

APRIL 2018



Resurrection Sunday 1 April

8.00am 10.00am
Murray Anderson
6.00pm Easter Celebration

Sunday 8

8.00am 10.00am 6.00pm
Race & Reconciliation
Sean Savides

(Missions prayer meeting between the morning services – will be meeting upstairs on the balcony at 9.15am)

Fellowship Groups – Social Week

Tuesday 10

8.30am Hiking: Nellies Pool. Meet at Vallyland, bring a jacket, strong shoes, water & something for tea. Please contact Carole 0812356809 with any questions.

Friday 13

CoolClub 5.45pm – 7.15pm
Grade 1-4
7UP 5.45pm – 7.15pm
Grade 5-7
Hood 7.30pm – 9.00pm
Grade 8

Saturday 14

8.30am Valley Inter-Church Prayer Meeting. Venue TBC

9am – 11.30am Fellowship Group Leaders Training

Sunday 15

8.00am 10.00am 6.00pm
1. Deuteronomy 1v1-8
Murray Anderson

Tuesday 17

Fellowship Groups
Deuteronomy 1v1-8

10.00am Stay & Play

Wednesday 18

Fellowship Groups
Deuteronomy 1v1-8

Thursday 19

9.30am Day Life

Friday 20

CoolClub 5.45pm – 7.15pm
Grade 1-4
7UP 5.45pm – 7.15pm
Grade 5-7
Hood 7.30pm – 9.00pm
Grade 8-12

Saturday 21

10.00am Craft Group meets in the Childrens Centre

Sunday 22

8.00am 10.00am 6.00pm
2. Deuteronomy 4v1-40
Murray Anderson

Tuesday 24

8.30am Hiking: Hout Bay Lookout, Silvermine Dam parking. R50 entrance or Wild Card. Meet at Vallyland, bring a jacket, strong shoes, water & something for tea. Please contact Carole 0812356809 with any questions.

10.00am Stay & Play

Wednesday 25

6.00pm AVM dinner

Thursday 26

9.30am Day Life

Friday 27 Public Holiday

Sunday 29

8.00am 10.00am 6.00pm
3. Deuteronomy 5v1-5, 22-33
Carel Pienaar

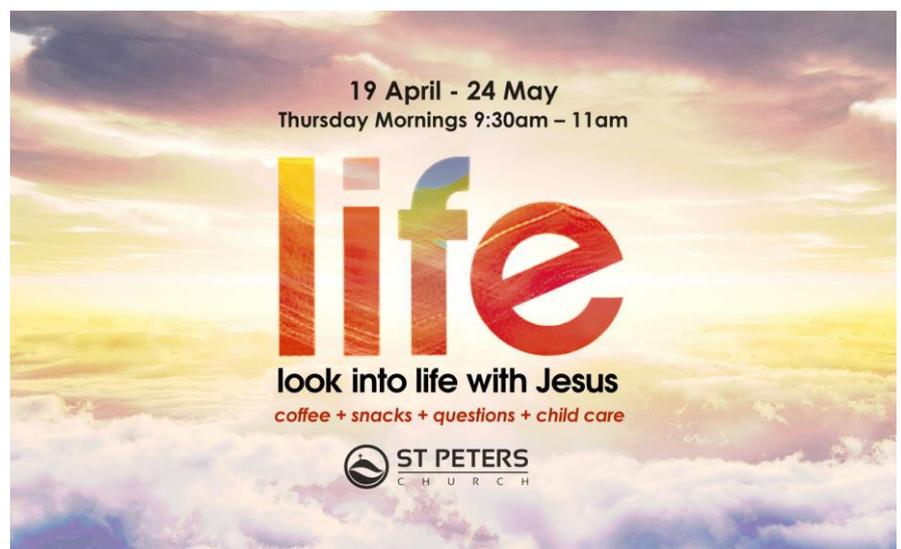


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The Shame and Power of the Cross...

As we consider the events of Good Friday, we might wonder, "Isn't it a bit bizarre to celebrate the agonizing death of Jesus on a Cross?" Many people during the 1st Century felt the same (or even more perplexed by this); as Paul writes, "we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles" (1 Cor. 1:22). And this is why...

- Crucifixion in the Roman world...

