

## How Christians Respond to Easter

### *How Christians Respond*

- Certain resps Xians just know how make. Here's what mean: if I say cert phrases, I bet you know how resp. Let's give try; (respond out loud): Lord w/you; (also you). Good! Another, perfect for today: Xp risen; (risen, ind). Getting hang! Now look at opening vss of Ps 118; these vss meant be said as resps; so let's say togeth responsively. **Vs. 1-4a(b)**. Certain resps Xians just know how make.
- Esp on Easter. Today we celeb res of JC from dead. Rom: "**He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification**" (4:25). IOW, death/res of J is what forgives our sins, makes us right w/God. W/o Easter, there's no: salv, heaven, peace; only guilt, fear, despair. But (try again): Xp risen; (risen, ind). **Vs. 1a(b)**. That's how Xians resp to Easter (XRE). We can't help but resp to Easter. And Ps 118 shows us number of ways how XRE.

### *By Giving Thanks to the Lord*

- 1<sup>st</sup> way XRE: by giving thanks to Lord. How many us at dinner table pray these words, or variation of them: **vs. 1**. But this thnkflns not limited to our meals. The res of J is our reason for giving thanks in everything, every day. Thank you J for: loving me; coming into sin-filled world; fighting, defeating tempt every day your life; your Passion & for terrible death on cross; your res, victory over death; my salv; promise of eternal life in heaven; forgiving all my sins; always being w/me; hearing my prayers; baptizing me into your family; feeding me w/holy supper; my faith/church/Word; for fam/home/food; everything! All these blessings are gracious gifts from our risen Savior. And how we resp? We **vs. 1a**. That's 1<sup>st</sup> way XRE: by giving thanks to Lord.

### *By Trusting in God*

- Here's 2<sup>nd</sup> way: by trusting in God. **Vs. 5**. On cross, J was hard pressed by weight our sins. But now he's risen from dead, and he lives in heaven, where it's so "**spacious,**" there's room for all Xians there. J once: "**Trust in God; trust also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms**" (Jn 14:1-2, NIV84). And right now, J in heaven preparing room for each us there. He says, "Trust in me."
- Jesus certly trusted Father. On cross, J tempted doubt God's love. But here says **vs. 6**. What do? Crux one worst forms death imaginable. Yet w/confdnt trust, J: **vs. 8, 7**. When J rose from dead, triumphed over enemies! **Vs. 10-12**. Satan can accuse you of sin no more; J cut him down. Your sin defines you, controls you no more; cut down. Death can capture, contain in its cold clutches no more; cut down.
- **Vs. 14**. Res of J is our salv. Trust in J! If anything in life right now causing you doubt God's love 4u, just look in tomb; that puppy's empty! Jesus rose 4u! **Vs. 14**. Trust in God. That's how XRE.

### *By Not Fearing Death*

- Here's 3<sup>rd</sup> way XRE: by not fearing death. Ps 118: **vs. 15b-16**. What mighty things? Well, think like this: when J died, like he sank down into deep, dark, ugly pit. That pit is death; he sank to bottom. But God Father's mighty right hand reached down from heaven into that terrible pit of death, grabbed hold J, pulled him out; then lifted him high for all to see! **Vs. 15b-16a**. Look and see what God's mighty right hand has done; he raised J from dead.
- And someday, going do same 4u! That deep, dark, ugly pit of death still claims its prey. We still have funerals, miscarriages; still lose loved one; still all face death. But when God raised J, made promise to raise us, as well. So someday, when we fall into that pit, God's mighty right hand will reach down from heaven again, grab hold us, pull us out, as well. And we will rise, just as surely as J did!

- And so, dear Xian, don't be afraid of death. J: **“Because I live, you also will live” (Jn 14:19)**. I've conducted lot funerals as pastor, and lot com services at cem. During com service, I always read these words from Ps 118: **vs. 19-20**. And I point casket when say those words, bec death/res J makes death a gate. Death, for Xian, is the gate thru which righteous enter etern life. If you facing death, or if mourning death, remem: **vs. 17**. He raised J; going raise you. Don't be afraid death; that's how XRE.

