

Stripes on Friday

This year I, and thousands of other Christians, am observing the Holy Days with trepidation. Should we go out? Should we stay in? If we go out, how do we stay safe?

It's humbling to realize how much of our time is spent on other things and that it has taken this pandemic to bring us all "back home" as it were. The Easter Bunny is not what it's all about anyway. During a scrolling session on Facebook, I saw something along the lines of "You can't stop Easter. Satan tried 2,000 years ago and look what happened!"

Holy Week continues today with Good Friday. Of course, nobody knew that it was good at the time.

Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. 1 Peter 2:24

As we know, through scripture, the week that started with such jubilation did not end that way. Those who had cried "Hosanna" became fearful for their lives and hid. Even His disciples were not faithful. As Jesus prayed in Gethsemane, he asked Peter, John and James to "watch" as he prayed. They fell asleep. That very night Judas betrayed Him and Peter denied Him. By Friday, He had been whipped, beaten, mocked, humiliated and nailed to a cross to die. Only a handful of witnesses were there when He drew His last breath. Even then, his compassion was displayed as he made provision for his mother; forgave those who crucified him, and for the thief at his side.

Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son! Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home. John 19:25-27

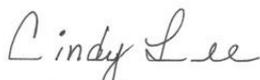
Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do... Luke 23:34a

And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise. Luke 23:42-43

The stripes that Peter refers to (1 Peter 2:24 above) are the lash marks of the whip. Those stripes represent the pain that He endured for us, for our salvation. "That we...should live unto righteousness." His blood was shed before He reached the cross. Yet, His death upon that cross is what had to happen for our salvation. His blood, all of His blood had to be shed for us. When the soldier pierced His side, the last drops of His eternal blood were shed.

But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water. John 19:34

As we continue our week, looking to Sunday, remember the stripes that brought our salvation and the blood that makes us whole. Alleluia!



Cindy Lee Nonnemacher
Author