

**ATTENTION!!**

**MeetUp Class**  
Monday, May 23, at 7:00 p.m.  
28561 Sunnyslope St.  
Desert Hot Springs CA 92241

**Visiting Needs**

**Jesus Said... "I was sick, and you visited Me..."**  
Matthew 25:36

**May Birthdays**

2 Peggy Woodruff                      15 Kena Brown

**June Birthdays**

9 Debbie Pescador

**June Anniversaries**

5 Kurt & Debbie Hoffman

# Indio Informer

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**Does Jesus Care**

By Jonathan McAnulty

There is a hymn, written by Frank Graeff, in 1901, which asks, the question, "does Jesus care?" Does Jesus care, when my heart is pained? Does Jesus care, when my way is dark? Does Jesus care, when I've tried and failed? Does Jesus care, when I've said good-bye.

The scriptures answer this question in the affirmative: Yes, Jesus does care.

God Loves us through the suffering. The apostle Peter says concerning the care of God and the appropriate response to that divine care: *"Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you."* (1 Peter 5:6-7; NKJV)

As the apostle penned those words, he was writing to Christians who might have reason to doubt that God cared for them. They were saints who were facing persecution and hardships because of their faith. Peter reminds them of the proper manner in which they should answer this persecution: with love and kindness. (cf. 1 Peter 3:13-17) He also reminds them that Christ suffered on our behalf. (eg. 1 Peter 3:18, 4:1). He says concerning their problems: *"Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy."* (1 Peter 4:12-13; NKJV)

The example of Christs reminds us of several important things in relation to suffering and the love of God. Firstly, suffering does not preclude the love of God. Many think to themselves that if God really loved them then He would never allow them to feel pain. But God surely loved His Son, Jesus, and Jesus still suffered. He experienced abandonment by His friends and students. He experienced betrayal. He experienced beatings and torture. He

**Regular Meeting Times**

Sunday.....9:45 a.m.  
Sunday.....10:45 a.m.  
Wednesday.....7:00 p.m.

**Website:**  
[indiochurchofchrist.com](http://indiochurchofchrist.com)

**Preacher:**  
Jack Critchfield

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experienced an excruciating, and public, death. There is no heartache, pain, or sorrow that Jesus cannot empathize with, having suffered similar in His own flesh.

But through it all, Jesus held to His faith in the love and mercy of God, the Father. He confessed this faith, saying to God in prayer, *“for You loved Me before the foundation of the world.”* (John 17:25) With His final words He commended His soul into the Father’s hands (cf. Luke 23:46). Jesus knew that God cared for Him, even in the midst of misery and sorrow, and that such suffering did not signify that God was uncaring.

The example of Christ also reminds us that good can come through suffering, if we face it with faith. The suffering of Christ was not without purpose. It served to bring salvation to a world which desperately needed it. As Peter reminds us, Jesus suffered for us. Elsewhere, we are reminded that no suffering is ever pleasant as we are going through it. But that does not mean we cannot grow through it, and even from it, nor does it preclude the possibility that the suffering might in some way prove beneficial. It is a rather short-sighted perspective which refuses to consider that sometimes God might allow us to experience grief because doing so, in one fashion or another, is good for us, leading to greater joy afterward, if we allow it to. (cf. Hebrews 12:3-11) That’s not necessarily a message you want to hear in the middle of suffering, but that does not make it a false argument.

Finally, though, the suffering of Christ reminds us that Jesus cared enough about us to suffer on our behalf. When we find ourselves doubting whether or not God cares for us, remember the counsel of the Bible, which reminds us *“What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?”* (Romans 8:31-32; NKJV) Why would God care about us enough to allow Jesus to suffer for us, but not care enough about us to do more for us, when we turn to Him in faith, through Christ.

God does not promise to take away all of our cares and sorrows in this world. But He has promised to give His children strength to face those cares if they trust Him and follow where He leads them. When we find ourselves wondering, “Does Jesus care,” we can answer with the old hymn-writer, “Oh yes, He cares. I know He cares.” And in so knowing, let us follow the advice of the apostle, by humbling ourselves before God, and casting our cares upon Him.

## **True Colors**

By Jack Critchfield

Immediately following Peter’s good confession, Jesus began plainly telling His disciples that He must suffer and die at the hands of the chief priests, elders, and scribes. Peter took the Lord aside and began rebuking Him saying that this would never happen. The Lord turned His back on Peter and, in the hearing of the rest of the disciples, said, *“Get behind Me, Satan; for you are not setting your mind on God’s interests, but man’s”* (Mark 8:33). Then, summoning the multitude, He went on to explain: *“If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me”* (vs. 33).

Taking up the cross of Christ requires self-denial. A. T. Robertson describes denying oneself as saying no to oneself and then adds that this is a difficult thing to do. R. C. Foster explains the meaning of self-denial in these words: “Let him disown the things that have self as their aim and end....” Paul describes self-denial in these words: *“I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me”* (Galatians 2:20). Focusing on God’s interests before our own is required before we can truly take up our cross.

In what have we placed our true interests? Suffering and persecution have a way of pointing these out to us. If we shrink in the face of controversy, ridicule, or persecution; it is likely that our interests in the things of this life are stronger than our interests in the things of God. Jesus said, *“Do not fear those who kill the body but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell”* (Matthew 10:28). There are things more important than the preservation of physical life. Precaution and wisdom should be exercised, but not to the extent that we no longer put God’s interests first.

God’s interests demand that we take up the cross and follow Jesus. If He truly is Lord, then His interests must always come before our own. Even in the face of personal sacrifice, we must be willing to take up the cross. This is how we show our true colors, and this is the only way to find true happiness in this life and in the life which is to come.

**May God continue to bless us all.**