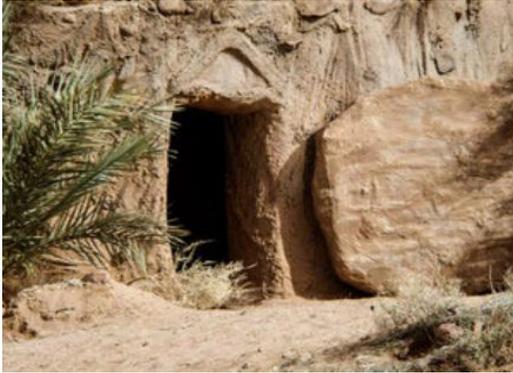


SIGN OF JONAH, 3 DAYS, 3 NIGHTS

By Pastor Mike Taylor

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1st Corinthians 15:3 "For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;

*15:4 And that he was buried, and that he rose **again the third day** according to the scriptures:*

15:5 And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve:

15:6 After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep."

This spring season, most of world celebrates the risen Lord. It is something we must all celebrate and give thanks to God our Father for sending His Only Begotten Son to die for the sins of you, and for me. We give Him well deserved praise and glory for the plan of redemption and the single most important aspect of that redemption, His own resurrection. His resurrection will be the first fruits of our own resurrection when Jesus breaks forth from the clouds with power and great glory to redeem what is His, already paid for in full. Christians view this as a most sacred time, and in their hearts and minds, they are giving our Lord and Savior honor and glory for what He did for us, almost 2000 years ago.

BUT.....there's that word.....

Would it bother any of us to know that we are celebrating the Lords death and resurrection in a way that is contrary to scripture? After reading this, it should. I know, we are just doing what is traditionally been the way of the masses of Christians for years of our present lives, but to worship God in Spirit and in Truth, requires knowing the truth, does it not? What if I told you that Jesus did not rise from the dead on Sunday morning or traditionally called Easter? What if I told you that the tradition is nothing but the traditions of men and is in direct conflict with God's Holy Word and steeped in pagan idolatry. I think you would say prove it! Let us go to scripture and do just that...prove all things by the Word of God. Let us start by the very words of our Lord and Savior when the Pharisees came to Him asking for a sign that He was the Messiah. Matthew chapter 12,

12:39 "But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas:

*12:40 For as Jonas was **three days and three nights** in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.*

Just from taking the underlined words of Jesus and thinking on that only, I have been amazed that our Catholic friends found in the Lord, believe that Jesus was buried on "Good Friday" and was raised on Sunday morning. How do they get 3 days and three nights out of the time of Friday evening until Sunday morning? My brother, who is a "converted" Catholic hypothesized that Jesus was talking about half days, Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Really? Let us examine scripture starting here and then let us dive right into the season based on historical accounts and the way the Passover season is observed by the Jewish community, even today and would have been so done in the time of Jesus being delivered to be crucified as prophesied in your bible.

THREE DAYS AND THREE NIGHTS!

This was the only symbol that Jesus gave to the disbelieving Jewish authorities of the sign of Him being the

Messiah. He plainly told them that as Jonah was 3 days and 3 nights in the belly of the fish, so He would also be 3 days and 3 nights in the heart of the earth. Any less than 3 days and 3 nights would make Jesus an outright fraud and an imposter. In others words, He would be a lunatic and a liar! We know that He was God's foreordained sacrifice for the sins of the world and not a fraud. So we need to examine this question, "what is three day and three nights, being the only sign our Lord gave"?

In the beginning of your bible, found in Genesis, the creator gives the definition of what is a day, consisting of the evening and the morning. Genesis 1:3,

“And the evening and the morning were the first day. And the evening and the morning were the second day. Genesis 1:8 and so on till God rested on the seventh day from all His labors...”

This reveals that God made a literal 24 hour day, half being in the evening, and the other half being in the morning. So when Jesus said 3 days and 3 nights, he literally meant three 24 hour period or a total of 72 hours or He was a fraud. Additionally, Jesus' understanding of a day's length in John 11:9: "Are there not twelve hours in the day?" From this we can safely assume that night is also twelve hours long, and day and night together equal 24 hours. It is no stretch of intellect to figure that three days and three nights total 72 hours.

