



An Easter Message

by James M. Decker

Easter 2020 is one we won't soon forget. Our usual "traditions" have been disrupted. There were no community Easter egg hunts. Family Easter gatherings have been scaled back. And on Easter Sunday, a day that almost always sees peak attendance in our churches, church sanctuaries were mostly empty.

It's cliché to remind everyone that the church is the people, not the building, but sometimes clichés exist for a reason. In the lead-up to Easter 2020, I've seen churches prove that they are more than a building in ingenious, heartwarming ways. Churches without a history of online streaming have utilized Facebook Live and Zoom to stay connected with their congregations, and in doing so, have also connected with new audiences. Churches have developed "drive in" services to connect in a socially-distanced manner. Churches have worked together across denominational lines to feed schoolchildren and provide visible Easter celebrations for their communities.

As I think about the lessons of this unique Easter season, I think about the misleading idea that accepting Christ will lead to "smooth sailing" in life. It can often be quite the opposite. Few (if any) have served God as faithfully as Paul, but if you ever want to dispel the notion of Christian faith leading to smooth sailing, check out Paul's list of sufferings in 2 Corinthians 16:23-28. And let's not forget, Paul left his life as a powerful Roman official to subject himself to floggings, prison, and ultimately death in service of Jesus.

Earlier in the week, my wonderful wife (with the "help" of our daughter Miriam), used sidewalk chalk to write a much-needed reminder from John 16:33 in front of our house. At the Last Supper, Jesus had just informed his disciples that their time together would soon end and He would leave and return to the Father. The disciples were filled with confusion and anxiety. Jesus reassured them, informing them that each would soon be scattered to their own home, but they would one day see each other again. In the meantime, they should ask God for what they need, doing so in Jesus' name. Jesus counseled them, "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world, you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."

On this Easter Sunday, "smooth sailing" is certainly not the order of the day. Instead, the feelings of John 16 reign supreme. Our people are filled with confusion and anxiety about threats to our health, about our livelihoods and economic security, and about uncertainty for the well-being of our families, friends, neighbors, and communities. We're even scattered to our own homes. But like the disciples that night in the Upper Room, like Paul trading luxury and power for danger and suffering, we need not worry. Today, Easter Sunday provides us the hope of a much greater "smooth sailing" than anything we could ever desire on Earth. No matter how you may be struggling with the troubles of the world, remember what Jesus told the disciples. In this world, you will have trouble, but take heart. Jesus has overcome the world!

He is risen! From our family to yours, God bless you and Happy Easter.

James Decker is a lawyer,



Fire! Members of the Bronte Volunteer Fire Department were called out to a fire north of Bronte on Wednesday, March 25, 2020. A tractor belonging to a local man caught fire and was extinguished by Bronte VFD.

farmer, and mayor in Stamford, and the creator of the

forthcoming "West of 98" podcast and website. He may be contacted through Facebook at facebook.com/james.decker.

Russell Davis
Agent

611 Austin Street
PO Box 1079
Robert Lee, Texas 76945
(325) 453-4505 office
(325) 453-4524 fax
(325) 650-1904 mobile
TXFB-INS.COM

Are you earning enough on your savings?

Tommy E Neal, AAMS®
Financial Advisor

2412 College Hills Boulevard
Suite 102
San Angelo, TX 76904
325-223-8244

Edward Jones®
MAKING SENSE OF INVESTING

MKT-5894I-A Member SIPC

For the safety of Coke County citizens,

The Observer/Enterprise

has suspended the use of our drop boxes indefinitely.

Items for publication may be emailed to ObserverEnterprise@gmail.com.

You may also text or call with your information to (325) 453-2433.

IVEY MOTORS

2019 Ford F-550 Chassis	\$51,500
<i>White w/Gray Cloth! Single Cab! Diesel! 4x2! Only 500 Miles! Like New Condition!</i>	
#V170B	
2016 Ford F-150 King Ranch	\$32,000
<i>White w/Brown Leather! Navigation, Sunroof, & Bed Liner! 4x2! 84K Miles! Great Condition!</i>	
#7138A	
2013 Jeep Wrangler Unlimited Rubicon	\$26,995
<i>White w/Black Leather! 4x4! 3.6L V6! Hard Top w/ Alpine Stereo! 86K Miles! Great Looking Ride!</i>	
#7176A	
2019 Ford Flex SEL	\$25,995
<i>Black w/Tan Leather! Navigation! Like New Condition! Only 12K Miles!</i>	
#7175A	
2018 Ford Explorer XLT	\$25,995
<i>White Platinum w/Tan Leather! Navigation! Super Clean SUV! 40K Miles!</i>	
#W316A	

Free Pick Up and Delivery for Sales and Service!

453-4561

Ask For: **Cole Flanagan • Buddy Wallace • Kagan Maxcey**