

The Resurrection of Jesus Christ, Part 2

Scripture: Matthew 28:8-10

Code: 2402

Let's open our Bibles to Matthew chapter 28 as we return to Matthew's narrative on the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. The world has heard many important messages. The world has learned many great truths. The world has experienced many dramatic and life-changing events. But not any one of them nor all of them combined can come close to the significance of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Nothing in the history of the world...in fact, not everything in the history of the world can match for significance the reality that Jesus was raised from the dead.

In the resurrection of Jesus Christ is the heart of the Christian faith. Christianity is a belief, is a series of truths and doctrines and principles that rise and fall on the resurrection of Christ. When Jesus rose from the dead, He proved Himself to be exactly who He claimed to be. When He rose from the dead by the power of the Father, He was affirmed to have accomplished what He came to accomplish. And in 2 Corinthians 4:14 it says that as God raised up Jesus from the dead, so also shall He raise us up. Ours is a belief in resurrection life and that is built on the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Because He lives, we shall live also.

Now the message of the Scripture has always been a message of resurrection hope, that death is not the end. Death is not a cul-de-sac, it's not a deadend street. For the believer it's a thoroughfare that enters into eternity. That's always been the belief of the people of God. In Psalm 49:15, for example, the Scripture says God will ransom my soul from the power of the grave. In Psalm 73 and verse 24 we read, "Afterward...that is after this life, speaking to God...Thou wilt receive me to glory." The prophet Hosea in chapter 6 verse 2 confidently asserts that God will raise us up that we may live before Him. The great prophet Isaiah in chapter 26 and verse 19 says, "Thy dead shall live, their bodies shall rise. O dwellers of the dust, awake and sing for joy." And in Daniel 12 verse 2 there is the great promise that those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake unto everlasting life.

In the fourteenth chapter of Job, one of the oldest books in Scripture, verse 14 says, "If a man die, shall he live again? All the days of my appointed time, will I wait...says the answer...till my change come." And in the nineteenth chapter of Job and verse 25 through 27 we read, "For I know that my redeemer lives and that He shall stand at the latter day on the earth and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God whom I shall see for myself and not another, though my heart be consumed within me." And so, the testimony of Job is that no matter what happens to his flesh, some day in a new flesh He will see God.

That has been the hope of God's people for all history. And it is a hope predicated on the resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is His resurrection that guarantees ours. It is His resurrection, says Paul, that is the firstfruits of all that slept. He is the guarantor of our resurrection. Is it any wonder then that the resurrection of Jesus Christ is mentioned at least 104 times in the New Testament?

The resurrection may be denied, it may be despised, it may be mocked, men may make an effort to explain it away, to give some rational arguments to explain the phenomena, but frankly I think only a fool would want to explain away the resurrection of Christ because in so doing he explains himself right into eternal doom. For the only hope of life after death, the only hope of eternal salvation, the only hope of being with God in glory forever is the resurrection of Christ. To explain that away is to damn all of the human race. Only a fool would do that. But there have been many such fools.

I'm reminded of the account of a missionary by the name of Dr. Bull. He was a Methodist missionary to the Riucco(?) Islands of Japan. And he visited on one occasion the island of Amacusa(?). And on that island he found a grave, a mass grave. And he was told that the burial there was a burial of Christians. And as he deciphered the marker on the grave he found that there were 11,111 heads taken from the bodies of Christians and buried in that place. The date of the grave is 1637, the same year in which the Japanese government ordered all Christians exterminated. And in this case he was told that they put the heads in one place and the bodies in another place to frustrate the Christian's hope of resurrection, feeling that if there was ever a resurrection God wouldn't be able to figure out what head went with what body. Foolish people.

Listen, the resurrection of Jesus Christ guarantees the resurrection of every saint, no matter what happens to the body. That is the promise of Scripture. And this then is unarguably the single greatest event in the history of the world. You cannot just slide the resurrection out of Christianity. Anybody who denies the literal bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ cannot be a Christian. He can only falsely claim the title because the resurrection is the heart of everything in the Christian faith.

