Easter

Intro: This day is generally regarded by the religious world as “Easter Sunday.” A day set aside to gaily commemorate the death, burial and especially the resurrection of our Lord.

1. Our religious neighbors often wonder why faithful members and congregations of the church do not celebrate this day as do others.
   a. Often we are invited to engage with the denominations in special sunrise services.
      i. Most continually decline.
      ii. Sadly, we have some who are now accepting these invitations.
   b. Why? Are we anti-Christ?

2. This lesson sets forth our reasons and should be of help not only to them but to our own as well who might be babes.

I. THE CHURCHES OF CHRIST DO NOT TEACH, NOR OBSERVE, RELIGIOUSLY, ANYTHING THAT IS NOT SPECIALLY AUTHORIZED IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.
   B. Just a few scriptures along this line.
      1. 2 Tim. 3:16-17 “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: 17That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.”
      2. 2 Pet. 1:3 “According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:”
      3. 1 Cor. 4:6 “And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos for your sakes; that ye might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another.”
      4. 1 Pet. 4:11 “If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.”
      5. Mat. 15:9 “But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.”
      6. Gal. 1:6-9 “I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.”
      7. 2 John 9 “Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.”
      8. Rev. 22:18-19 “For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: 19And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.”

C. What about Easter?
   1. There is no scriptural authorization for observing Easter.
   2. Notice its origin.
      a. “The name Easter, like the names of the week, is a survival from the old Teutonic mythology. According to Bede it is derived from ‘Eostre’ or ‘Ostara’ the Anglo-Savox
goddess of spring, to whom the month answering to our April, and called 'Eosturmanath' was dedicated. (Encyclopedia Britannica Vol. VII, p. 859).

b. “The term 'Easter' was derived from the name of the Teutonic goddess of spring. She was called 'Aestro,' 'Ostara,' or 'Ostern.' Because the heathen Saxon tribes held feast to the goddess at the same time Catholics had feast, these apostates borrowed the term and applied it to their holiday. At these Saxon feast human sacrifices were offered to the heathen goddess of spring.” (Roy J. Hearn).

3. Thus, it is a commandment of men and not of God (cf. Mat. 15:9 “But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men”).

a. But what about Acts 12:1-4 “Now about that time Herod the king stretched forth his hands to vex certain of the church. 2And he killed James the brother of John with the sword. 3And because he saw it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to take Peter also. (Then were the days of unleavened bread.) 4And when he had apprehended him, he put him in prison, and delivered him to four quaternions of soldiers to keep him; intending after Easter to bring him forth to the people.”

b. The Greek word is pascha (πάσχα) which means “Passover.”

c. The context shows this to be a Jewish feast day, not Christian.

(1) The Jews would not commemorate the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus.

(2) It was never brought forward from Judaism into the Christian religion.

D. The sincere follower of Christ will desire to teach and practice only that for which there is a “thus saith the word of the Lord.”

E. What might well apply today:

1. Gal. 4:9-11 “But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage? 10Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. 11I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain.”

2. Rom. 14:5-6 “One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. 6He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks.”

II. Though We Do Not Observe Easter We Do, However, Commemorate The Death, Burial And Resurrection Of Christ.

A. In baptism when one becomes a child of God.

1. Rom. 6:1-7 “What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? 2God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? 3Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? 4Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. 5For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: 6Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. 7For he that is dead is freed from sin.”

2. Col. 2:12 “Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.”

B. As Christians, each first day of the week in partaking of the Lord’s Supper we commemorate Christ death.

1. Mat. 26:26-29 (we have a direct statement) “And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. 27And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it: 28For this is my blood of the new testament,
which is shed for many for the remission of sins. 28But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.

2. 1 Cor. 11:23-34 (we have both a direct statement and implication) “For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: 24And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. 25After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. 26For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come. 27Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come. 28But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. 29For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. 30For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. 31For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. 32But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world. 33Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another. 34And if any man hunger, let him eat at home; that ye come not together unto condemnation. And the rest will I set in order when I come.”

3. Acts 20:7 (we have both implication and example) “And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight.”

Conclusion: It’s not that the Christian does not want to remember Christ’s resurrection, on the contrary, his whole system of faith is based upon that foundation. The Christian will observe it as the Lord authorized.