

CALVARY CHAPEL OF PHILADELPHIA



# EASTER SUNDAY

1<sup>st</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> Grade

April 5<sup>th</sup>, 2026

*"I Lay Down My Life"*

KNOW GROW SHOW



# "I Lay Down My Life"

The Objective is the key concept for this week's lesson. It should be the main focus of the study.

These are the key verses that you will find helpful in teaching your study this week. The "Main Teaching Passage" is the basis of the study, whereas the other verses support the objective of the lesson.

This is the memory verse for the students for this week. If a student can memorize the verse for the following week, you may give them a prize from the reward box found on your cart.

An introductory activity or question that will settle the class, draw their attention to the study, and prepare their hearts for God's Word.

**Objective** This lesson will show the students how Jesus had the opportunity to avoid the cross, but chose to die for us because He loves us.

## Key Verses

Matthew 26:39, 47-56; 27:11-14, 39-43; 28:1-8—Main Teaching Passage

John 10:17-18a

Hebrews 12:2

1 John 1:9

## Memory Verse - John 10:17

"Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again."

## Hook

Ask the students if any of them would be willing to do an unpleasant task (do extra homework today, clean the bathroom, etc.) Then ask if they would do it if they knew they would be rewarded with a piece of candy. Ask how many would do it for \$5. Then ask about progressively better rewards.

Even if something is difficult or unpleasant, people are willing to do it if they know the end reward is worth it. Today we are going to hear the story of Jesus' crucifixion and find out that He went through this terrible experience because He thought the reward was worth it. And what was His reward? You and me!

What does the Bible say? This is where we will read a passage or series of passages that teach on the subject of the day.

## BOOK

Today we are going to see that in the days and hours before Jesus' death, He had many opportunities to avoid going to the cross. When He prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane the night before, He knew that what was about to happen to Him would be difficult and painful. In fact, in Matthew 26:39 He asked the Father if there was any other way to save us without going to the cross. Yet knowing that there was no other way, He submitted His will to the Father's and went to the cross for us willingly.

In Matthew 26:47-56 when Judas and the religious leaders came to arrest Jesus, Peter tried to stop them with his sword, even cutting off the ear of one of the high priest's servants. But Jesus rebuked him, pointing out that if He wanted to stop them, He could have called down an army of angels. He declared to everyone that they were only able to arrest Him because He had allowed it.

Again He demonstrated His willingness to go to the cross before Pilate in Matthew 27:11-14, when He made no defense before the Jews' many false accusations against Him, and so He was sentenced to die on the cross. As He hung on the cross, onlookers mocked in Matthew 27:39-43 and challenged Him to save Himself, and although he could have done just that, Jesus willingly gave up His life on the cross in order to save us.

The good news is that the story didn't end there. In Matthew 28:1-8, Mary Magdalene and other women went to Jesus' tomb to find it empty. Jesus had risen from the dead! Because Jesus was willing to go to the cross and accomplish His mission, He defeated sin and death for everyone who believes in Him.

## LOOK

Jesus said in John 10:17-18a, "Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself." In other words, Jesus was telling the people that when He died, it would not be because He was being forced to or didn't have any choice. He would willingly give His life up for us. This truth is demonstrated time and time again in the story of the crucifixion.

Today we saw that Jesus had several opportunities to prevent what was going to happen to Him. He could have called down twelve legions of angels to rescue Him from His enemies. He could have defended Himself before Pilate and proven that the accusations against Him were false. He could have used His power to bring Himself off the cross. But even though He had many chances to prevent His crucifixion from happening, He obeyed God's plan and died for us.

The fact that Jesus died for us is amazing all on its own, but what makes it even more incredible is that Jesus chose to go through all of that

The interpretation/exegesis of the passage. What does this passage mean? How does this passage apply to my life?