Look with me for a moment to the fifteenth chapter of 1 Corinthians and let me show you the centrality of the resurrection and the argument of the Apostle Paul. If there is no resurrection there is no Christian faith, there is no hope, there is no salvation, there is no eternal life. And he makes that argument very clear in 1 Corinthians 15 beginning in verse 13. He says, "If there is no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen?" So let's start with that assumption...Christ is not risen. Let's say that Christ did not rise. We'll try to explain the fact that His body wasn't there another way. We'll try to explain the fact that the grave clothes were lying in perfect order another way. We'll try another angle. Maybe somebody took His body, maybe He never was dead and He just kind of awakened in the coolness of the tomb and got up and walked out. Let's say He didn't rise.

Then verse 14 says, "If Christ is not risen then our preaching is useless because the gospel says men are sinners and sinners need a Savior and Christ is that Savior and Christ has paid the penalty for sin and conquered death if He did rise. If He did not rise then He is as dead as everybody else is and He didn't do a thing for us. His payment was not accepted. He was not powerful enough." So if Christ is not risen, then gospel preaching is useless. There is no good news. The news is all bad.

The next statement in his argument comes in the same verse, verse 14, "And your faith is also useless," and he repeats that in verse 17. "If Christ is not raised your faith is useless." If Christ is not risen then all gospel preaching is useless and anyone who believes it is exercising an absolutely useless faith because a dead Christ is not good news and believing in a dead Christ is pointless.

Furthermore, verse 15 Paul says, "Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God because we have testified of Christ that He raised up Christ whom He raised not up if so be that the dead rise not." In other words, he says all the Apostles are liars. And men whom the world has honored for centuries and whom the world has esteemed as men of truth and morality and conviction and ethics are nothing but a bunch of liars. If Christ is not risen, gospel preaching is useless, faith in it is useless and the Apostles are liars who repeatedly preach that Christ did rise.

Furthermore, verse 17 says "If Christ be not raised your faith is vain or useless and you are yet in your sins." And the next point in his argument is that the power of sin is unbroken. And every man therefore is under the total domination of sin to be doomed and damned forever by it. No, the resurrection of Jesus Christ is not just negotiable reality, it is the very cornerstone of the Christian faith. And if you remove it, the whole thing comes down.

Furthermore, verse 18 says, "Then they also who are fallen asleep, or who have already died in Christ, are damned." If Christ is not risen, gospel preaching is useless, faith in it is useless, the Apostles are liars, sin's power is unbroken and everybody who died hoping in Christ is damned.

Therefore he says in verse 19, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." If Christ didn't rise from the dead, then Christians are putting their hope in a different Christ and they are the most pitiful people in the world.

But bless God, He did rise. And let's go back to Matthew 28 and see His resurrection. And this is the theme of Matthew's last chapter. This is the climax of 28 chapters of the life of Christ. It is the monumental event of history. The simplicity of which he presents it is thrilling. The lack of effort to try to prove it but to just let it speak for itself is convincing.

Now we set the time last time, verse 1, in the end of the Sabbath. Or literally, long after the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week...Sunday morning at dawn. John says when all of it began to happen it was still dark. By the time the ladies arrived at the tomb, the streaks of sunlight

coming from the east had begun to come across the top of the Mount of Olives and it was beginning to be light. It is then the third day. It is Sunday, the third day since Jesus was put in the grave on Friday. This then is the promised day of resurrection. For at least five times already in Matthew's gospel, the fact that Jesus would be in the grave has been stated and that He would be there three days. Five times it has already been said or noted by some that Christ said He would be in the grave three days. And now it is that third day...resurrection day.

Now as we saw last time, Matthew approaches the resurrection scene differently than Mark and Luke and John. They all see the same scene. They all deal with the similar phenomena and yet their perspectives are unique to each writer. Matthew approaches it from the feelings and attitudes and emotions of the women who were there. And thus it has a very human quality. Though it is a supernatural event to exceed all events, it still has a very natural, a very human, a very real sense as we come to it through the emotions of these women who loved Christ.

