

Seeking the true meaning

Does Resurrection Week portray the Christian spirit?

As I've shambled wearily around campus this past week, I've noticed something a bit out of the ordinary.

There is a heightened level of good feelings all around campus, and it can probably be traced to one of two main sources. Big Event occurred last weekend, and Resurrection Week is going on as I write these very words.

I believe some important prophet once said, "When that Aggie volunteer spirit sweeps across campus and mingles with that Aggie religious good feeling, it's nothing but good times ahead."

Last Saturday, 20 billion altruistic Aggies painted, pruned and plowed their way into the hearts of hundreds of appreciative community residents.

And as I speak, all 40,000 of us are slowly winding our way through another Resurrection Week. This is the chance for bubbly lunch of

Or would most Christians be more inclusive?

... apt to get out there and do something positive in the community. They're down there in the trenches, letting their neighbors know that we Aggies don't only think about Bevo, beer and Bonfire.

Sure, Big Event has its share of problems, but these are mainly along the organizational line. Sometimes 12 groups of students show up at one work site to do five minutes of labor while other big projects don't get anybody at all.

Other times a rich jerk who supports the University gets a Big Event group to come out and dust his mansion or polish his Porsche, or something similarly ridiculous. But all in all, Big Event kids sound like they're participating in those good old Christian values known as charity, and doing unto others and all that good stuff.

But when it comes to that Christian thing, it's Resurrection Week that I'm not so sure about. Now I'm not go-

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ing to start slamming the Christians for being Christian; they have the same right as everybody else to jump around and holler and publicly proclaim how excited they are to believe in something. I just wish they'd be consistent in their actions and their words.

Three years ago the Latter-Day Saint Student Association, or Mormons, as I like to call them, was invited by the Resurrection Week people not to take part in the festivities. In other words, one group of Christians was told by another group of Christians not to come out and help them do Christian things during the big Christian week. Not very Christian, is it?

I'll admit it, I didn't know that much about the LDS religion so I checked its description in the Student Organizations Guide. It said that I could go to one of their meetings to meet "people with strong Christian values and high morals." Huh, they sound like good guys and gals to me.

Thinking that perhaps I'd made a mistake when it came to understanding what Resurrection Week was all about, I looked up the Resurrection Week organization's description in that very same guide. Oddly enough, I discovered that they were a group whose purpose was "to bring Christians of many different denominations together to celebrate ... and to share the Christian faith."

The lesson here must be that "many denominations" does not mean "all." Well, at least it's just one religious group that is being excluded and shown disrespect.

Oh wait, I forgot about the famous Crucifixion scene that winds up the week. In the tradition of all good Passion Plays, this one has Jesus being led to the cross while bands of angry Jews yell such cheerful things as "Crucify him!" and "Look at the King of the Jews now!"

Now I'm no Biblical scholar, but I always assumed that crucifixion was the Roman, not the Jewish, means of executing slaves and political prisoners in Judea at that time. I had also learned that the Romans were in control of the area back then, so any decision to kill somebody would have been theirs, and not the Jews'.

Perhaps the Resurrection Week people have forgotten that one of the biggest causes of anti-Semitism over the past two thousand years has been the mistaken belief that the Jews committed deicide, which translates as the "murder of God."

