

DAY 24 BUT



John 3:16

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one & only Son, that whoever believes in Him will never perish BUT have eternal life."

I once heard a TV talk show host say this about the word, BUT: "BUT is a powerful word. It means to forget everything I just said- because now I'm going to tell you what I really mean! When you use the word BUT, the words that follow are the words that are remembered."

If you were paying attention in your HS

English classes, you may have learned that 'But' is a conjunction or a connecting word that is used to introduce something contrasting with what has already been mentioned. It can mean "on the contrary; or yet." It can also mean "except, unless or without the circumstance that."

Our scripture says, "For God so loved the world that he gave his one & only Son, that whoever believes in Him will never perish BUT have eternal life." And it continues in verse 17, "For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, BUT to save the world through him."

Romans 6.23 says, "For the wages of sin is death, BUT the free gift of God is eternal life through JC our Lord."

1 Cor. 13.6: "Love does not delight in evil, BUT rejoices with the truth."

1 John 4.18: "There is no fear in love, BUT perfect love casts out fear."

Gal. 2.20: "I have been crucified with Christ, and I no longer live, BUT Christ lives in me."

Acts 3.15: "You killed the author of life, BUT God raised him from the dead."

Matt. 19:26: "Jesus said, 'With man this is impossible, BUT with God all things are possible.'"

So, you get the picture?! Our word and how it is used reminds us that a word doesn't have to be long to be important. But it is a really short word, yet it is essential in really grasping the hopeful message of the Gospel - of Good Friday and Easter Sunday... and, in fact, it really sums up what these two days are about.

Trevor Hudson notes: "God knows that there is a Good Friday side to life. We sin, we hurt one another, and we die-- all parts of the failing and futile reality we live in. If they were the ONLY parts and if sin and death had the final word... life would not even be worth living, right?"

BUT, we also can experience an Easter side to life. God, in no way, abandons us to the grave. His care and his love are so great that God comes to us....in Jesus Christ so that those who simply believe in him will not perish BUT share in the undying life that God graciously gives...

I love how TPT translates our verse: "For this is how much God loved the world-- he gave his one and only, unique Son as a gift. So now everyone who believes in him will never perish" ---He could have left it there & maybe we could live in a perpetual state of purgatory??? BUT, NO! There's a very significant BUT---the amazing alternative of experiencing everlasting life.

Take a moment and thank God for the BUT here.... Acknowledge that there is a Good Friday side to life---BUT Easter is real --- and it's coming!

Daily Practice

Pay special attention today to every time you use the word BUT (speaking, emailing, texting)-- or when you hear someone else use it. And ask God to remind you of God's gift of love and eternal life:) Amen.

The below reflections are written by congregants & staff of CPC. All reflections are following Trevor Hudson's book Pauses for Lent and are both heavily influenced and borrowed from his work. Any quotes without attribution should be credited to him.