

April 2, 2010
Thank God for This Friday

1. The focal point of all history is the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus: past, present, future, and eternally. From before the fall of man, God's plan has been for Jesus to accomplish everything we need – "Paid in full" – Paul reminds us that this focal point of history is the most important part of our Christianity.

1 Corinthians 15:3-4 – "I passed on to you what was most important and what had also been passed on to me. Christ died for our sins, just as the Scriptures said. He was buried, and he was raised from the dead on the third day, just as the Scriptures said."

2. I thank God for this Friday, not only because He "paid in full"; but because He now lives in me with a life-giving strength that I don't have within myself.

Galatians 2:19b-21 – "So I quit being a "law man" so that I could be God's man. Christ's life showed me how, and enabled me to do it. I identified myself completely with him. Indeed, I have been crucified with Christ. My ego is no longer central. It is no longer important that I appear righteous before you or have your good opinion, and I am no longer driven to impress God. Christ lives in me. The life you see me living is not "mine," but it is lived by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. I am not going to go back on that. Is it not clear to you that to go back to that old rule-keeping, peer-pleasing religion would be an abandonment of everything personal and free in my relationship with God? I refuse to do that, to repudiate God's grace. If a living relationship with God could come by rule-keeping, then Christ died unnecessarily." (Message)

3. Thank God for this Friday, because it is by my symbolic death and resurrection, that I inherit God's eternal plan for me.

a. Hell has no power over me when I share in the resurrection of Jesus.

Revelation 20:6 – "Blessed and holy are those who share in the first resurrection. For them the second death holds no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him a thousand years."

b. I choose to relate to God for myself in a way that no one can do for me when I believe, repent and am baptized.

Acts 2:37-38 – "Peter's words pierced their hearts, and they said to him and to the other apostles, "Brothers, what should we do?" Peter replied, "Each of you must repent of your sins and turn to God, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

c. I believe and participate in the resurrection of Jesus when I make my public declaration in baptism!

Romans 6:3-8 – "Or have you forgotten that when we were joined with Christ Jesus in baptism, we joined him in his death? For we died and were buried with Christ by baptism. And just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glorious power of the Father, now we also may live new lives. Since we have been united with him in his death, we will also be raised to life as he was. We know that our old sinful selves were crucified with Christ so that sin might lose its power in our lives. We are no longer slaves to sin. For when we died with Christ we were set free from the power of sin. And since we died with Christ, we know we will also live with him."

Here are some symbols of Baptism:

- 1. My public surrender to Christ**
- 2. My sins washed away**
- 3. My rejection of my sins**
- 4. The death of my past life**
- 5. Like Noah's Ark I'm carried to the new life**
- 6. The mark of God's covenant with me**
- 7. Re-enact "Paid in Full"**

4. Thank God for this Friday, because our communion is the life long remembrance of history's most important event.

1 Corinthians 11:23-26 – "For I pass on to you what I received from the Lord himself. On the night when he was betrayed, the Lord Jesus took some bread and gave thanks to God for it. Then he broke it in pieces and said, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this to remember me." In the same way, he took the cup of wine after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant between God and his people—an agreement confirmed with my blood. Do this to remember me as often as you drink it." For every time you eat this bread and drink this cup, you are announcing the Lord's death until he comes again."