Now remember the first attitude we saw was the attitude of sympathy. Early in the morning while it is still dark, John says, the women begin to move toward the tomb. The night before, after sun had gone down, that is the Sabbath was ended, they had purchased some spices and they were coming for a final anointing of the corpse. They didn't believe in a resurrection. They weren't anticipating a resurrection. They were coming out of devoted love and sympathy to Christ to anoint His body one more time before decay finally totally took over. In Mark 16 it says as they approached the grave they were concerned about who might roll the stone away because it was so large and they were weak and they would need some men to do that. That tells me that they weren't at all expecting a resurrection. They didn't even realize there would be a Roman guard there to keep them from doing what they intended to do. And so they came not aware of a resurrection, not aware of the guard at the grave...only aware of their own sympathy for the Savior, for the teacher that they had followed so long and they were now sad because He was dead. And frankly, they had little if any hope in their heart for a resurrection. They never seem to even expect it.

The women appear at the end of verse 1, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary, Mary the wife of Cleophas or Alphaeus, the mother of James the Little and Joses. And Mark says also Salome was there. Salome was the wife of Zebedee and the mother of James and John. And Luke says that Joanna was there, the wife of Chuza who was one of the stewards of Herod. So it was a little group of women who came.

As they came the ground must have rumbled with the tremors because there was an earthquake, as verse 2 indicates. But their purpose in coming was to see the tomb, it says at the end of verse 1. They wanted to see it and then to go and anoint the body of the Lord. When they arrived, or even as they began to approach feeling the waves of the earthquake, their sympathy was turned to another emotion and that was the emotion of terror. And verse 2 tells us there was a great earthquake and the earthquake was not caused by the resurrection. Remember what I told you, Christ had already gone

out of the grave. The angel came and he caused it. It says there was a great earthquake because an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone from the door and sat on it...that's what created the earthquake. And remember what I told you, the angel did not open the grave to let Christ out, the angel opened the grave to let people in. Christ had already left. He didn't need to wait for the stone to be removed, He went right through the stone...just as later on He went through the walls of the upper room to meet the disciples, the door being shut. Christ left. And then the angel rolled the stone away that the world may go in and see that Christ was risen. And that arrival created an earthquake.

I said last time, also, that as the women approached they could see the tomb was opened. The stone was laying flat and an angel was sitting on it. Now apparently one of those women, Mary Magdalene, who was very devoted and very impetuous and very impulsive. She was sort of the counterpart of Peter among the women. Apparently as she saw the opened tomb didn't really take stock of the angel and wait to see what was going to happen...but John chapter 20 records that Mary Magdalene having arrived and seen the tomb opened, turned immediately and ran. And if you read the twentieth chapter of John and the first four verses, you will see that she ran back into the city to find Peter and John to tell them that something terrible had happened and someone had taken the Lord. She didn't wait around to talk to the angel, perhaps didn't even see the angel. In fact, I'm almost sure she didn't or she would have been anxious to stay and find out from the angel what had happened. And so she goes to Peter and John.

So as the description of the angel comes in verse 3, by this time Mary Magdalene is gone. She's running back into the city to find Peter and to find John. Meanwhile the rest of the women remain and they face an angel whose face or countenance is like lightning. And that is to identify him with the glory of God, the Shekinah presence, the glowing incandescent light defusing the divine one Himself. This then is a messenger from holy God. Further that is confirmed because his garment is as white as snow, speaking of holiness and purity and sinlessness. This is a holy angel sent from the face of God. And we remember, don't we, that the angels do always behold the face of the Father. And the glory of the Father, it says in Matthew 18, they behold His face, the glory of the Father transmitted to them, borne by them in this occasion to those women demonstrates that this is a messenger from God and his white garment that he is a holy angel.

So fearful was he, verse 4 says, that the soldiers were knocked unconscious. And they're in a state of coma at this point, lying on the ground. The women are in sheer terror. And in verse 5, "The angel answered and said unto them, Stop being terrorized, stop being afraid, there's no need for this. For I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. I know why you're here." That must have been a comforting word for them.

