

LCMS Stewardship Newsletter Article

April 2017

Easter is a moveable feast. Easter isn't on the same calendar date every year in the way that Christmas is always celebrated on December 25. The date for Easter each year always falls on the first Sunday after the first full moon after the Spring equinox. And once you find the date of Easter, everything else finds its place—Good Friday and Maundy Thursday, Ash Wednesday and the Transfiguration, the Ascension of our Lord and Pentecost.

All this is a long way of saying that Easter determines everything. Easter defines everything. It orders not only the entire church year, but it orders our very lives. It defines and gives meaning to our lives, as well to the things that happen in them. And since Easter defines everything, that means it changes everything too. It redefines who we are and where we stand with God and with one another. Easter makes all things new.

Without Easter, Jesus would not be raised from the dead. Without Easter death would still reign, we would still be in our trespasses and sins, and our faith and hope would be in vain. But Jesus is raised from the dead. Easter changes everything. It makes all things new. Therefore, darkness is overcome with light, wrath with peace, fear with hope, angst with rest, sadness with joy, hatred with love, sin with righteousness, and death with life. Easter changes everything, redefines everything, determines everything. Easter makes all things new.

Thus, Easter also changes our attitude about giving. For if God gave us His own Son into death so that we will live, how will He not give us everything else we need? He will, and He does. He provides for us. He even gives us the gifts that we give back to Him for service in the church. Easter demonstrates that we have a God who loves us, a God who provides for us, a God who presses us into His service, a God who has made us new in the death and resurrection of His Son.

For when you give to the church, you pass along those things that God alone has given to you. You pass along the message to others that Easter changes everything and makes all things new, even as it has done this for you. This is not a burden, but pure joy. For God has given you a part in the administration of His kingdom. He provides for the needy through your hands. He ensures that the Gospel is preached and the Sacraments are given out through the work of your hands and in the gifts that you give. And He honors and blesses this work and generosity as it redounds to those around you.

So when you sit down on the first day of the week to make your offering to the place where Easter is proclaimed and where the gifts of Easter are given out, remember: Easter changes everything. It makes all things new. More than that: Easter has changed you and made you new. Because Jesus who was crucified for our transgressions is raised for our justification.