

THE WORD ON THE STREET

Dear Friend,

Ah...what a great weekend this past weekend, Easter weekend. If you are a Christian and feel no different than any other weekend, I highly suggest you get your pulse checked to make sure you are alive! The resurrection was the last step that needed to be taken to show that Jesus was The Messiah and the penalty for sin was paid in full.

Leading up to Easter weekend, I was doing a fair amount of reading in Matthew to once again try to understand what took so long for the disciples to believe Jesus truly was the Messiah. They never actually did understand until after his resurrection. Peter may have been the first to see Jesus as Messiah, at least he was the first to vocalize it (see Matthew 16:13-14). I don't believe Peter fully believed until after the Resurrection.

Matthew 16:13-28 took place in an area called Caesarea Philippi. Jesus pulled his disciples away from the crowd (miles away) to a secluded cave near the base of a mountain. The timing was the winter before the spring he was crucified. Most of the disciples, by this time, had spent three years with Jesus yet they did not firmly grasp the truth that Jesus was the Messiah. A huge step is taken in that direction in a short exchange between Jesus and Peter. Jesus, "Who do people say that I am (what's the word on the street)?" Peter, "Well, Jesus, there's a lot of speculation going on, a lot of ideas floating around, but me? I believe you are the Christ, the Son of the Living God."

Do you and I understand what Peter just did? He used the word "Christ". Christ is a title, "The anointed one." That title was reserved for one person and one person only, The Messiah. When I read this, I thought, "Wow...Peter finally gets it - and this changes everything!" But it didn't change everything instantly; Peter had his struggles all the way up to the Resurrection. One of the ironic things is the location - they were sitting in the area where the Roman god, Pan, was worshipped. Not only did Romans worship pagan gods and mythological figures here, so did several other cultures. I believe Jesus choose their location to say, "Yes, I am the Messiah, the anointed, true one of the Living God and there are no other gods. Live this daily, any god this world has to offer is a phony. The Christ Jesus is the only anointed Son of the Living God.

In Christ's Love,
Pastor Mike

Prayers: Chrissy Corth (back surgery), Dick Hickernell Family (Dick died), Donna Clickenger (hospital)

Events: Communion Sunday