

Easter: then and now

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My favorite season, as a child, was spring; my fondest memory of spring was always Easter. With Easter being the first holiday of spring, our family prepared for it all week. Today, however, holidays have become so commercialized that Easter items and clothes are offered for sale months before the actual holiday. The traditional Easter holidays have also changed a lot. I have become aware of many similarities and differences regarding Easter, as a youth, and as an adult, including the Easter outfit, the Easter egg hunt, and the arrival of the Easter bunny.

Easter Sunday morning at church was like a fashion show; everyone wearing new outfits. During my childhood, the outfits were usually bought at the local Sears department store. Mom made me try on every itchy, wool, and ugly plaid suit in our price range. This was brutal for me personally, although, it was not unusual to see the other young boys at church wearing the same horrible “Easter suits.”

Therefore, it turned out that it was not such a big deal. However, today it is nothing like that. The young girls and boys usually have their outfits chosen and ordered through the online Internet shopping websites. Instead of having to endure the hot dressing room and your mother bringing you every ugly, hideous outfit off the rack to try on, kids today pick out the outfit they like and parents have it mailed to their home. In this day and age the entire family looks like they just came out of a magazine photoshoot. Everyone is wearing name-brand clothes, shoes, accessories, and of course, their hairstyles are perfect. Today, if someone were to appear at church wearing the identical outfit of another, it would be an unforgiving travesty.

As a child I did not care what outfit I wore on Easter Sunday; I was just glad to get home and get out of it. Kids today probably feel the same way too. Actually, the rush to get out of the Easter outfit is one of the traditions that have probably stayed the same on Easter Sunday. No one, adult or child, likes dressing up, especially that early in the morning. It does not matter if it is a name brand suit or an outfit from Wal-Mart, everyone is still playing dress-up for two hours in uncomfortable clothes, and I cannot be convinced that anyone likes that.

Easter was one of my favorite childhood holidays; spring was here and everything was blooming. This was the perfect weather for hunting Easter eggs. The night before Easter we would dye eggs, preparing for the family egg hunt. Families cannot seem to find the time to do that anymore. Then again, why should an egg hunt from the past be compared to today when you now can go out and buy eggs that have already been dyed your favorite colors, including glow-in-the-dark neon green. The family hunt used to be a big deal since it was an opportunity for gathering the family together to visit and enjoy watching the kids find the eggs that the adults had fun hiding. Today, there are very few families that continue to get together for such events.

Families do not seem to enjoy the simple and fun things like that anymore. Everyone is too busy now. People work on Sundays, but not in the past. Most likely it is because children are not taught that time with family is precious, and they have become ungrateful for the small things in life. Parents find it easier to buy items that control their children's attention. Therefore, the

children would rather spend time inside playing Xbox, Nintendo, or on a laptop looking at unknown sites than hunting eggs outside in the sunshine.

The biggest part of the Easter excitement is the Easter Bunny, a fictitious rabbit that brings gifts. When I was younger the Easter Bunny brought maybe two or three small gifts or toys, mainly from a dollar store of some kind. Today, the Easter Bunny has become a close second to Santa Claus, with parents shopping at Macys, Belk or any other name brand department store to find the best items. There seems to be no more small inexpensive gifts in the Easter baskets nowadays. The baskets cannot hold all of the clothes, money, jewelry, and toys.

The joy of Easter was mainly the preparation for it. Now it seems to be about the gifts given, not the enjoyment of the surprise of waking Easter Sunday morning to discover the gifts from that imaginary Easter Bunny had left for you. However, as adults of a generation that grew up with nothing, it is our fault our children get more of what they want, because we simply want them to have better than we did growing up. It is just a shame that we did not realize how good we really had it back then; it would not hurt for some of this next generation to earn a little more and to be spoiled a lot less.

Easter used to be a holiday based on faith and family; now it is being based on gifts and a long weekend. Enjoying the days of family, food, and fun are very different now. Video games and social media make up the majority of the family time spent on the Easter holiday. The new Easter outfit has to be of a name brand, coloring eggs seems to be a chore not a tradition, and the Easter bunny has to take out a small loan just to make the kids happy.

Easter is very different now than when I grew up; it has lost a lot of “ family meaning” just by being over commercialized and not recognized for its true Biblical history. What used to entertain children with the visit from the Easter Bunny, dyeing eggs, and having an Easter egg hunt, just for the fun of finding them, has changed. Easter Sunday has changed to seeing who gets the biggest Easter basket of goodies and who wins the prize for finding the most plastic eggs at the community Easter egg hunt.

Easter has changed over the years. Many holidays have become a way for businesses to make money by offering the most unusual choices at the lowest sale price. Hopefully, our children will not have to take out loans to continue the family traditions. Easter will still be my favorite spring holiday for one main reason; thememoriesof my childhood and family times. Things, traditions, and the reason for the Easter holiday have changed! Hopefully, the traditions of faith, family, and fun will re-enter our society one day.