And then in verse 6 he says, "He's not here, He was raised as He said." And the emphasis is on "as He said," this is what He predicted. This was the prophecy. "Come, see the place where He lay." And

if you compare the other accounts, the women went into the tomb and as they went in the angel went in with them and the angel repeated the same message again. So hard to believe, he repeated it again. And then a second angel appeared, one at the head and one at the feet and the two angels together repeated the message similar and said He was raised.

And then in verse 7 you'll remember the angel said, "Go quickly." All of this is taking place in a very brief time. "Go quickly and tell His disciples that He is risen, or literally that He was raised by the power of the Father--implied--from the dead." Fascination has to give way to proclamation. You can't just hang around the tomb, you've got to get out with the message. Go to the Apostles immediately and tell them He is alive.

Now the evidence was all there. If they were taking note of it, the evidence was all there. The empty tomb...not only the empty tomb but the unconscious guard, something so powerful that it overpowered the Roman soldiers. And then there was the angelic testimony from a holy angel out of the presence of God. And then there was the orderly grave clothes. The other gospel writers point out how that if Jesus had been stolen by someone, they would have ripped those things off Him and they would have been scattered all over the inside of that tomb, or the outside. But they were lying perfectly as they had been lying when He was in them with the headpiece where the head would be and the rest where the body would be as if He had lifted out.

Further testimony was these women knew the disciples didn't believe in any resurrection, they hadn't really come to grips with the resurrection so they wouldn't have stolen the body to falsify a resurrection they didn't even believe was going to happen. Furthermore there was the explicit statement of Jesus fulfilled in this. Oh there was plenty of evidence that it really was a resurrection. But the angel goes even further. Look at verse 7. You're not going to have to take my word for it, he says in effect, "Behold, He goes before you into Galilee. There shall you see Him. Lo, I have told you." I've given my message, I've done my duty. You're going to become eye witnesses when you see Him in Galilee. And this, of course, would be the climax of Matthew's gospel. The promise of the resurrection would be fulfilled. And Jesus said it in chapter 26 verse 32, "After I am raised up, again I will go before you into Galilee. I'll meet you all in Galilee." Galilee of the Gentiles...Galilee of the nations where the Lord first ministered and first did His miracles and first redeemed souls and was first hated and rejected...Galilee, a microcosm of the world.

The fact that He would meet them and commission them to preach the gospel in Galilee was in a sense to say, "I want this to be a representation that you must go to the whole world." It was a positive statement. Even as when Jesus came in Matthew 4:15 it says He came to Galilee as a light to the darkness, as light to the shadow of death. Galilee represented the world and the message of resurrection was to go to the world so the commissioning was to be in Galilee. And indeed it was as Matthew points out in verses 16 to 20, that great statement, "Go ye and make disciples, baptizing..." and so forth and so on. That was said to them, verse 16 says, in a mountain in Galilee. And

Matthew's gospel ends with that great commission, all those people gathered in Galilee and sent out with the message of the risen Christ.

Now that doesn't mean that He didn't appear to anybody in Jerusalem first, because He did. It simply means that the great commissioning would take place in Galilee. The Lord will lead you there and He will meet you there and there you will be sent to the world with the message.

There were some appearances of Christ in Jerusalem before the meeting in Galilee. There's no question about that. In fact I can give it to you very briefly. This is Sunday morning. In just a matter of moments He will appear to Mary Magdalene who will arrive at the grave. The women who have been there since she left are now on their way to the disciples. They're going to be leaving. And as they're leaving, Mary Magdalene and Peter and John are coming and He'll appear to Mary. And later on He will appear personally to Simon Peter as Luke 24 tells us and 1 Corinthians 15:5 also tells us He appeared first to Peter. So there will be a personal appearance to Mary because of her deep devotion and because she stayed by the grave. A personal appearance to Peter because he of all the disciples had seemingly defected the farthest and needed grace for restoration.