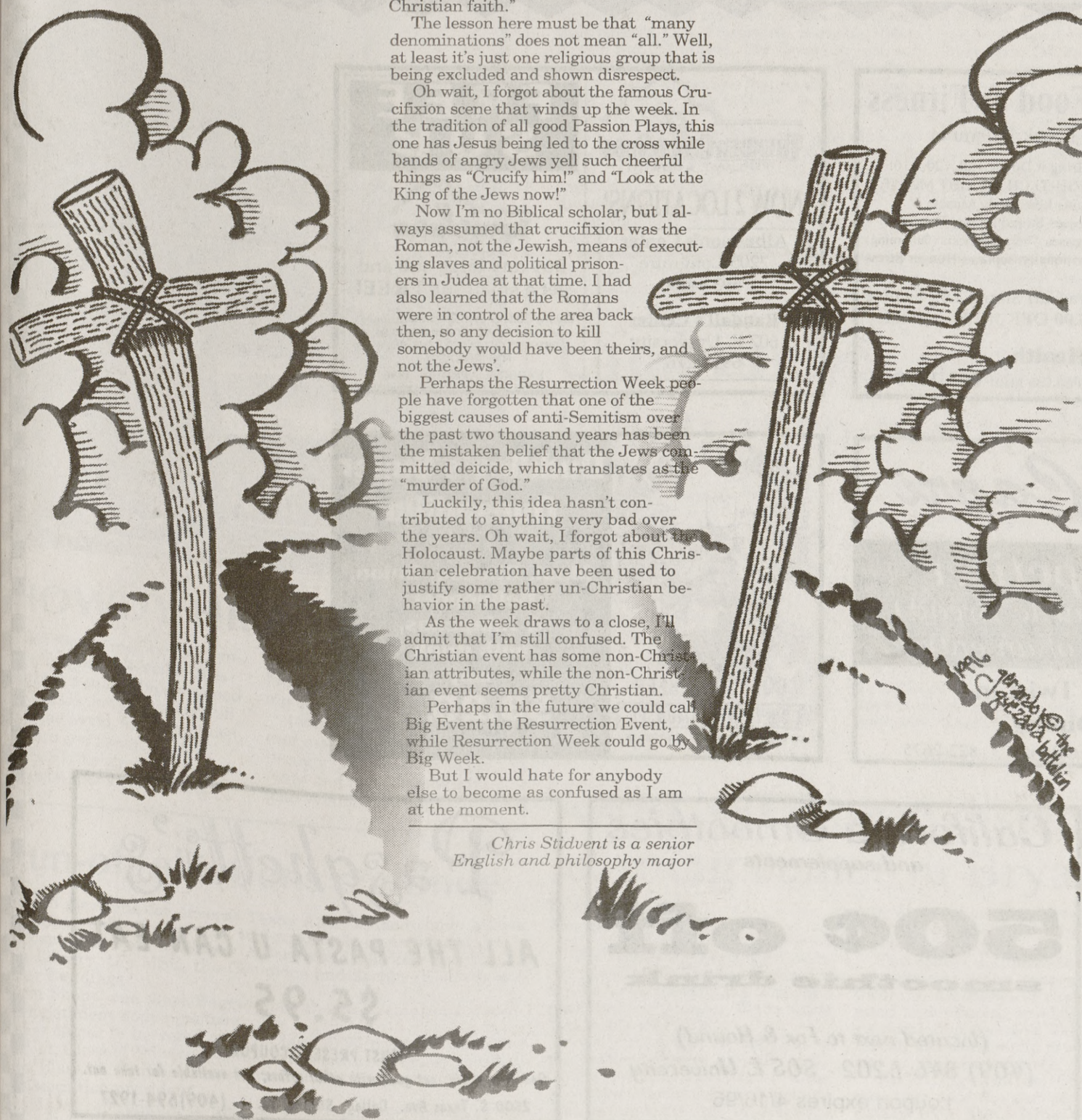
Luckily, this idea hasn't contributed to anything very bad over the years. Oh wait, I forgot about the Holocaust. Maybe parts of this Christian celebration have been used to justify some rather un-Christian behavior in the past.

As the week draws to a close, I'll admit that I'm still confused. The Christian event has some non-Christian attributes, while the non-Christian event seems pretty Christian.

Perhaps in the future we could call Big Event the Resurrection Event, while Resurrection Week could go by Big Week.

But I would hate for anybody else to become as confused as I am at the moment.

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To Democrats, even moderates are extreme

Kentucky obliterated Syracuse.

What? You watched the game and it didn't seem that bad?

Well, that doesn't matter.

Kentucky won so Syracuse was technically "obliterated" from the tournament so my English still holds ... sort of.

English professors might argue, although correct in denotation, "obliterate" would not be correct in connotation. In other words, the word doesn't fit the picture.

Really, though, none of this matters. If I repeat obliterate often enough, eventually it will come to mean "pulled the game out with about two minutes left."

English, you see, is like Texas weather (or university grading standards): wait a while and it will change.

Take the word "extreme."

We keep hearing the adjective "extreme" applied by Democrats to every program or idea endorsed by Republicans. For example, that contract thing, you remember ... it proposed such wacky ideas as making Congress responsible for following its own laws and promising a balanced budget by 2002.

Well, according to Democratic leaders, the Contract with America is "too extreme."