## LOOK (Continued)

suffering and pain for us. Imagine if you were given a choice of whether or not to go through all the same suffering and pain that Jesus endured. Would you do it? I don't think I would, but Jesus did. He let them arrest Him, beat Him, mock Him, and crucify Him. And why did He choose to go through that? For you and me! He loves us so much that He knew the only way to save us from our sins was to go to the cross to take the punishment that we deserved. He didn't have to. He could have avoided the cross, or even never have left heaven in the first place, but then we would still be dead in our sins. He loves us so much that He was willing to go to the cross and take on all of that suffering in order to save us.

Some people here today might not know why Jesus had to die in the first place. The problem is our sin. Sin is anything we think, say, or do that goes against what God wants. God desires to be with us forever, but because we have sin and God doesn't, we can't live as sinful people with a holy, perfect God. In fact, the Bible says that the punishment for sin is death, or separation from God forever. But God didn't want us to be separated from Him, so He sent His Son Jesus to take our punishment for us. We deserved to die on that cross, not Jesus, but He took our place because He loves us. But death didn't have the final victory over Jesus. On the third day, Jesus rose again from the dead, defeating death for us.

Because Jesus died and rose again, we can be forgiven of our sins and be with Jesus forever. If you've never done that before, all you need to do is admit that you're a sinner, ask Jesus to forgive your sins, and make Him the Lord (Master) and Savior of your life. When you trust in Jesus like that, He promises to forgive your sins and come into your life, and you will spend eternity with Him in heaven. You get to be a part of God's family and enjoy His love forever.

## TOOK

Give an opportunity for any students who have never given their lives to Christ to hear and receive the Gospel message.

**Pray:** Thank Jesus for choosing to give His life to save us. Praise Him for going to the cross and then rising again to forgive our sins.

**Parent Question:** Why did Jesus choose to die for us?

What is my response to this passage of Scripture? How should my life change according to what this passage teaches me? What are the practical things I can do throughout the week to make this true in my life?

# FURTHER STUDY

## Commentary on Matthew 26-28 (Select Passages) by David Guzik

C. Jesus prays and is arrested in the Garden of Gethsemane.

1. (Mat 26:36-39) Jesus' prayer in deep distress.

**Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and said to the disciples, "Sit here while I go and pray over there." And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and He began to be sorrowful and deeply distressed. Then He said to them, "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch with Me." He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, "O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will."**

a. **Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane:** This is just east of the temple mount area in Jerusalem, across the ravine of the Brook Kidron, and on the lower slopes of the Mount of Olives. Surrounded by ancient olive trees, **Gethsemane** means "olive press." There, olives from the neighborhood were crushed for their oil. So too, the Son of God would be crushed here.

i. "And again, he chose that garden, amongst others contiguous to Jerusalem, because Judas knew the place. He wanted retirement, but he did not want a place where he could skulk and hide himself. It was not for Christ to give himself up-that were like suicide; but it was not for him to withdraw and secrete himself-that were like cowardice." (Spurgeon)

b. **He began to be sorrowful and deeply distressed:** Jesus was disturbed; in part from knowing the physical horror waiting for Him at the cross. As He came to Gethsemane from central Jerusalem, He crossed the Brook Kidron, and saw in the full moon of Passover the stream flowing red with sacrificial blood from the temple.

i. "The words in the Greek are expressive of the greatest sorrow imaginable." (Poole)

c. **My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death:** But more so, Jesus was distressed at the spiritual horror waiting for Him on the cross. Jesus would stand in the place of guilty sinners and receive all the spiritual punishment sinners deserve; He *who knew no sin would be sin for us* (2 Corinthians 5:21).

i. **Exceedingly sorrowful** "is a rather weak translation for a phrase which contains Matthew's favourite word for violent emotion, even shock (used in Matthew 17:6, 23; 18:31; 19:25; 27:54)." (France)

ii. Jesus did not die as a martyr. "Jesus went to his death knowing that it was his Father's will that he face death completely alone (Matthew 27:46) as the sacrificial, wrath-averting Passover Lamb. As his death was unique, so also his anguish; and our best response to it is hushed worship." (Carson)

iii. "Hence the Greek Litany, 'By thine unknown sufferings, good Lord, deliver us.'" (Trapp)

iv. Yet in this hour of special agony, God the Father sent special help to His Son. Luke 22:43 says that angels came and ministered to Jesus in the garden.

d. **If it is possible:** Of course, there is a sense in which all things are possible with God (Matthew 19:26).