The famous Roman philosopher and statesman, Cicero wrote, "Crucifixion is the most cruel and terrifying penalty". It was a cruel form of punishment the Romans applied to anyone who opposed their rule. For example, when Spartacus (a leader of a rebellion against Rome around 73-71 BC) died in battle, six thousand of his followers were crucified in one day, lined up along a road that stretched 193km.

Jewish historian Josephus (a contemporary of Jesus) records that after the death of King Herod (mentioned in Matt. 2:19) a Jewish revolt occurred against Rome. In response, as Josephus writes, "Varus sent a part of his army into the country, to seek out those who had been the authors of the revolt; and when they were found, he punished some of them that were most guilty, and some he dismissed; now the number of those who were crucified on this account were two thousand". Jesus was a boy when this happened.

What Jesus and His contemporaries would have seen as they saw people crucified is this, "Nothing could be more horrible than the sight of this living body, breathing, seeing, hearing, still able to feel, and yet reduced to the state of a corpse by forced immobility and absolute helplessness. We cannot say the crucified person writhed in agony, for it was impossible for him to move. Stripped of his clothing, unable even to brush away the flies that fell upon his wounded flesh already lacerated by preliminary scourging, exposed to insults and curses of the people... the cross represented miserable humanity reduced to the last degree of impotence, suffering and degradation" (Maurice Goguel). Crucifixion was a living hell. The English word "excruciating" (directly translated: "from the cross pain") was invented to try and describe this pain.

Roman Orator Marcus Cornelius Fronto summarizes what the Romans thought of the message of a crucified Savior, "the religion of the Christians is insane, in that they worship a crucified man, and even the instrument of his punishment itself". The Cross, as Paul wrote, is "foolishness to Gentiles".

- A Crucified Messiah?

For the Jews, when Jesus was crucified, this did not fit their idea of what God's King/Messiah should be. Isn't the Messiah supposed to be a conqueror, crushing Israel's enemies (Ps. 2)? How could the one who was supposed to bring blessing (Ps. 72:17) suffer such a cursed death? To be crucified, hung on a tree, meant you were cursed by God, "And if a man has committed a crime punishable by death and he is put to death, and you hang him on a

tree, his body shall not remain all night on the tree, but you shall bury him the same day, for a hanged man is cursed by God..." (Deut. 21:22-23). The Cross, as Paul says, is a "stumbling block" to the Jews.

- A Cross-shaped Message

Yet, it is this message the Apostles resolved, "to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified" (1 Cor. 2:2). Irrespective of what the 1st Century audience thought of Jesus' crucifixion, the Apostles refused to teach anything else (cf. Acts 2:14-36; 3:11-26; 4:10; 10:39-43; 13:26-43 etc.).

The message of the Cross only leaves you with two options. Firstly, you can conclude with many Jews and Gentiles, "This is crazy" and reject it. You can join the chorus of millions of people who still believe so today. Secondly, you can conclude that the insistence of such a seeming insane message must imply it is true. Why hammer on something so bizarre if it seems illogical to everyone else? What did the followers of Jesus understand that I possibly don't? Why the Cross?

Paul tells us that the Cross is, "the power of God" (1 Cor. 1:18). It is the power of God to ransom us from our sins (Mk. 10:45), to usher in a new relationship with God (Mk. 14:22-25), rescue us from Satan and his kingdom of darkness (Col. 1:14), redeem us from slavery to sin and its consequences (Rom. 3:24; 6:22; 8:23), justify us before God (Rom. 3:24-25; 5:9), provide forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38; 1 Jn. 1:9), bring peace between us and God (Eph. 2:14-17), heal our brokenness (1 Pet. 2:24), cleanse us (Rev. 7:14) and set the example of what life should be like (Phil. 2:5-11; Heb. 12:1-3). The Cross of Jesus might seem illogical, but in this message alone do we have what nothing and no one else can offer: everlasting hope.

Carel Pienaar

ST PETERS FINANCE UPDATE

	Year to date to 28 Feb 2018	Month of Feb 2018
INCOME	741 453	368 394
BUDGET	713 078	356 539
EXPENDITURE	706 643	360 035
BUDGET	727 491	363 745
SURPLUS / (SHORTFALL)	34 810	8 359
BUDGET	-14 413	-7 206
INCLUDED IN EXPENDITURE:		
GIVING TO REACH SA	57 552	27 706
GIVING TO MISSIONS	43 530	22 055