Now let's take the traditional and popular stance of a Good Friday crucifixion believed by the major religions and plug in 72 hours. Notice the problem? It doesn't fit. You only come up with 36 hours or half the required time to make what Jesus said was the “ONLY” sign He gave that He WAS their Messiah. If you take that amount of time that God stated in the beginning and Jesus plainly stated about His resurrection, then you come away with a Monday evening resurrection. So it's not even close to Sunday morning. So what's the problem with the tradition? Problem is that men have failed to understand, or chose to ignore what really happened during this time of the historical account, not just the biblical account of the way the nation of Israel kept this season differently than traditions of modern Christianity which is the only barometer we have, because Jesus lived in a Jewish society with all its customs and following Biblical Torah Law. Look at John 19:31,

“Therefore, because it was the Preparation Day, that the bodies should not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away.”

Many of the traditional Christian community mistakenly think that the Sabbath this verse refers to is the weekly Sabbath or Saturday. But historically, on this week, there are TWO Sabbaths...one is after Preparation Day, and one is the weekly Sabbath. So logically, but in gross error, they think that they are referring to Friday, but is that so? Historically we find that the Jewish people started calling this the week of Unleavened Bread beginning with Passover. In your Bible that word Easter is mentioned, but in Greek the word is Pascha, or Passover. Acts chapter 12, and it is mentioned only one time and no where else, why?

12:4 “ And when he had apprehended him, he put him in prison, and delivered him to four quaternions of soldiers to keep him; intending after Easter to bring him forth to the people.”

It may be accounted for bias of the King James translators to not translating it correctly as Passover, not to discredit the KJV, but it is men's bias that we must look past and look to the original text for the proper translation in Greek. Now let's move on to the historical account of this season.

THE LORDS SUPPER and EVENTS OF THE CROSS

Jesus knew that His time had come, and if He was going to have a Passover meal with His disciples, He must do it the night before, as He Himself was being delivered as our Passover, which was the next night. On Nisan 14, Jesus gathered His followers to institute the New Covenant of the bread and the wine as symbols of His broken body and shed blood. Luke,

22:14 “And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him.

22:15 And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer:

22:16 For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God.

22:17 And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves:

22:18 For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come.

22:19 And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me.

22:20 Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you”.

When Jesus was arrested, it was early morning before daylight and He was judged in a kangaroo court apart from the people in secret for fear of the masses gathered for the Passover season. History shows us from just other secular writings that this was a Wednesday morning Jesus was judged as a heretic and sentenced to death by the cross. Note that by Jewish method of biblical time keeping is from sundown to sundown, not like we do today, which is confusing to the everyday Christian.

Jesus was put on the cross before noon or the sixth hour of this Wednesday , which was counted from 6am our time. Note that Jesus hung on the cross by scripture from the 6th hour and died about the 9th hour, or 3pm and the heavens were black as night, during the strength of the daylight.

Matthew chapter 27,

27:45 “Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour.

27:46 And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

27:47 Some of them that stood there, when they heard that, said, This man calleth for Elias.

27:48 And straightway one of them ran, and took a sponge, and filled it with vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave him to drink.

27:49 The rest said, Let be, let us see whether Elias will come to save him.

27:50 Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost.”

So Jesus died about 3PM on Wednesday afternoon, when the Priest came to Pilate to have the legs of the victims crucified broken and have them quickly die and taken off the crosses since the next day was a High Day. John chapter 19,

19:31 “The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day, (for that sabbath day was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away.”

From scripture, Jesus legs were not broken, as He was already dead. Jesus was quickly taken off the cross (by His cousin), Joseph of Arimathaea, a follower also of Jesus,

John 19:38 “And after this Joseph of Arimathaea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus: and Pilate gave him leave. He came therefore, and took the body of Jesus.

19:39 And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight.

19:40 Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury.

19:41 Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid."

So summarizing up to this point, Jesus was crucified on Nisan 14 about noon in the daytime until being taken off the cross before sundown and laid in a tomb of a rich man before the High Day of Passover was to begin at sundown. So begins our time clock of the time of our Lord being in the tomb for 3 days and 3 nights according to His Word of being the Messiah. The time clock starts BEFORE 6pm or sundown on a Wednesday night...**a side note that I find most compelling and emotional to my heart strings is this. In the temple at that very hour that our Lord was crucified and died from torture and the loss of blood, the priest in the temple were in the middle of the task of slaughtering all the lambs for the Passover sacrifices the next day. Our Savior Jesus Christ was slain at the very same hour. He WAS the Passover Lamb of God.**

