

mar 31

i know this isn't easter morning. that was over a month ago. that doesn't stop me from remembering everyday and being thankful for the sacrifice of our Lord.

i have a friend that has since passed away. she used to say that if she were ever to wear a cross, she would wear it behind her, because the cross was behind. it's true in the sense that we serve a risen Lord. but we have to go through the cross to reach that risen Lord. "if anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me." luke 9:23

we must crucify the flesh that lusts against the spirit. "therefore submit to God. resist the devil and he will flee from you." james 4:7 the enemy is always seeking to attack you wherever he might and his plans for us are not pleasant.

again, i want to tell you a little story.

One Easter Sunday morning, a pastor came to the Church carrying a rusty, bent, old bird cage, and set it by the pulpit. Several eyebrows were raised and, as if in response, the pastor began to speak.

"I was walking through town yesterday when I saw a young boy coming toward me, swinging this bird cage. On the bottom of the cage were three little wild birds, shivering with cold and fright. I stopped the lad and

asked, "What you got there son?"

"Just some old birds," came the reply.

"What are you gonna do with them?" I asked.

"Take 'em home and have fun with 'em. I'm gonna tease 'em and pull out their feathers to make 'em fight. I'm gonna have a real good time."

"But you'll get tired of those birds sooner or later. What will you do then?"

"Oh, I got some cats. They like birds. I'll take 'em to them."

The pastor was silent for a moment. "How much do you want for those birds, son?"

"Huh??!!! Why, you don't want them birds, mister. They're just plain old field birds. They don't sing - they ain't even pretty!"

"How much?"

The boy sized up the pastor as if he were crazy and said, "\$10?".

The pastor reached in his pocket and took out a ten dollar bill. He placed it in the boy's hand. In a flash, the boy was gone.

The pastor picked up the cage and gently carried it to the end of the alley where there was a tree and a

grassy spot. Setting the cage down, he opened the door, and by softly tapping the bars persuaded the birds out, setting them free.

Well, that explained the empty bird cage on the pulpit, and then the pastor began to tell this story.

One day Satan and Jesus were having a conversation. Satan had just come from the Garden of Eden, and he was gloating and boasting.

"Yes, sir, I just caught the world full of people down there. Set me a trap, used bait I knew they couldn't resist. Got 'em all!"

"What are you going to do with them?" Jesus asked.

"Oh, I'm gonna have fun! I'm gonna teach them how to marry and divorce each other. How to hate and abuse each other. How to drink and smoke and curse. How to invent guns and bombs and kill each other. I'm really gonna have fun!"

"And what will you do when you get done with them?", Jesus asked.

"Oh, I'll kill 'em."

"How much do you want for them?"

"Oh, you don't want those people. They ain't no good. Why, you take them and they'll just hate you. They'll spit on you, curse you and kill you!! You don't want those people!!"

"How much?"

Satan looked at Jesus and sneered, "All your tears, and all your blood." Jesus paid the price.

The pastor picked up the cage he opened the door and he walked from the pulpit.

yes, Jesus paid the price of redemption. Jesus forgave but then He admonished, "sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon you." john 5:14 He never told us to go our way and do our own thing. indeed a worse thing is seeking to devour us. "if you do well, will you not be accepted? and if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. and its desire is for you, but you should rule over it." gen 4:7

sin is always waiting at the door, seeking any opening you might provide. the devil is waiting to tempt, torture and terminate. Jesus said, "the thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly." john 10:10

"I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both you and your descendants may live." deut 30:19