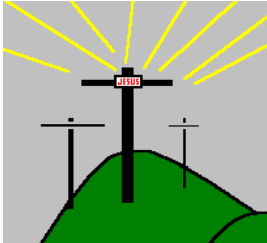


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## EASTER CAME

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When I was in elementary school and we lived in Wyoming, my folks made Easter special in many ways. Before Easter Mom directed us as we colored eggs. Back then we didn't have fancy dyes, stickers or markers. We used the old fashion process that took dyes, vinegar and a lot of time to do right. In the end, we had colorful eggs. My sister turned out pretty Easter eggs; my experimentations didn't turn out quite so nice. (I don't recall what younger brother Paul's eggs looked like.)

After services, we'd come home to an Easter hunt, not for eggs, but for a large chocolate bunny, or something along that line, for each of us children. But for all the fun of Easter, we knew that Easter was more than bunnies and eggs. They were only a fun addition to a very serious, yet joyful holiday.

In the small oil town of Lance Creek, Wyoming, far up on a hill, the church owned a large cross. Even though the weather could be quite chill at Easter time, those who wished, met on that hill for a short Easter sunrise service. I shivered in the cold as the message of Easter conveyed in quiet words and song wafted over me. As the sun rose and bathed that cross in light, tears started in my eyes. I understood. Easter was for me.

Easter was the culmination of God's plan since the beginning. He knew we humans would turn our backs and decide we could live without Him. But God loved us anyway. Because of that love, God in Jesus choose to enter our world, choose to live with us, share His love, and do it without the sin, the bad choices and selfishness that mark our lives. It wasn't enough just to live among us. That changed very little. He needed to do much more to save the people He'd created.

Just as when our children misbehave and need correction, so there are consequences to our bad choices, consequences both here and now and for eternity. Jesus came, allowed Himself to be murdered, in order to take the punishment, the consequences of our wrongful choices. The thought that Jesus died for me, would have died just for me, is humbling.

The exciting truth that radiated from those sunrise services outside in the chill air is that Jesus did more than die, He took our place and then conquered death that He could offer us life. Easter is a celebration of life. Death could not hold Christ and it cannot hold us if we come to Him.

“I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.” John 10:10 MKJV

Easter is about sacrifice, about life and about salvation and hope in the risen Lord. What better time to know that hope than during the Easter season.