And after that there would be an appearance to two disciples. Two disciples are on their way to Emmaus. And as they walk on the road to Emmaus, the Lord joins them, walks along with them, opens the Scripture, teaches them about Himself. Then reveals Himself to them in the breaking of bread. So He appears to Mary in the area of Jerusalem. He appears to Peter in the area of Jerusalem. He appears to the two on the road to Emmaus outside Jerusalem. And then on this very Sunday night, all the disciples were gathered in the upper room and the Lord appeared to them. It says in Luke 24:36, "And as they spoke, Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them and said to them, Peace be unto you." And they were terrified and frightened and thought they'd seen a spirit.

So, He appeared to Mary. He appeared to Peter. He appeared to unnamed disciples on the road to Emmaus in the afternoon. And by evening He appears to the eleven disciples gathered together. In fact there were only ten at that time, who was missing? Thomas. And eight days later the Scriptures tell us, John chapter 20 verses 26 to 29, He appeared again in the upper room, this time Thomas was there and Thomas when he saw Him said, "My Lord and My God." So there were several appearances to the disciples in Jerusalem.

But the great appearing in which there was a great commissioning occurred in Galilee. And that is the one of which Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 15 and verse 6 when he says, "And after that...after He had been seen by Peter and the disciples...He was seen of about 500 brethren at one time." And that would have been that great appearing in Galilee to all the gathered disciples on a mountain. And even after that, He appeared to Apostles prior to His ascension. And every time He appeared to them it says in Acts 1 He spoke of things pertaining to the kingdom of God. For 40 days, from resurrection to ascension, at varying intervals to varying groups of the disciples, He appeared. But the high point

of all those appearances was the appearance on the mountain in Galilee, I believe it was to that 500 plus where He commissioned them to preach the gospel to the whole world. And every meeting in Jerusalem prior to that was just a preparation for the great commissioning that would occur in Galilee.

So the angel then says to the ladies, "He will go before you into Galilee, you'll see Him there. I've told you." And sent them off as if to say you have your orders. Mark 16:7 says, "The angel said, Go tell the apostles and Peter." Peter most needed restoration. He most needed grace and forgiveness.

And so the women had come to the tomb with an emotion of sympathy. That had been turned into an emotion of terror and now the emotion of terror began to give way to a third emotion and that's noted in verse 8 and that is the emotion of joy. Verse 8, "And they departed quickly from the sepulcher with fear and great joy. Now their fear is tempered by tremendous joy and they did run to bring His disciples the message. "Did run" is the main verb. The angel said go, they spun around on their heels and took off down the path. And they're running into the city to find the disciples to tell them that the message from the angel is that Jesus was raised from the dead. And their terror is mingled now with great joy...the thrill that it might be true that it might be true that it might be true and we're going to see Him in Galilee.

By the way, when they got to the apostles and delivered their message, according to Mark 16:13, the apostles did not believe them. That's important. And again it reaffirms the fact that they didn't steal the body because they didn't even believe in the resurrection so why would they falsify it. Luke 24 also indicates the same thing, verses 10 and 11, verses 22 to 25, they weren't even believing in the resurrection. So off the women go to find the disciples. When they find them they can't even convince them that it's true.

Now meanwhile, Mary Magdalene who has been finding Peter and John in another place is on her way with them to the grave. And they pass each other, apparently without seeing each other. The soldiers are still unconscious. The tomb is open. The angel is there. Peter and John and Mary Magdalene are returning to find out what is going on.

Now turn in your Bible to John 20 and let's see what happens when they arrive. Verse 4 says, "Peter and John ran together and the other disciple," John never uses his own name, always calls himself the other disciples, or the disciple whom Jesus loved, or the disciple who leaned on Jesus' chest, something like that. He ran faster than Peter. And He came first to the grave.

Now John was somewhat timid. He was faster than Peter but he was also a little more timid. And he just stooped down and looked in. He didn't go in. He just kind of stooped and looked. And he saw the linen clothes lying there but he didn't go in. See, he hasn't got any information except that Mary says somebody took the body. And he looks in and all he sees are the grave clothes and he can't figure out immediately what's happening. And he's a little bit tense about just bursting into a grave. And I

can understand that.

And then comes Simon Peter. And Peter doesn't know any of that kind of sensitivity. He just blasts into the grave...right by John, may have almost knocked him down. And he saw the linen clothes lying there and the cloth that was about His head, not lying with the linen clothes but wrapped together in a place by itself. In other words, indicating that there had been no struggle at all but that Christ had just left in perfect peace and quiet.