Yet this is true only in a sense, because there are things that are *morally* impossible for God. It is impossible for God to lie (Hebrews 6:18) and impossible to please Him without faith (Hebrews 11:6). It was not *morally possible* for God to atone for sin and redeem lost humanity apart from the perfect, wrath-satisfying sacrifice that Jesus prepared Himself for in Gethsemane.

e. **If it is possible, let this cup pass from Me:** God the Father would never deny the Son any request, because Jesus prayed according to the heart and will of the Father. Since Jesus drank the **cup** of judgment at the cross, we know that it is not **possible** for salvation to come any other way. Salvation by the work of Jesus at the cross is the only **possible** way; if there is any other way to be made right before God, then Jesus died an un-necessary death.

i. Repeatedly in the Old Testament, the **cup** is a powerful picture of the wrath and judgment of God.

· *For in the hand of the Lord there is a cup, and the wine is red; it is fully mixed, and He pours it out; surely its dregs shall all the wicked of the earth drain and drink down.* (Psalm 75:8)

· *Awake, awake! Stand up, O Jerusalem, you who have drunk at the hand of the Lord the cup of His fury; you have drunk the dregs of the cup of trembling, and drained it out.* (Isaiah 51:17)

· *For thus says the Lord God of Israel to me: "Take this wine cup of fury from My hand, and cause all the nations, to whom I send you, to drink it."* (Jeremiah 25:15)

ii. Jesus became, as it were, an enemy of God, who was judged and forced to drink the **cup** of the Father's fury, so we would not have to drink from that cup – *this* was the source of Jesus' agony.

iii. The **cup** didn't represent death, but judgment. Jesus was unafraid of death, and when He had finished His work on the cross – the work of receiving and bearing and satisfying the righteous judgment of God the Father upon our sin – when He finished that work, He simply yielded Himself to death as His choice.

f. **Nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will:** Jesus came to a point of decision in Gethsemane. It wasn't that He had not decided before nor had consented before, but now He had come upon a unique point of decision. He drank the cup at Calvary, but He *decided* once for all to drink it at Gethsemane.

i. " 'Not your will but mine' changed Paradise to desert and brought man from Eden to Gethsemane. Now 'Not my will but yours' brings anguish to the man who prays it but transforms the desert into the kingdom and brings man from Gethsemane to the gates of glory." (Carson)

ii. This struggle at Gethsemane – the place of crushing – has an important place in fulfilling God's plan of redemption. If Jesus failed here, He would have failed at the cross. His success here made the victory at the cross possible.

iii. The struggle at the cross was first won in *prayer* in Gethsemane. Jesus **fell on His face, and prayed.**

3. (Mat 26:47-50) Judas betrays Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane.

**And while He was still speaking, behold, Judas, one of the twelve, with a great multitude with swords and clubs, came from the chief priests and elders of the people. Now His betrayer had given them a sign, saying, "Whomever I kiss, He is the One; seize Him." Immediately he went up to Jesus and said, "Greetings, Rabbi!" and kissed Him. But Jesus said to him, "Friend, why have you come?" Then they came and laid hands on Jesus and took Him.**

a. **With a great multitude with swords and clubs:** They clearly regarded Jesus as a dangerous man and came to take Him with great force.

i. **Behold, Judas:** “What he received payment for was probably information as to where Jesus could be arrested in a quiet setting with little danger of mob violence.” (Carson) Perhaps he led the soldiers first to the upper room; when he found that Jesus and the disciples were not there, he could guess where they would be.

