

GIFT GIVERS

Agape International Ministries

April 2000

Do You Believe in Easter?



Edith Burns was a wonderful Christian who lived in San Antonio, Texas. She was the patient of a doctor by the name of Will Phillips. Dr. Phillips was a gentle doctor who saw patients as people. His favorite patient was Edith Burns. One morning he went to his office with a heavy heart, and it was because of Edith Burns.

When he walked into that waiting room, there sat Edith with her big black Bible in her lap, earnestly talking to a young mother sitting beside her. Edith Burns had a habit of introducing herself in this way: "Hello, my name is Edith Burns. Do you believe in Easter?" Then she would explain the meaning of Easter, and many times people would be saved.

Dr. Phillips walked into that office and there he saw the head nurse, Beverly. Beverly had first met Edith when she was taking her blood pressure. Edith began by saying, "My name is Edith Burns. Do you believe in Easter?"

Beverly said, "Why yes I do."

Edith said, "Well, what do you believe about Easter?"

Beverly said, "Well, it's all about egg hunts, going to church, and dressing up."

Edith kept pressing her about the real meaning of Easter and finally led her to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

Dr. Phillips said, "Beverly, don't call Edith into the office quite yet. I believe there is another delivery taking place in the waiting room."

After being called back into the doctor's office, Edith sat down. When she took a look at the doctor, she said, "Dr. Will, why are you so sad? Are you reading your Bible? Are you praying?"

Dr. Phillips said gently, "Edith, I'm the doctor, and you're the patient." With a heavy heart he said, "Your lab report came back, and it says you have cancer, and Edith, you're not going to live very long."

Edith said, "Why, Will Phillips, shame on you! Why are you so sad? Do you think God makes mistakes? You have just told me I'm going to see my precious Lord Jesus, my husband, and my friends. You have just told me that I am going to celebrate Easter forever, and here you are having difficulty giving me my ticket!"

Dr. Phillips thought to himself, "What a magnificent woman this Edith Burns is!"

Edith continued coming to Dr. Phillips. Christmas came and the office was closed through January 3rd. On the day the office opened, Edith did not show up. Later that afternoon, Edith called Dr. Phillips and said she would have to be moving her story to the hospital and said, "Will, I'm very near home, so would you make sure that they put women in here next to me in my room who need to know about Easter."

Well, they did just that, and women began to come in and share that room with Edith. Many women were saved. Everybody on that floor from staff to patients were so excited about Edith, that they started calling her Edith Easter; that is everyone except Phyllis Cross, the head nurse.

Phyllis made it plain that she wanted nothing to do with Edith because she was a “religious nut”. She had been a nurse in an army hospital. She had seen it all and heard it all. She was the original G.I. Jane. She had been married three times, she was hard, cold, and did everything by the book.

One morning the two nurses who were to attend to Edith were sick. Edith had the flu, and Phyllis Cross had to go in and give her a shot. When she walked in, Edith had a big smile on her face and said, “Phyllis, God loves you, and I love you, and I have been praying for you.”

Phyllis Cross said, “Well, you can quit praying for me; it won’t work. I’m not interested.”

Edith said, “Well, I will pray, and I have asked God not to let me go home until you come into the family.”

Phyllis Cross said, “Then you will never die because that will never happen,” and curtly walked out of the room.

Every day Phyllis Cross would walk into the room and Edith would say, “God loves you Phyllis, and I love you, and I’m praying for you.”

One day Phyllis Cross said she was literally drawn to Edith’s room like a magnet would draw iron. She sat down on the bed and Edith said, “I’m so glad you have come, because God told me that today is your special day.”

Phyllis Cross said, “Edith, you have asked everybody here the question, ‘Do you believe in Easter?’ but you have never asked me.”

Edith said, “Phyllis, I wanted to many times, but God told me to wait until you asked, and now that you have asked...”

Edith Burns took her Bible and shared with Phyllis Cross the Easter Story of the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Edith said, “Phyllis, do you believe in Easter? Do you believe that Jesus Christ is alive and that He wants to live in your heart?”

Phyllis Cross said, “Oh, I want to believe that with all of my heart, and I do want Jesus in my life.” Right there, Phyllis Cross prayed and invited Jesus Christ into her heart. For the first time Phyllis Cross did not walk out of a hospital room, she was carried out on the wings of angels.

Two days later, Phyllis Cross came in and Edith said, “Do you know what day it is?”

Phyllis Cross said, “Why Edith, it’s Good Friday.”

Edith said, “Oh, no, for you every day is Easter. Happy Easter, Phyllis!”

Two days later, on Easter Sunday, Phyllis Cross came in to work, did some of her duties, and then went down to the flower shop and got some Easter lilies because she wanted to go up to see Edith and give her some Easter lilies and wish her a Happy Easter. When she walked into Edith’s room, Edith was in bed. That big black Bible was on her lap. Her hands were in that Bible. There was a sweet smile on her face.