Then after Peter went in and sort of broke the barrier a little, then went in the other disciple who came first to the sepulcher and he saw and what? And believed. He had such a heart of faith, didn't he? Peter's probably got a million questions and John goes from curiosity to faith that fast. He believed. For as yet, up to this point, they hadn't even known deep in their hearts the Scripture that He must rise again from the dead. They didn't even understand that. Oh, they heard him say it, it didn't compute, it didn't register. You see, they were unwilling to allow Jesus to even say He was going to die, therefore they blocked out of their minds that He might rise again.

But John believed. And Peter questioned. And verse 10 says they went away again to their own home. They went back to try to figure it out. They didn't seem to want to do any investigation. They didn't seem to want to chase around and find out what foul play might have occurred, they just left.

But typically verse 11 says Mary didn't leave. Ever and always the devoted follower, always seeming to linger past everyone else, at the cross, at the burial and here. And so she was weeping and she stooped down and it mentions stooping down all the time because the entrance would be very low and it would be necessary if you were to go to that place now where they believe the grave of the Lord has been discovered, you would find you have to stoop to get into that little entrance. She finally stooped down and looked into the sepulcher and she sees two angels in white...the one at the head, the other at the feet where the body of Jesus has lain. These two angels are still there.

And they said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? She said to them, Because they have taken away my Lord and I know not where they have laid Him." Now we don't know who "they" is and she didn't know who "they" was, she just said somebody has taken Him. "And when she had thus said she turned herself back." Now I don't know what was going on in her mind other than that she was so sorrowful she didn't realize she was talking to two angels. That ought to sort of wake you up to something. She looks in and here are two angels and they talk to her and she acts like this is normal. "Well, somebody took Him away and I don't know where they put Him." Her spiritual perception and her ability to understand what's going on is overpowered by her sorrow. And now we might understand why the original time when she came to the grave a few moments before this and there was an open grave and an angel there, she didn't compute that either. She just took off. And here she's having a conversation with these two angels about where this body might be. Maybe assuming they were men, for angels do take the appearance of men.

And then she had spoken and turned herself around, verse 14 says, and saw Jesus standing and didn't know it was Jesus. And somebody says, "Well, she was crying and she couldn't see too well." Well, that's probably right and she was so upset and emotional that she just couldn't make sense out of much, that's right. But the reason she didn't know it was Jesus was because Jesus after His resurrection was not known by anyone who saw Him unless He opened their eyes that they might know who He was, for in His resurrection glory He was changed so that He had to reveal Himself. How else could the two disciples on the road to Emmaus this afternoon walk with Him and talk with Him and not know who He was until He disclosed it to them by some personal means?

And so, Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Who you looking for? And she supposed Him to be the gardener...the person who takes care of the garden...and she said, Sir, if you have taken Him from here, tell me where you laid Him and I'll take Him away." In other words, if this grave was only for rent and not for sale or if this could only be used a few days because someone else has to be placed here and you've put Him somewhere else, please tell me where He is, I'll take Him and find a proper place to put Him. "And Jesus said to her in Aramaic, her own language, Miriam..." very personal touch and said her name and instantly she knew. "She turned herself and said to Him, Rabboni," which is the most dignified you could ever use in Aramaic, Rabbi is a step below Rabboni which is only for a highly exalted teacher and it means master. And Jesus in that moment revealed Himself to her and she was the first, it says in Mark chapter 16, to see the resurrected Christ.

