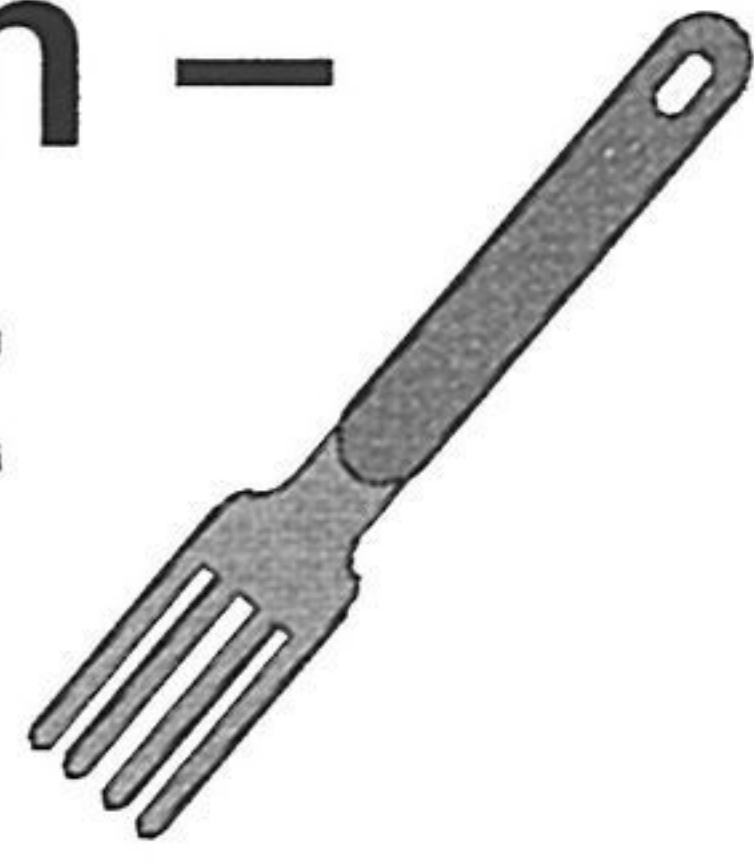


# Resurrection – What's in it for ME!



Notice please that I used an exclamation mark at the end of the title rather than a question mark because for many people, these words would be a statement, not a question. What do I mean by that?

At Easter times Christians tend to think of Jesus dying on the cross FOR THEM and that they automatically have this FREE PASS to a new life beyond this life here on earth... That is the "What's in it for me" attitude that we see and hear so often happening in and around churches by some Christians who KNOW that they are saved and going to Heaven.

Resurrection is what every Christian is brought to believe in and yet...wait a minute..... wasn't it Martin Luther who said that GRACE was the gift of God and not something that could be bought, sold or otherwise obtained through human endeavor?

GRACE **is** the gift of God and, believe it or not, the idea of a post death RESURRECTION is also the gift of GOD. The trouble is; how do we achieve this? I don't know about you but I sincerely hope that following the demise of Pastor Ian, God has something more in store for me.

When I first heard the little story I am about to share with you, it reminded me of the many pleasant and formative years that my wife Irene, our family and I spent among the people of the farming community in the Ashburn area. ....

*There was a young woman who had been diagnosed with a terminal illness and had been told that she had only a short time left in this world. She was getting her things "in order," and contacted her pastor, asking him come to her house to discuss certain aspects of her final wishes. She told him which songs she wanted sung at the service and what scriptures she would like read.*

*Everything was in order and the pastor was preparing to leave when the young woman suddenly remembered something very important to her. "There's one more thing," she said excitedly.*

*"What's that?" came the pastor's reply.*

*"This is very important," the young woman continued. "I want to be buried with a fork in my right hand." The pastor stood looking at the young woman, not knowing quite what to say.*

*"That surprises you, doesn't it?" the young woman asked. "Well, to be honest, I'm puzzled by the request," said the pastor. The young woman explained. "My grandmother once told me this story, and I have also, always tried to pass along its message to those I love, and those who are in need of encouragement.*

*My Grandmother told me:*

**"In all my years of attending church socials and potluck dinners, I always remember that when the dishes of the main course were being cleared, someone would inevitably lean over and say, 'Keep your fork.' It was my favorite part because I knew that something better was coming ... like velvety chocolate cake! or deep-dish apple pie. Something wonderful, and with substance!"**

*So pastor, I just want people to see me there in that casket with a fork in my hand and I want them to wonder, "What's with the fork?" Then I want **you** to tell them:*

**"Keep your fork .. the best is yet to come."**

*The pastor's eyes welled up with tears of joy and understanding as he hugged the woman for what was likely to be the last time.*

*In that moment he also knew that the young woman had a better grasp of the concept of Heaven than he did.*

*Her implicit faith told her that something better was coming.*

Weeks later, at the funeral, people were walking by the young woman's casket and they saw the pretty dress she was wearing and a fork placed in her right hand. Over and over, the pastor heard the whispered question "What's with the fork?" and over and over he smiled.

Later, as he addressed the gathering, the pastor told the people of the conversation he had with her shortly before she died and how she wanted her friends to

*Continued on page 14*