ii. “Judas knew where to find them. Jesus could easily have foiled his plan by choosing a different place for this night, but...this was not his intention.” (France)

iii. “Those skilled in the Jewish learning tell us, that the ordinary guard of the temple belonged to the priests, and such officers as their employed; but upon their great festivals, the Roman governors added a band of soldiers, who yet were under the command of the priests.” (Poole)

b. **Greetings, Rabbi!** Judas warmly greeted Jesus, even giving Him the customary **kiss**. But the **kiss** only precisely identified Jesus to the authorities who came to arrest Jesus. There are no more hollow, hypocritical words in the Bible than “**Greetings, Rabbi!**” in the mouth of Judas. The loving, heartfelt words of Jesus – calling Judas “**Friend**” – stand in sharp contrast.

i. **And kissed Him:** “Kissed Him heartily...What a tremendous contrast between the woman in Simon’s house (Luke 8) and Judas! Both kissed Jesus fervently: with strong emotion; yet the one could have died for Him, the other betrays Him to death.” (Bruce)

ii. “This *sign* of Judas was typical of the way in which Jesus is generally *betrayed*. When men intend to under-mine the inspiration of the Scriptures, how do they begin their books? Why, always with a declaration that they wish to promote the truth of Christ! Christ’s name is often slandered by those who make a loud profession of attachment to him, and then sin foully as the chief of transgressors.” (Spurgeon)

c. **Then they came and laid hands on Jesus and took Him:** This happened only *after* they had all fallen to the ground when Jesus announced Himself as the “*I am*” (John 18:6).

i. “It is strange that, after this, they should dare to approach him; but the Scriptures must be fulfilled.” (Clarke)

4. (Mat 26:51-56) The arrest of Jesus in Gethsemane.

**And suddenly, one of those who were with Jesus stretched out his hand and drew his sword, struck the servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear. But Jesus said to him, “Put your sword in its place, for all who take the sword will perish by the sword. Or do you think that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He will provide Me with more than twelve legions of angels? How then could the Scriptures be fulfilled, that it must happen thus?” In that hour Jesus said to the multitudes, “Have you come out, as against a robber, with swords and clubs to take Me? I sat daily with you, teaching in the temple, and you did not seize Me. But all this was done that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled.” Then all the disciples forsook Him and fled.**

a. **One of those who were with Jesus stretched out his hand and drew his sword, struck the servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear:** Matthew doesn’t tell us, but we know from John 18:10 that this unnamed swordsman was Peter.

i. “A wonderful work of God it was surely, that hereupon he was not hewn in an hundred pieces by the barbarous soldiers.” (Trapp)

ii. “It would have been far better if Peter’s hands had been clasped in prayer.” (Spurgeon)

iii. "But how came Peter to have a sword? Judea was at this time so infested with robbers and cut-throats that it was not deemed safe for any person to go unarmed. He probably carried one for his mere personal safe-ty." (Clarke)

**b. He will provide Me with more than twelve legions of angels:** Had Jesus wanted Divine help at this moment, He could have had it. There were **more than twelve legions of angels** ready to come to His aid.

i. "A legion is judged to be six thousand foot and seven hundred horse. And this great army of angels is by prayer despatched from heaven in an instant." (Trapp) The number is impressive, especially considering that one angel killed up to 185,000 soldiers in one night (2 Kings 19:35).

ii. With one sword, Peter was willing to take on a small army of men, yet he couldn't pray with Jesus for one hour. Prayer is the best work we can do, and often the most difficult.

iii. With his sword, Peter accomplished very little. He only cut off one ear, and really just made a mess that Je-sus had to clean up by healing the severed ear (Luke 22:51). When Peter moved in the power of the world, he only cut off ears. But when he was filled with the Spirit, using the Word of God, Peter pierced hearts for God's glory (Acts 2:37).

iv. "Our Lord had thus the means of self-defense; something far more powerful than a sword hung at his girdle; but he refused to employ the power within his reach. His servants could not bear this test; they had no self-restraint, the hand of Peter is on his sword at once. The failure of the Servants in this matter seems to me to illustrate the grand self-possession of their Master." (Spurgeon)

v. At the moment when it seemed that Jesus had nothing and no advantage, He knew that He still had a Father in heaven, and access to His Father and all His resources through prayer.