And then in verse 17 Jesus says unto her, "Don't cling to Me...don't cling to Me." She grabbed Him. I mean, she had lost Him once and she wasn't going to let go again. The pain of His dying and going away was more than she could stand and she's holding on and He says no, "Because I'm not yet ascended to My Father." I can't stay. "Go to My brethren and say to them, I ascend unto My Father and to your Father, to My God and your God." One of the great statements of all of Scripture. He says, first of all, from now on they are My brethren, not friends like He had called them so beautifully in John 15:15, but now brethren. Why? Because of His death and resurrection they have been brought fully into the family of God and as Paul put it, they are heirs and joint heirs with Jesus Christ who is...Hebrews 2:11 and 12 says...not ashamed to call them brother. Go tell My brothers though they are cowardly, though they have forsaken Me, though they have denied Me, though they have fled from Me, though they have demonstrated that they do not stand by, they are My brothers, they have been redeemed into the family of God and go tell them that I have to go to My Father and your Father, My God and your God. And in those two identifications, He draws them into Himself...we share the same Father, we share the same God...tell them.

And so she lets go and now she also takes off to tell the disciples. Verse 18 it says that when she came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord and that He had spoken these things...it says she came and told the disciples she had seen the Lord and that He had spoken these things unto her.

So, you understand the scene? The women have gone. Mary Magdalene, Peter and John have come. Peter and John took off, went back home. Mary lingered, saw Christ. Now she leaves to tell the disciples. The other women are also on their way. She's a little behind them. After having revealed Himself to Mary, the Lord then supernaturally transports Himself out in front of the other women and comes along the road to meet them. And we pick that scene up again in Matthew chapter 28. And it is a marvelous scene...absolutely marvelous.

In verse 9, and this takes us to their fourth emotion...they're filled with joy and their joy will turn to worship. "And as they went to tell His disciples, behold Jesus met them, having already revealed Himself first to Mary" as it says in Mark 16 and now He goes ahead of them supernaturally transporting Himself and comes back approaching them and He meets them. And I just love this. "Jesus met them saying, Chairō te...is the Greek word...Chairō te." There He was in resurrection glory, in physical form right on the road, alive from the dead and He says to them, "Chairō te." You know what that is? "Hi...Good Morning...Hello." Well, you'd think maybe you'd get something more profound than that out of the resurrected Son of God. There's something so beautiful about that. That was the ordinary salutation of the marketplace. That was the ordinary greeting that everybody gave as they passed on the roads. That was what you said when you spoke to the people in your own house every day. Here is Christ in resurrection glory...here is the Son of God in His kingly majesty having conquered death and in a very simple and warm and human way He simply stops some women that He loves and with human tenderness and very natural human sympathy He says good morning, hi.

And even though Jesus Christ is glorified, beloved, He has not lost His human sensitivity. He has not lost His human tenderness. He is heavenly but He is also earthly. He can commune with the holy angels and the trinity but He can also commune with men who walk the dusty roads of life. Marvelous picture. And even though He said to them something as simple as hi, or hello, immediately they held Him by the feet and worshiped Him. They knew who He was. They knew He was the risen Christ. And this was their recognition of His deity. This was their recognition that He was to be adored and praised and glorified and worshiped and honored. They were doing what Paul says every one should do, that every knee should bow, every tongue should confess Jesus as Lord to the glory of God, Philippians 2:11. They worshiped one who was worthy of worship. They paid Him homage as to God. And so they come to the emotion of worship.

I sense that in my own heart here. When I look at the cross I'm like those women...I feel sympathy. When I come to the grave and I feel the earthquake and sense the movement of God in a mighty way delivering Christ from death and a descending angel rolling the stone away, I sense the terror and the fear of almighty power. As I become alert and awake and alive to the resurrection, my heart is filled with joy and in coming to see Jesus Christ, you fall at His feet in adoring worship.

The evidence is all there. I mean, it was coming together in their minds, now it was solidified. They were eye witnesses of His resurrection. The empty tomb, that said something. The grave clothes, they said something. The unconscious soldiers, that said something. The testimony of the angels, boy, that was strong evidence. But this was it...they touched Him. This is not a figment of their imagination. This is not an apparition. This is not a spiritual resurrection. They held Him by the feet. It was a real physical bodily literal resurrection.

A lawyer by the name of Sir Edward Clarke said, and I quote, "As a lawyer I have made a prolonged study of the evidences for the events of the first Easter day. To me the evidence is conclusive and over and over again in the high court I have secured the verdict on evidence not so compelling. Inference follows on evidence and a truthful witness is always artless and distains effect. The gospel evidence for the resurrection is of this class and as a lawyer I accept it unreservedly as the testimony of truthful men to facts they were able to substantiate," end quote.

