body, perfectly man, and perfectly God, possessing “all the fulness of the Godhead bodily” as the Bible says (Colossians 2.9).

That He was raised from the dead. That all who trust Him will also be raised from the dead. “This is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day” (John 6. 40). “No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the

prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me" (John 6. 44-45).

Such a lot to think about, if it's new to you. So many questions to be answered, so many issues to be faced. If you have mislaid your Bible we would be glad to provide you with one.

A portion of the Bible is explained in each of our services, so that over time, through the public ministry, these issues may become clearer. Privately, members would be happy to explain the reason for the faith they have. "Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you" (1 Peter 3.15).

Our services are at 1045 and 1400hrs every Sunday, including Easter Sunday. We would welcome you also to our Good Friday service at 1045 which will last about an hour and a quarter.

Perhaps you face a difficult, seemingly impossible, situation. The words of the Lord Jesus Christ are as true today as when they were first spoken to a man whose 12-year old daughter had just died, "Be not afraid, only believe" (Mark 5.36). The Lord Jesus raised her from the dead shortly afterwards. Faith in Jesus Christ always issues in a triumphant outcome.

Yours sincerely,