Sen. Christopher Dodd, chairman of the Democratic National Committee claims, according to recent polls, most Americans agree. Of course questions like, "Don't you agree with everyone else and their pets that Republican efforts to kill all old people, pregnant women and children are too extreme?" may have been a bit misleading, but we won't go there, yet.

Meanwhile, the senator, along with fellow Democrats, characterize their own programs as "mainstream." They cite the president's proposed budget as the most recent example. Of course, this budget actually increases the deficit for the next few years and doesn't cut a cent until long after he leaves office, but hey, that doesn't matter because it's a mainstream budget.

To quote Inigo Montoya in *The Princess Bride*, "You keep using that word ... I do not think it means what you think it means."

It also reminds me a bit of Lenin — excuse me while I blantly use my own emotional term. Lenin called all of his opponents Mensheviks. He and his followers referred to themselves as Bolsheviks.

My Russian-speaking friends tell me Bolshevik means "majority," whereas Menshevik means "minority." Of course, Lenin's followers never even remotely represented the majority, but that was a simple incon-



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venience of the language.

Sounds familiar, doesn't it?

Unfortunately, these linguistic pretenders have a long-term problem on their hands. Eventual-

ly, words come to mean the way they are used.

For example, look at the differences between Shakespeare's English of only 400 years ago and modern English. OK, I know you're busy so I've taken the liberty of finding an example for you: "Let."

It's a simple word. We use it to mean "allow." However, 400 years ago "let" meant "restrain."

Hamlet, for example: "Unhand me, gentlemen. By Heaven, I'll make a ghost of him who lets me."

Even in the short term, words change. "Bad," for example. Of course, by the time Michael Jackson figured that out we all kinda' longed for the original meaning of the word. MJ wasn't the only '80s star to be a bit "creative" with language. Loverboy? How about Survivor? That was a bit optimistic. But I digress ...

Which brings us back to Dodd and his "English means what I say it means" crowd. We already know "entitlement" has nothing to do with anything to which we are entitled and "protecting the (old, young, poor, working people, small animals, tree bark, etc.)" means spending more of our future earnings — remember, they aren't paying the bills right now, we will. We also realize that a "tax on the rich" means everyone earning more than \$25,000 pays more.

Hmm, something is rotten in the state of Denmark ...

The word which no one in Washington seems to understand is "accountability." As in "so you're out of money again, Dave. Gosh, that's too bad."

You know the next line of this lecture — sing along, if you want "... you need to be more accountable. So I'm going to let you figure out how to pay your bills."

Next time you take a few minutes and hear CNN or read a paper, check out the word "choice." I get the feeling that, by Dodd's definition, very few of us are mainstream — whether we like Newt Gingrich or not.

You know, in hindsight, Syracuse did pretty well. The experts, after all, predicted a blow-out. They said Syracuse didn't stand a chance.

Jim Boehm, the Syracuse coach, apparently wasn't briefed on the meaning of "blow-out." So his team went and played a great game.

But then, that's just the opinion of an extremist.

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MAIL CALL

Cadets and women take back the night

On Thurs., Mar. 27, at 9 p.m., about 60 women gathered around Rudder Fountain for an annual event called Take Back the Night, sponsored by the TAMU chapter of The National Organization of Women. There were readings of poetry, statistics, a personal account of one woman's rape and a symbolic march across campus to show that women should not be afraid to walk around campus by themselves at night.

In a perfect world, women would be able to walk anywhere by themselves, day or night. Unfortunately, rape and sexual assault do occur, even in the seemingly safe Aggieland.

Marching with us were three members of the Corps of Cadets who work in the Guard Room. We invited them to come to our march to acknowledge those who work in the guard room and

for the services they provide for Texas A&M. The Corps of Cadets Escort Service is always available, and the people who work there are proud to provide this resource on our campus.

I urge all women at A&M to use this service, and I would like to thank the three gentlemen from the guard room for marching through the rain with us and for their support. Take Back the Night isn't just about the safety of women on this campus, it is about the safety of your mothers, sisters, girlfriends and wives in communities everywhere. Take Back the Night is about not becoming another victim of rape and sexual assault, and it is about utilizing resources like self-defense, pepper spray and, the Escort Service to protect yourself until the day it is safe for every woman to Take Back the Night for herself and walk at night without any fear.

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