

## **AN EMPTY TOMB (Matthew 28:1-10)**

### **I. The proof of the resurrection.**

- A. There is great debate in the scholarly world about the resurrections of Jesus.
  - 1. The reason is, if Jesus did rise from the grave as the Bible says, then He is the Son of God.
  - 2. Not only that, it proves that all of the other miracles that Jesus did are true.
  - 3. As br. Rex Turner, Sr. said, "If Christ arose from the dead, all other miracles will be freely admitted; and all that is claimed for Christ will be granted."
- B. There are three possibilities about what happened to the body of Jesus for there to be an empty tomb:
  - 1. The enemies of Jesus took it;
  - 2. The disciples of Jesus took it;
  - 3. Jesus arose from the dead by the power of God.
- C. As for the first possibility, do we not believe that there on the Day of Pentecost, fifty days after the body of Jesus went missing, once the apostles began to preach about the resurrection of Jesus, the enemies of Jesus would not have produced the body of Jesus to remove all doubt about His death?
- D. As for the second, there is no doubt that the lives of the disciples changed after the third day.
  - 1. If there was no resurrection, would the disciples have preached to the detriment and danger of their own lives?
  - 2. Every one of the apostles but one died a martyrs death.
- E. Much more evidence could be given to disprove the first two possibilities but let us focus on the third.
- F. First of all, notice the number of witnesses to the resurrected Christ (1 Corinthians 15:5-8).
  - 1. This is not a complete list.
  - 2. It leaves out the various women who met Jesus on the road and others.
  - 3. But this is a vast number of eyewitnesses; far more than is needed in a court of law.
- G. Secondly, notice the attitude of some of the witnesses before the resurrection.
  - 1. His own brothers did not believe him (John 7:3-5) but they did after the resurrection (Acts 1:13-14).
  - 2. Saul of Tarsus persecuted the church (Acts 8:3), but when confronted by the resurrected Christ became an ardent soldier of the cross.
  - 3. Saul is a great evidence for the resurrection.
- H. Thirdly, notice the proofs that the witnesses used to teach others (1 John 1:1-2).

I. Fourthly, notice what they taught others (1 Corinthians 15:1-4).

J. Fifthly, notice what they suffered.

1. James was cast off the temple and then beaten to death.

2. All of the apostles were martyred except John.

K. All of these things go to prove the resurrection.

## II. **The purpose of the resurrection.**

A. Why did Jesus have to be resurrected from the dead?

B. There are a few very important reasons for the resurrection.

C. One is that it declared Him to be the Son of God (Romans 1:4).

1. Jesus claimed to be deity in the flesh (John 9:35-37).

2. By being resurrected, it was proved that He was the Son of God

D. Another reason is that it gives men assurance that there is life after this (1 Corinthians 15:20-22).

1. There is no hope if Christ is not risen (1 Corinthians 15:19).

2. 1 Corinthians 6:14 drives this point home for us.

E. Another reason is that the resurrection had to take place for us to be free from sin.

1. Romans 6:4-5.

2. 1 Corinthians 15:17.

3. 1 Peter 3:21.

F. Another reason is that it assures all men that there will be a judgment day (Acts 17:30-31).

1. The word assurance means proof.

2. His resurrection gives proof to all men that they need to repent and obey because of coming judgment.

## III. **The power of the resurrection.**

A. Philippians 3:10.

B. Paul wanted to completely know the power of the resurrection of Jesus.

C. Barnes says this phrase means understanding and experiencing the proper influence which the fact of the resurrection should have on the mind.

1. Paul wanted his life changed by the resurrection of Jesus.

2. The resurrection has the power to do that.

D. If people would contemplate on what all the resurrection really means it would change their lives.

1. The apostles focused on the resurrection in the first gospel sermon and tied it to forgiveness of sins.

2. Paul told the Jews of Antioch in Pisidia that forgiveness and justification are tied to the resurrection (Acts 13:30-39).

E. The resurrection will give us hope of life after this.

F. It will strengthen and sustain us in the face of death.

G. As one writer stated, "There is no one truth that will have greater power over us, when properly believed, than the truth that Christ has risen from the dead.

H. If each of us would strive to know the power of the resurrection as Paul did, we could all do great things for Christ.

1. It would change our outlook on life.
2. It would lead us to focus on living for God and not for the world (Romans 6:10-11).