Professor Thomas Arnold who was the author of the famous three volume History of Rome and an appointee to the chair of modern history at Oxford University in England writes this, quote: "The evidence for our Lord's life and death and resurrection may be and often has been shown to be satisfactory. It is good according to the common rules for distinguishing good evidence from bad. Thousands and tens of thousands of persons have gone through it piece by piece as carefully as every judge summing up a most important cause. I have myself done it many times over, not to persuade others but to satisfy myself. I have been used for many years to study the histories of other times and to examine and weigh the evidence of those who have written about them, and I know of no one fact in the history of mankind which is proved by better and fuller evidence than the great sign which God hath given us, that Christ died and rose again from the dead," end quote.

The evidence is there. And it was for the women. The final moment of grasping the living Christ. And in that moment, of course, their worship turned to a new emotion, a new feeling, a new attitude of hope, verse 10, "Then said Jesus unto them, Stop being afraid. Go tell My brethren that they go into Galilee and there shall they see Me." Their hope was so clear now. They would see Him in Galilee for they had seen Him already.

Jesus repeats the same message the angel gave, reminding us again of the source of the angelic message and says, "Go tell My brethren, those who are now My brethren, those who now belong to Me who are in the family...go tell them...tell them that I'll see them in Galilee. We'll have a great convocation and commissioning there."

And so, we come then to the end of Matthew's brief glimpse of the resurrection. It's so simple. It lacks pretension. It doesn't look like the kind of case that someone is working very hard to prove because it's so incredulous. He states it so simply and so artlessly and such common terms are used. It

doesn't even try to beg the issue. It states the simple convincing truth. And the women run to tell the rest. And before the days of Christ's earthly journey are over, He will appear to them all, confirming His resurrection. And then select from among them who will write the New Testament which is the record of His resurrection and the meaning of it.

Let me close with that. What does the resurrection mean? Let me suggest several things for you to think about. First of all, it means that the Word of God is true. Jesus said it over and over again, I'll rise...I'll rise...I'll rise...I'll rise in three days. And He did. The record of the Word of God is true. It affirms the truthfulness of Scripture.

Secondly, the resurrection means that Jesus Christ is the Son of God as He claimed to be, that He as God has power over death.

Thirdly, it proves that salvation is complete...that on the cross He conquered sin and death and hell and rose victorious.

Fourthly, the resurrection proves that the church is established. You remember in Matthew 16 He said, "I'll build My church and the gates of hell will not prevail against it?" And the gates of hell is a colloquial expression for death in that culture. He says I'll build My church and death won't stop Me, and it didn't. His resurrection proved that death could not stop Him from building His church.

Fifthly, it also proves that judgment is coming. The judge is alive. And He said He would live in John 5 and He said that God would give Him judgment. And He would have the power to raise the dead and He would judge the dead. Some would enter eternal life and some would enter eternal judgment. The judge is alive, folks, and court will be in session to determine the eternal destiny of every man and woman.

And sixthly, the resurrection of Jesus Christ proves that heaven is waiting. In John 14 He said I'm going to go away, but if I go I will come again and when I go I go to prepare...what?...a place for you because in My Father's house are many rooms. Heaven is waiting and Christ is preparing it for His own.

You see, the resurrection proves all of that. The Word of God is true. Jesus is the Son of God, deity, salvation is complete, the church is established, judgment is coming and heaven is waiting. All of that because of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. I trust that you not only believe in the resurrection, but that you have received as your Lord and Savior the one who was raised, the Lord Jesus Christ. Shall we bow in prayer?

God knows every heart here as we wait for just a final moment. He knows your heart. He knows whether you believe in the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. In Romans 10 it says if you believe in your heart that God hath raised Him from the dead and confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, you shall be saved for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. Being a Christian is believing in the resurrection of Christ and receiving the resurrected Christ as Lord and Savior. My prayer is that that is your prayer. And if you know Him, thank God again for what He has done for you.

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