**c. All this was done that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled:** With all power at His disposal, Jesus was in total command. He was not the victim of circumstance, but He managed circumstances for the fulfillment of prophecy.

**d. Then all the disciples forsook Him and fled:** At this point, all the disciples scattered, running for their own safety. A few (Peter and John, at least) followed back to see what would happen at a distance. None of them stood beside Jesus and said, "I have given my life to this Man. What you accuse Him of, you may accuse me of also." Instead, it was fulfilled what Jesus said: *All of you will be made to stumble because of Me* (Matthew 26:31).

i. "We never know our hearts upon the prospect of great trials, until we come to grapple with them, and to be engaged in them. These disciples had all said they would not forsake him; when it comes to the push, not one of them stands by him." (Poole)

B. Jesus before Pilate.

1. (Mat 27:11-14) Jesus greatly impresses Pilate.

**Now Jesus stood before the governor. And the governor asked Him, saying, "Are You the King of the Jews?" So Jesus said to him, "It is as you say." And while He was being accused by the chief priests and elders, He answered nothing. Then Pilate said to Him, "Do You not hear how many things they testify against You?" But He answered him not one word, so that the governor marveled greatly.**

**a. Now Jesus stood before the governor:** History shows us Pontius Pilate was a cruel and ruthless man, un-kind to the Jews and contemptuous of almost everything but raw power. Here, he seems out of

character in the way he treated Jesus. Jesus seems to have profoundly affected him.

i. Matthew condenses the full account, telling us only of the *second* appearance of Jesus before Pilate. The first appearance before Pilate is described in Luke 23:1-6. Hoping to avoid making a judgment about Jesus, Pilate sent Him to Herod, the sub-ruler of Galilee (Luke 23:6-12). Jesus refused to say *anything* to Herod, so He re-turned to Pilate as here described in Matthew.

b. **Are You the King of the Jews?** When they brought Him to Pilate, the Jewish leaders accused Jesus of promoting Himself as a king in defiance of Caesar (Luke 23:2). They wanted to make Jesus seem like a dangerous revolutionary against the Roman Empire. Therefore, Pilate asked Jesus this simple question.

i. "The question reveals the form in which the Sanhedrists presented their accusation." (Bruce)

ii. Of course, we can only wonder what Pilate thought when he first set eyes on Jesus, when he saw this beaten and bloodied Man before him. Jesus didn't look especially regal or majestic as He stood before Pilate, so the Roman **governor** was probably sarcastic or ironic when he asked, "**Are You the King of the Jews?**"

iii. "Pilate was evidently not alarmed by the charge brought against Jesus. Why? Apparently at first glance he saw that the man before him was not likely to be a pretender to royalty in any sense that he need trouble him-self about...The [you] in an emphatic position in verse 11 suggests this = *You* the King of the Jews!" (Bruce)

c. **It is as you say:** No majestic defense, no instant miracle to save His own life. Instead, Jesus gave Pilate the same simple reply He gave to the high priest (Matthew 26:64). This amazed Pilate; he asked, "**Do You not hear how many things they testify against You?**" Pilate couldn't believe that such a strong, dignified man – as beaten and bloody as He was – would stand silent at these accusations. **The governor marveled greatly.**

i. There is a time to defend one's cause or one's self, but those times are rare. When we rise to our own defense, we would usually be better off to keep silent and to trust God to defend us.

ii. Spurgeon explained why Pilate **marveled greatly**: "He had seen in captured Jews the fierce courage of fanaticism; but there was no fanaticism in Christ. He had also seen in many prisoners the meanness which will do or say anything to escape from death; but he saw nothing of that about our Lord. He saw in him unusual gentleness and humility combined with majestic dignity. He beheld submission blended with innocence." (Spurgeon)

6. (Mat 27:38-44) Jesus is mocked on the cross.