### *By Rejoicing*

- And finally, a 4<sup>th</sup> way XRE: by rejoicing! **Vs. 15a**. Easter is day to rejoice, bec **vs. 22**. Jewish leaders, like foolish builders, threw quarry's best stone onto junk rock pile. But God pulled J out that rock pile, said “This is best stone in yard!” Now J is resurrected cornerstone of God's church. And that's our reason to rejoice!
- Vs. 24 says **vs. 24a** (raised J on Easter Day); **vs. 24b** – and we will! Or, as vs. 24 says in trad transl: **“This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it!” (NIV84)**. Easter is day to rejoice, be glad. Not just today; not just in this festival service; but every day. Xian life is life of rejoicing, bec our Savior is not dead; he's alive. And so we rejoice, like PS worshippers did (**vs. 26a**), and like psalmist does (**vs. 28**). XRE by rejoicing!

### *Christians Know How to Respond*

- I think Xians are pretty good making resps. Shall we try again? **Vs. 1a(b)**. See! We know how to resp. And we know how resp to Easter.
  - For all the blessings you receive from risen Lord, resp by giving thanks to the Lord.
  - For all the fears/doubts the res removes, resp by trusting in God.
  - For J' victory over death, resp by not fearing death.
  - And for the joy of your salvation, resp by rejoicing.
- Xp risen; (risen, ind). That's how Xians respond to Easter.

### **Psalm 118**

<sup>1</sup> Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever. <sup>2</sup> Let Israel say: “His love endures forever.” <sup>3</sup> Let the house of Aaron say: “His love endures forever.” <sup>4</sup> Let those who fear the LORD say: “His love endures forever.”

<sup>5</sup> When hard pressed, I cried to the LORD; he brought me into a spacious place. <sup>6</sup> The LORD is with me; I will not be afraid. What can mere mortals do to me? <sup>7</sup> The LORD is with me; he is my helper. I look in triumph on my enemies. <sup>8</sup> It is better to take refuge in the LORD than to trust in humans. <sup>9</sup> It is better to take refuge in the LORD than to trust in princes.

<sup>10</sup> All the nations surrounded me, but in the name of the LORD I cut them down. <sup>11</sup> They surrounded me on every side, but in the name of the LORD I cut them down. <sup>12</sup> They swarmed around me like bees, but they were consumed as quickly as burning thorns; in the name of the LORD I cut them down.

<sup>13</sup> I was pushed back and about to fall, but the LORD helped me. <sup>14</sup> The LORD is my strength and my defense; he has become my salvation. <sup>15</sup> Shouts of joy and victory resound in the tents of the righteous: “The LORD's right hand has done mighty things! <sup>16</sup> The LORD's right hand is lifted high; the LORD's right hand has done mighty things!” <sup>17</sup> I will not die but live, and will proclaim what the LORD has done. <sup>18</sup> The LORD has chastened me severely, but he has not given me over to death. <sup>19</sup> Open for me the gates of the righteous; I will enter and give thanks to the LORD. <sup>20</sup> This is the gate of the LORD through which the righteous may enter. <sup>21</sup> I will give you thanks, for you answered me; you have become my salvation.

<sup>22</sup> The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; <sup>23</sup> the LORD has done this, and it is marvelous in our eyes. <sup>24</sup> The LORD has done it this very day; let us rejoice today and be glad. <sup>25</sup> LORD, save us! LORD, grant us success! <sup>26</sup> Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD. From the house of the LORD we bless you. <sup>27</sup> The LORD is God, and he has made his light shine on us. With boughs in hand, join in the festal procession up to the horns of the altar. <sup>28</sup> You are my God, and I will praise you; you are my God, and I will exalt you. <sup>29</sup> Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever.