

Christian Study

Christian Study

Lesson 241

Be Light

Focusing on Church beyond Sunday

How Can I Know and Understand What the Bible Means?

Understanding the Basic Gospel

The empty tomb

The Eyewitnesses to the empty tomb

Luke 24:6 & 10 He is not here, but has risen. Remember how He spoke to you when He was still in Galilee. **10** It was Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary *the mother* of James, and the rest with them, who told these things to the apostles.

In John 20:4-8 "And the two together were running, and the other disciple outran Peter and came to the tomb first **5** And stooping to look in, he saw the linen strips lying there; however he did not go in. **6** Then Simon Peter came, following him, and entered into the tomb; and he saw the linen strips lying there, **7** and the facecloth which had been on His head, not lying with the linen strips, but apart from *them*, having been rolled up in one place. **8** Then the other disciple, who came to the tomb first, went in also; and he saw and believed." The significance of the grave clothes lies in their undisturbed condition. The body clothes were lying where the body had been, collapsed from the weight of the spices, but undisturbed. The head napkin was lying apart from the body clothes, still twirled in its concave shape, but with no head inside it. The condition of the clothes appears to have had a remarkable effect upon John and Peter as they viewed them.

According to the above account, there was no indication of any struggle, there were not footprints to show that a band of people came in there and stole the body and the way the clothes were wrapped does sound like it was done by the one who was

wrapped in it. Nobody will steal a dead body and the first thing that will come to their head is to strip him naked and take time to wrap the clothes

Implication of the Empty Tomb

Matthew 28:11-15 "Now while they were going, behold, some of the guard came into the city and reported to the chief priests everything that had happened **12** When they had assembled with the elders and taking counsel, they gave sufficient silver *coins* to the soldiers, **13** saying, 'Tell them, 'His disciples came at night and stole Him away while we were sleeping.' **14** "And if this reaches the governor's ears, we will influence him and make you secure." **15** So they took the silver and did as they were instructed. And this saying has been widely spread among the Jews until this day."

The Roman guards reported exactly what they saw happened, but the report was not in favor of the chief priests. As a result, they responded by bribing the guards to lie about the truth of the resurrection. If the guards were asleep as the priests instructed them to say, they would not have known if it was the disciples who stole the body. The Jewish leaders were fully aware that the tomb was empty and they ask Pilate to secure the grave for three days, because by that time the body would have start to rotten and stinking.

Another fear that motivated the Jewish leaders to hide the truth concerning Christ's resurrection is found in, **John 11:47-48** "Therefore the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered a council and said, "What are we doing? For this Man works many signs. **48** If we leave Him alone in this way, all will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and will take away both our place and nation." They were very worried about their position in the community rather than believing the plain truth of the same God they profess and worship with all their heart. They also wanted to be friends with the worldly and fleshly things of their times so they found ways to distort the truth This reminds me of what the writer of the book of James said in the fourth chapter. **James 4:1-4** "What causes fights and quarrels among you? Aren't they caused by the selfish desires that fight to control you? **2** You want what you don't have, so you commit murder. You're determined to have things, but you can't get what you want. You quarrel and fight. You don't have the things you want, because you don't pray for them. **3** When you pray for things, you don't get them because you want them for the wrong reason-for your own pleasure. **4** You unfaithful people! Don't you know that love for this evil world is hatred toward God? Whoever wants to be a friend of this world is an enemy of God".

We can see here that the first set of people who did not believe that Christ rose from the tomb were the religious leaders, and it happened when they took their eyes of the plan of God and put it on their powers and self righteousness.

Possible reasons for the empty tomb

If the Apostles had stolen the body, they would not have gained much and would not be willing to be persecuted and tortured for a lie. Let's look at a few of the many passages supporting the claim that the tomb was empty and they did not steal the body.

- a) **2 Corinthians 11:23-27** "Are they servants of Christ? I am a fool to talk this way, but I serve him better than they do. I have worked harder and have been put in jail more times. I have been beaten with whips more and have been in danger of death more often. **24** Five times the Jews gave me thirty-nine lashes with a whip. **25** Three times the Romans beat me with a big stick, and once my enemies stoned me. I have been shipwrecked three times, and I even had to spend a night and a day in the sea. **26** During my many travels, I have been in danger from rivers, robbers, my own people, and foreigners. My life has been in danger in cities, in deserts, at sea, and with people who only pretended to be the Lord's followers. **27** I have worked and struggled and spent many sleepless nights. I have gone hungry and thirsty and often had nothing to eat. I have been cold from not having enough clothes to keep me warm.
- b) **Acts 5:40** "and they called the apostles back in. They had them beaten with a whip and warned them not to speak in the name of Jesus. Then they let them go"
- c) **Acts 7:57-60** "The council members shouted and covered their ears. At once they all attacked Stephen **58** and dragged him out of the city. Then they started throwing stones at him. The men who had brought charges against him put their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul. **59** As Stephen was being stoned to death, he called out, "Lord Jesus, please welcome me!" **60** He knelt down and shouted, "Lord, don't blame them for what they have done." Then he died."
- d) **Acts 12:1-2** "At that time King Herod caused terrible suffering for some members of the church. **2** He ordered soldiers to cut off the head of James, the brother of John

There is a theory that explains in detail the idea that Jesus was not dead, but only wounded. He was revived in the coolness of the tomb from which He then escaped. How could a man tortured and weakened as Jesus; got out of His grave clothes? Move the stone with hands pierced by spikes? Stand and walk of feet ripped by spikes? Insure that the guards did not hear Him?

Summary and Conclusion

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the central truth of the Christian faith. It proves beyond a shadow of a doubt that Jesus is indeed who He claimed to be--- God in the flesh. The Apostle Paul underscored the importance of the resurrection in **1 Corinthians 15:17** "And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins!"

If Jesus had not been raised, He would have been nothing more than a person who seeks sympathy or attention and we would have no hope in this world. Because God raised Him with power we know that He is truly the Son of God, and we can experience resurrection life through faith in His name. Jesus Christ lives today and wants to work in the lives of those who will trust Him and let Him come in and take residence in your daily life today.

If the story concerning Jesus Christ is true, was He just a man or is He the resurrected Son of God? The Apostle John summarized the purpose of his gospel with these words: **John 20:30-31** "And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; **31** but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that *by* believing you may have life in His name."

"Who do you say that I am?"

Your answer to this question posed by Jesus of Nazareth affects your life here and now and for all eternity. **Matthew 16:15 Luke 9:20**

Claim His Promise

Romans 6:8-11

"But if we died with Christ, we believe that we also shall live together with Him, **9** knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, no longer dies. Death is no longer master *over* Him. **10** For what *death* He died, He died to sin once for all; but what *life* He lives, He lives to God. **11** Likewise you also, consider yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord."

**Do not try to live within your weaknesses,
live by the power of the living God, who dwells in you.**

I want to take this time to thank God for all of us who have been in this study and pray that the Holy Spirit continue to teach you truth that sets all of us free from the error of this world.. It is a pleasure to be able to share with you the good news of God across geographical, cultural and ethnic boundaries.

Talk to Jesus everyday
He is interested in ALL you say

It is no secret, what God can do. What He's done for others, He'll do for you.

Our mission is to help people find strength and security on the foundation that can never be shaken, cracked or shattered. This foundation is the remarkable truth of God's unconditional love and His indisputable grace experienced in a relationship with Jesus Christ. The critics of Christianity have launched a full attack to discredit the person and works of Jesus Christ and the reliability of His word. We cannot be silent anymore. Let us as children of light, stand firm in the faith, because He who has taken us this far will never forsake us. You are called Christians, be careful of that name. Let not our Lord Jesus Christ be blasphemed on your account

Believe this, "Jesus did not come to make bad people good, He came to make dead people live."

Keep It Simple

Jesus loves me this I know, for the Bible tells me so.

If you have any questions, comments or you know anybody else who will benefit from this study please feel free to give us their email address and they will be added to our mailing list to receive weekly lessons. The email address is

santigiemandol@yahoo.com,

A candle loses nothing by lighting another candle (Ephesians 5:8)

Let's go light another candle