**Then two robbers were crucified with Him, one on the right and another on the left. And those who passed by blasphemed Him, wagging their heads and saying, "You who destroy the temple and build it in three days, save Yourself! If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross." Likewise the chief priests also, mocking with the scribes and elders, said, "He saved others; Himself He cannot save. If He is the King of Israel, let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe Him. He trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now if He will have Him; for He said, 'I am the Son of God.'" Even the robbers who were crucified with Him reviled Him with the same thing.**

b. **And those who passed by blasphemed Him, wagging their heads:** In the midst of His staggering display of love, Jesus was not honored. Instead, He was **blasphemed** and His enemies sneered, saying, "**Save Your-self. If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross.**"

i. "Nothing torments a man when in pain more than mockery. When Jesus Christ most wanted words of

pity and looks of kindness, *they that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads.*" (Spurgeon)

ii. Significantly, they mocked Jesus for who He really was and is.

- They mocked Him as a Savior
- They mocked Him as a King
- They mocked Him as a believer who trusted in God
- They mocked Him as the Son of God

iii. They acted as if Jesus did what they said, they would **believe Him**. Yet it is precisely because He did *not* save Himself that He can save others. Love kept Jesus on the cross, not nails! Jesus did greater than come down from the cross; He rose from the dead, yet they did not believe even then.

iv. Jesus also showed us how we should regard the scorn and mocking of this world – that is, to not regard it at all. "Scorn! Let us scorn scorn. Does the world laugh at us? Let us laugh at the world's laughter, and say to it, 'Dost thou despise us? It is not one half as much as we despise thee. Our fathers despised thy sword, O world, thy dungeons, thy racks, thy gibbets, thy stakes, and dost thou think that we shall tremble at thy scoffs, and jeers?'" (Spurgeon)

A. The risen Jesus.

1. (Mat 28:1-3) Mary Magdalene and Mary of Bethany find an angel at the tomb.

**Now after the Sabbath, as the first *day* of the week began to dawn, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb. And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat on it. His countenance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow.**

a. **Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb:** They came to finish the preparation of Jesus' body, which was cut short by the Sabbath (Luke 24:1-3). So **after the Sabbath** on Sunday (**the first day of the week**), they came to the tomb – fully expecting to find the dead body of Jesus.

b. **There was a great earthquake:** Matthew alone notes this earthquake. The earthquake did not cause the stone to be rolled away; if anything, the angelic rolling of the stone prompted the earthquake.

i. "The earth shook both at Christ's passion and at his resurrection; then, to show that it could not bear his suffering; now, to show that it could not hinder his rising." (Trapp)

ii. Some think this was not a normal earthquake, but refers to the disturbance of the guards at the tomb (Matthew 28:4). "Seismov, a *shaking* or *commotion* of any kind: probably the word means no more than the *confusion* caused among the guards by the angel's appearance. All this had taken place before the women reached the sepulcher." (Clarke)

c. **An angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat on it:** When the women came to the tomb, they saw the stone rolled away and an angel sitting on the stone. The door to the tomb was wide open.

i. "Indeed there needed not any angel at all to remove the stone, if this had been all he had come down for; He that was quickened by the Spirit, could by the same power have rolled away the stone; but as it was fit that the angels, who had been witnesses of his passion, should also be witnesses of his resurrection." (Poole)

ii. The stone that enclosed the body of Jesus in the tomb had been like the gate of a prison cell, trapping the body of Jesus in the grave. Now it became a place of rest, as the angel **sat on it**.

2. (Mat 28:4-6) The angel's message.

**And the guards shook for fear of him, and became like dead men. But the angel answered and said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay."**

a. **And the guards shook for fear of him, and became like dead men:** The Roman soldiers responsible for guarding the tomb were terrified. The angelic presence made these professional soldiers tremble and faint.

i. "He does not appear to have drawn a flaming sword, nor even to have spoken to *the keepers*; but the presence of perfect purity overawed these rough legionaries." (Spurgeon)

ii. "The resurrection of Christ is a subject of *terror* to the servants of sin, and a subject of consolation to the sons of God; because it is a proof of the resurrection of both, the one to shame and everlasting contempt-the other to eternal glory and joy." (Clarke)

b. **He is not here, for He is risen:** For the first time, the followers of Jesus – these faithful women – heard what they did not expect to hear. They heard that Jesus was not in the tomb, but **risen** to resurrection life.

i. There are several examples in the Bible of people being *resuscitated* before this, such as the widow's son in the days of Elijah (1 Kings 17:17-24) and Lazarus (John 11:38-44). Each of these was resuscitated from death, but none of them were *resurrected*. Each of them was raised in the same body they died in, and raised from the dead to eventually die again. Resurrection isn't just living again; it is living again in a new body, based on our old body, perfectly suited for life in eternity. Jesus was not the first one brought back from the dead, but He was the first one *resurrected*.

ii. We should also say that Jesus **still is risen**. He ascended into heaven and continues to reign as resurrected man, still fully man and fully God.

iii. In Israel, one may see many graves and tombs – there is an ocean of tombs on the Mount of Olives, and vast sea of graves outside the eastern wall of the temple mount. You can see the tomb of Rebekka, the tomb of Da-vid, the tomb of Absalom – but you won't find the tomb of Jesus anywhere. **He is not here**.

iv. **As He said** reminded these women – and all the disciples – that they *should have* expected this. It was just what He promised.

c. **Come, see the place where the Lord lay:** The stone was not rolled away to let Jesus out. John 20:19 tells us that Jesus, in His resurrection body, could pass through material barriers. It was rolled away so that others could see in and be persuaded that Jesus Christ was raised from the dead.

i. "The invitation to *see the place where he lay* is appropriately addressed to the same people who had watched the body being deposited – so there is no possibility of a mistake." (France)

ii. "Come and see the niche in which he was laid-it is now empty; nor was there any other body in the place, for the tomb was a *new* one, in which no man had ever been laid, John 19:41; so there could be no deception in the case." (Clarke)

iii. The *fact* of the resurrection is clear enough. We must also grapple with the *meaning* of the resurrection. Simply, Jesus' resurrection proved that His death was an actual propitiation for sin and that the Father had accepted it as such. The cross was the payment, the resurrection the receipt, proving that

the payment was fully accepted.

iv. Those women were later grateful that the angel told them to **see the place where they laid Him**. It would have – it should have – been enough to merely hear the testimony of the angel. Nevertheless, when they *saw* it, it gave them ground to stand on even more solid than the testimony of an angel. “One eye-witness is better than twenty ear-witnesses; men will believe what you have seen if they do not believe what you have heard.” (Spurgeon)

- When we **see the place where they laid Him**, we see that the Father did not forsake Jesus
- When we **see the place where they laid Him**, we see that death is conquered
- When we **see the place where they laid Him**, we see that we have a living friend in Jesus

3. (Mat 28:7-8) The angel’s instructions to Mary Magdalene and Mary of Bethany.

**“And go quickly and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead, and indeed He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him. Behold, I have told you.” So they went out quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to bring His disciples word.**

a. **Go quickly and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead:** The angel commanded them to be the first messengers of the good news of Jesus’ resurrection. Since these women were some of the few people courageous enough to publicly identify themselves with Jesus, it was an appropriate honor.

i. “Not first to them who were the heads of the Church, as it were, but first of all to lowly women, did the Lord appear; and the apostles themselves had to go to school to Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to learn that great truth, “The Lord is risen indeed.” (Spurgeon)

b. **He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him:** This assured the women *they would see the resurrected Jesus*. He wasn’t simply raised from the dead; He was raised to continue His relationship with them.

i. Conceivably, the angel might have said: “He is risen, and has ascended to heaven!” That would have been better than knowing He was dead; but the truth was far better. He was risen, and risen to have and continue a real relationship with His disciples.

c. **Ran to bring His disciples word:** The women – filled with **fear and great joy** – did exactly what the angel told them to do. He told them to **go quickly** and they did.

i. “Saints running in the way of obedience are likely to be *met by Jesus*. Some Christians travel to heaven so slowly that they are overtaken by follies or by faults, by slumber or by Satan; but he who is Christ’s running footman shall meet his Master while he is speeding on his way.” (Spurgeon)

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