When Phyllis Cross went to pick up Edith’s hand, she realized Edith was dead. Her left hand was on John 14: “In my Father’s house are many mansions... I go to prepare a place for you. ...I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there you may be also.” Her right hand was on Revelation 21:4, “And God will wipe away



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every tear from their eyes, there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying; and there shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away."

Phyllis Cross took one look at that dead body, and then lifted her face toward heaven, and with tears streaming down her cheeks, said, "Happy Easter, Edith - Happy Easter!"

Phyllis Cross left Edith's body, walked out of the room, and over to a table where two student nurses were sitting. She said, "My name is Phyllis Cross. Do you believe in Easter?"

— AUTHOR UNKNOWN



Update on Bulgaria

In June of 1998, an article was published in **Gift Givers** about Christians in Bulgaria. At that time, there were 160,000 Christians in the country. The Good News of Jesus continues to be preached, and the number of the saved has increased to 250,000.

Through the ministry of International Impact, founded by Margaret Nikol, who witnessed and, by the grace of God, survived the Communists' ruthless slaughter of Christians in her homeland, 110,000 Bulgarian Bibles have been printed and distributed to believers. (Under the Communists, virtually all Bibles in the country had been destroyed. Even pastors had only a few hand-copied pages from which to preach.) Through the generosity of the more than 6,000 churches in which Margaret has shared her story, 20,000 to 30,000 new Bibles have been printed each summer for the past several years.

Sadly, the open door to Bulgaria may be closing very quickly. Leadership in the country is once again leaning toward totalitarianism. In January of this year, all churches other than the state-approved Greek Orthodox Church, were declared unlawful, summarily outlawing the entire evangelical movement in Bulgaria.

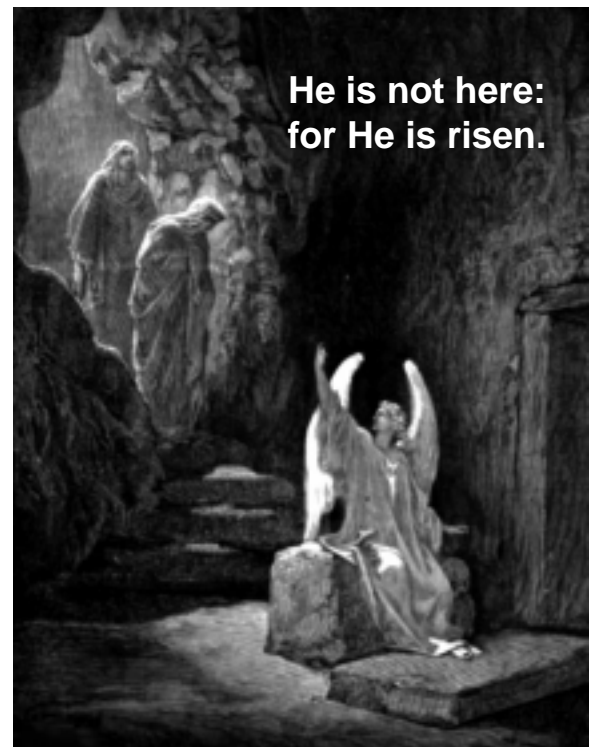
As this may be the last year it is possible, International Impact is trying to print even more Bibles than usual this summer. If the Holy Spirit moves you to help with this project, you may send your donation to International Impact, Inc., 7 Switchbud Place, Suite 192-214, The Woodlands, TX 77380. (NOTE: AIM and International Impact are not affiliated ministries.)

CAMEM Report

The latest news about CAMEM can be found on the Internet.

www.camem.org

This month, Bro. Dave disclosed tentative plans to resume distribution, possibly starting with a very modest figure of 7% in May, increasing to 12% in June. He hopes that by July the distribution will be up to 20% or more for the rest of the year.



Shall We Dance?

When I meditated on the word guidance, I kept seeing “dance” at the end of the word.

I remember reading that doing God’s will is a lot like dancing. When two people try to lead, nothing feels right. The movement doesn’t flow with the music, and everything is quite uncomfortable and jerky.

When one person relaxes and lets the other lead, both bodies begin to flow with the music. One gives gentle cues, perhaps with a nudge to the back or by pressing lightly in one direction or another. It’s as if two become one body, moving beautifully. The dance takes surrender, willingness, and attentiveness from one person and gentle guidance and skill from the other.

My eyes drew back to the word guidance. When I saw “G,” I thought of God, followed by “u” and “i.” God, “u” and “I” dance. God, you and I dance. This statement is what guidance means to me.

As I lowered my head, I became willing to trust that I would get guidance about my life. Once again, I became willing to let God lead.

– Author Unknown



If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. 1 Corinthians 15:19 - 22



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