72 HOUR BEGINS

Beginning from this hour of our Lord's entombment **before** sundown on a Wednesday evening, we begin our count of 3 twenty four hour days...let's begin. Wednesday evening until Thursday evening is 1 day or 24 hours. Thursday evening until Friday evening at sundown, 2nd day of 24 hours, and finally Friday evening until sundown Saturday evening or near the end of the weekly Sabbath. From the time of His entombment, the end of the sign of Jonah of 72 hours, Jesus opened His eyes in a transformed spiritual body and rose from the dead, not a second later, or a second earlier. Some say the covering was rolled back at this time, but scripture shows that the angels rolled it back for the living to enter. Jesus went right through the walls. Thus, Jesus fulfilled His sign of being the Messiah, by being resurrected exactly 72 hours later from the time of being put in the tomb before sundown the previous Wednesday evening. Some will say, well what about the verse that says He was raised on the first day of the week? Let's look at those verses.

16:1 " And when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, had bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint him.

16:2 And very early in the morning the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulcher at the rising of the sun.

16:3 And they said among themselves, Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre?

16:4 And when they looked, they saw that the stone was rolled away: for it was very great.

16:5 And entering into the sepulchre, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment; and they were affrighted.

16:6 And he saith unto them, Be not affrighted: Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: he is risen; he is not here: behold the place where they laid him... ..

16:8 And they went out quickly, and fled from the sepulchre; for they trembled and were amazed: neither said they any thing to any man; for they were afraid.

16:9 Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils."

What verse 9 is saying is that Jesus revealed Himself to Mary, before anyone else on the first day of the week. By following scripture and historical accounts we have established that Jesus was raised near the end of the weekly Sabbath, then was in the Garden when Mary was crying. This would have been on a Saturday, not Sunday, as Jesus proclaimed Himself, Lord of the Sabbath.

Why did the women wait until this morning to anoint the body of Jesus. It's easy if you follow the timeline. Jesus was laid in a tomb on Wednesday night at sundown. The next day was a High Day or the First Day of Unleavened Bread week which includes Passover, or Seder. The next day, they gathered all the implements to do the anointing

of Jesus body, then they rested on the weekly Sabbath which was Saturday, and made the trip to the tomb on the first full day with the preparations on Sunday morning. Jesus there met Mary in the garden and said these words: John 20,

20:13 "And they said to her, Woman, why are you sobbing? She told them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid Him.

20:14 On saying this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing [there], but she did not know (recognize) that it was Jesus.

20:15 Jesus said to her, Woman, why are you crying [so]? For Whom are you looking? Supposing that it was the gardener, she replied, Sir, if you carried Him away from here, tell me where you have put Him and I will take Him away.

20:16 Jesus said to her, Mary! Turning around she said to Him in Hebrew, Rabboni!--which means Teacher {or} Master.

20:17 Jesus said to her, Do not cling to Me [do not hold Me], for I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to My brethren and tell them, I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God."

Precisely at this very hour, the priest were in the temple performing the Feast of First Fruits. The evening before they had laid sickle to the first gathering of the spring harvest of barley and were waving it before God to bless the harvest, as a offering of the best of their harvest, a offering of first fruits from the earth. Jesus also ascended to the Father in heaven and offered Himself, the First Fruits of those borne of the dead as payment in full for the sins of the world, past, present, and future for all mankind that believes on His name. Historically and biblically , it is the scenario that fully satisfies biblical accounts and historical accounts apart from men's traditions. **At this time, Jesus was the first fruits of the FIRST resurrection that will end after the Tribulation and the last of the those raised in the first resurrection will be raised to life, just as He was.**

There is another reason why the women waited for the fourth day to anoint the body of Jesus and it is the same reason Jesus waited four days to raise Lazarus from the dead. In this time, nobody had a "stethoscope" to listen for the sounds of a heart beat. It was custom to wait four days to pronounce the deceased as dead...not just dead (as many were raised because of being in a coma), but dead, dead...with all the signs of decomposition of smell and rigor of the body. To be any earlier and be a witness of Jesus resurrection would have given critics another reason to believe that Jesus was never dead, but only in a coma and not really dead, so the women waited, as was custom for the fourth day at sunrise to approach the tomb of Jesus with the spices to complete His burial service.

SO WHY KEEP SUNDAY AS RESURRECTION DAY?

Good question and one that must be also answered on historical grounds. If anyone would take the time and research the meaning of the word "Easter" by even going to their encyclopedia or doing a word search and looking at even Wikipedia, they would find the historical meaning and why the tradition was moved to Sunday as Jesus being raised from the dead and is in total error. Why the change? Because men love tradition more than they love the truth. I myself did a word search and find that the word Easter is derived from pagan influence. It's not a comfortable ride when you find out your favorite holiday is nothing but a smorgasbord of pagan and perverted Christian symbols mixed with cute little items, such as bunnies and eggs. Wikipedia will give you many origins that have been incorporated into mainstream Christianity, but I take this definition from online source at religioustolerance.org,

"Origins of the name 'Easter':The name 'Easter' originated with the names of an ancient false goddess and god. The Venerable Bede, (672-735 **CE.**) a Christian scholar, first asserted in his book *De Ratione Temporum* that Easter was named after Eostre (a.k.a. Eastre). She was the Great Mother Goddess of the Saxon people in Northern Europe. Similarly, the "*Teutonic dawn goddess of fertility [was] known variously as Ostare, Ostara, Ostern, Eostra, Eostre, Eostur, Eastr, Eastur, Austron and Ausos.*" **1** Her name was derived from the ancient word for

spring: "eastre." Similar Goddesses were known by other names in ancient cultures around the Mediterranean, and were celebrated in the springtime. Some were:

Aphrodite, named Cytherea (Lady of Cythera) and Cypris (Lady of Cyprus) after the two places which claimed her birth; 8

Ashtoreth from ancient Israel;

Astarte from ancient Greece;

Emeter from Mycenae;

Hathor from ancient Egypt;

Ishtar from Assyria;

Kali, from India; and

Ostara a Norse Goddess of fertility.

An alternative explanation has been suggested. The name given by the Frankish church to Jesus' resurrection festival included the Latin word "*alba*" which means "*white*." (This was a reference to the white robes that were worn during the festival.) "*Alba*" also has a second meaning: "*sunrise*." When the name of the festival was translated into German, the "*sunrise*" meaning was selected in error. This became "*ostern*" in German. Ostern has been proposed as the origin of the word '*Easter*' .2"

So how was this pagan origin found to be included into modern Christianity? This is pure history and attempts are not made to lay blame on any one denomination, but you know who you are. From the Catholic Encyclopedia, the New Advent, we find these words:

"However it was not the custom of the churches in the rest of the world to end it at this point, as they observed the practice, which from Apostolic tradition has prevailed to the present time, of terminating the fast on no other day than on that of the resurrection of our Savior. Synods and assemblies of bishops were held on this account, and all with one consent through mutual correspondence drew up an ecclesiastical decree that the mystery of the resurrection of our Lord should be celebrated on no other day but the Sunday and that we should observe the close of the paschal fast on that day only."

The text of the decree of the Council of Nicaea which settled, or at least indicated a final settlement of, the difficulty has not been preserved to us, but we have an important document inserted in Eusebius's "Life of Constantine" (III, xviii sq.). The emperor himself, writing to the Churches after the Council of Nicaea, exhorts them to adopt its conclusions and says among other things: "At this meeting the question concerning the most holy day of Easter was discussed, and it was resolved by the united judgment of all present that this feast ought to be kept by all and in every place on one and the same day. . . And first of all it appeared an unworthy thing that in the celebration of the Jews, who have impiously defiled their hands with enormous sin. . . for we have received from our Saviour a different way. (where? Not in my bible!). . . And I myself have undertaken that this decision should meet with the approval of your Sagacities in the hope that your Wisdoms will gladly admit that practice which is observed at once in the city of Rome and in Africa, throughout Italy and in Egypt. . . with entire unity of judgment." Comment BOLD added emphasis mine.

So the Catholic Church fully admits that they changed the time of the observance of the resurrection and moved it to Sunday as a sign of the power of the Church. Can you say Anti-Semite? The ruling religious class of the Roman Catholic Church has a sordid history of being just that, Jew haters. Not that the Jews are innocent, but are any one of us innocent? We all crucified our Lord by our sins that could not be forgiven any other way. I crucified my Lord, you crucified the Lord Jesus and we are all guilty as charged. But it was God's plan all along to redeem

His creation from the sin nature begun so long ago in the Garden of Eden and the first man and woman sinned against God and fell under the power of Satan.

WHAT DO WE DO?

First each of us have to decide in all good conscience to either submit to the traditions of men who have changed the timing of the Lord's resurrection by filling it with pagan practices and cute little symbols to make the kids happy, or do we follow the clear teachings of the Bible? Do we honor God with our lips, or with our hearts? It's a personal decision that each of us have to make and it's not an easy one to make. I do not fault anyone who in all good conscience (and ignorance of the facts) continues to follow the traditions of men and feel they are giving our Lord proper worship and praise, but to the uneducated in Biblical accounts of this most sacred of Christian beliefs, the resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, the truth must be revealed to all who wish to serve God with an obedient heart. To observe a tradition that we come to know as being steeped in pagan practices and is in direct conflict with the ways of God and His written Word, is an opening for Satan to blind you to the rest of the truths of the Word of God and it's message. If they got this wrong, then what else did this "Catholic religion" get wrong. Much, you say and you would be right. We must stay true to His message and His sacrifice made in blood.

For my house, we observe the Lord's Supper yearly, as He did with His disciples by taking the wine and the bread as symbols of the New Covenant made in his blood and His broken body. It is the Lord's Passover for the remission of sins. By submitting myself unto the Lord and examining myself, much as Paul admonished to early Christians in : 1st Corinthians,

11:23 "For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread:

11:24 And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me.

11:25 After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.

11:26 For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.

11:27 Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.

11:28 But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.

11:29 For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.

11:30 For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep."

We must all praise and give God glory and worship for the sacrifice of His only Begotten Son, our Lord and Savior. We must worship our Lord God in Spirit and in Truth and not confuse the traditions of men, for the truth found in your open bible. We must praise Him during this season for His Resurrection to Life, that if Jesus be not raised we are a people most miserable: 1st Corinthians,

15:12 "Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?"

15:13 But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen:

15:14 And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain.

15:15 Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not.

15:16 For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised:

15:17 And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins.

15:18 Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished.

15:19 If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.”

I could on and on about what the pagan symbols mean that most men and women don't even realize what they are doing, but Lea Sylvester did an outstanding job of explaining the pagan influences starting with Nimrod as the Sun God, Baal and the Queen of heaven notion that is rampant even today in “modern” Christianity, or those who claim the moniker and it's power over other men. I invite you to read her post that was posted recently on Prophecy Update and pulled from the Omega Letter website entitled “Blood on the Doorpost”... You may read it here on Prophecy Update at this URL:

<http://campaign.r20.constantcontact.com/render?ca=5800d135-dc4d-460b-98de-5b102f622dc3&c=875220a0-ab1b-11e3-a1f8-d4ae52843d28&ch=87fd54c0-ab1b-11e3-a246-d4ae52843d28>

Or, straight to the article at this URL:

<http://www.omegaletter.com/articles/articles.asp?ArticleID=8021>

This message is designed to add to her account of the why the Easter season is dripping in pagan influence and YOU have decide whether you will honor God or follow men and their perversion of the Truth...note one thing my friend, as many of today's Christians find no fault in continuing the practice of worshiping God on this day out of tradition and “it's how we have always done it”, but remember one thing, “GOD HAS A MEMORY”...He never forgets how men have substituted pagan practices to somehow “worship” Him...can you say, the Golden Calf of Exodus and what God thought of using pagan symbols to worship Him? Was God amused? Was Moses amused? How many people were slain because of using pagan idolatry and dare think that it worshiped God? Jesus railed at the Pharisees for doing just the same thing that their forefather did in the wilderness: Mark 7,

7:7 “Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

7:8 For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do.

7:9 And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.”

Does the Word of God support what is written here? Search your heart and scripture and make that pledge to follow our Lord as He intended by clear commands of the Messiah, and God our Father. Do not think you can appease God for doing what you know now, is a gross error on how He wishes to be worshiped. For the true Christian, it will mean loss of reward at the Bema Judgment seat of Christ, and for the so called “Christian” who follows the edicts of their church, it could mean worshiping God as the children of Israel did when they worshiped a Golden Calf and you know what happened to them. Search your heart and get rid of anything that stinks of this world. The world is quickly passing away, but God's Word will NOT pass away.

***This is Pastor Mike Taylor, praying God's salvation come into each of your lives.
If there is anything I can help you with, pray with you about, or just listen
with an attentive ear, email me at realteam1999@sbcglobal.net,
God bless you, till we meet at Jesus feet.***