

Matthew 27:57-28:15

"The King Buried and Resurrected"

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Intro:

“One can never consent to creep when one feels an impulse to soar.” - Helen Keller

“Every man, whatsoever his condition, desires to be happy.” - Augustine

Big lottery winners report being super happy after winning the lottery. However, their happiness falls to baseline levels about two months later. People who become paralyzed from the waist down return to almost baseline levels of happiness within a few months after the accident (Silver, 1982; Lilienfeld et al., 2010).

“Man is bored, because he is too big to be happy with that which sin is giving him.” - A.W.

Tozer

Scriptures speak of a joy that is enduring (Isaiah 51:11) and that transcends our circumstances (Philippians 4:7).

Subject: The King Buried and Resurrected

Object: Trust Christ and Experience His Joy

I. The Devotion of Joseph of Arimathea (27:57-61)

After Jesus has been crucified, we are told that Joseph of Arimathea approaches Pilate to request the body of Jesus for burial.

It was customary in this culture that crucified people would be left on the cross to be eaten by animals. However, Pilate would not want this scene in light of the scandal surrounding the crucifixion of Jesus. In addition, the Jews would be greatly offended by a sight such as this during the Passover feast. Thus, Joseph’s offer to bury the body of Jesus would be greatly welcomed.

John’s gospel explains to us that Joseph was accompanied by Nicodemus (from John 3) who had brought 100 pounds of aloe and myrrh to embalm the body of Jesus with. Both men were respectable religious leaders who were intrigued with Jesus and Joseph is actually called a disciple of Jesus.

Luke 23:50 calls Joseph “a good and just man.” V.51 tells us he did not consent to their decision and deed, saying he did not sign off on the crucifixion of Jesus. (He was a member of the Sanhedrin)

The tomb which Joseph buried Jesus in was an extremely expensive tomb, illustrating Joseph’s great devotion to Jesus.

Joseph’s decision to follow Jesus would not be popular in the social circles he participated in. John refers to Joseph as a “secret” disciple of Jesus because of his fear of the Jews (John 19:38). On one hand, some may view Joseph as a coward for not wanting others to know he was a follower of Jesus. On another hand, it shows great devotion that Joseph was willing to be a disciple of Jesus when everyone around him was not.

There must have been a profound joy driving Joseph that he would be willing to sacrifice financially and commit social suicide.

II. The Unbelief of the Religious Leaders (27:62-66, 28:11-15)

The chief priests and Pharisees approach Pilate to propose a plan. They communicate that they suspect that the disciples may seek to steal the body of Jesus to confirm Jesus' prediction of His resurrection.

Suspecting this would cause even more trouble for them, they ask if Pilate will authorize Roman guards to secure the tomb. Pilate grants their request.

These religious leaders refer to Jesus as a deceiver revealing their unbelief in Jesus as Messiah.

After Jesus rises from the dead, some of these same religious leaders follow up with the Roman guards to bribe them. The guards had seen an angel roll away the stone covering Jesus' tomb. This stone would have likely been very heavy requiring multiple strong men to remove it.

Rather than receiving this as a sign of Jesus telling the truth, these religious leaders again reject Jesus. They offer the guards a large sum of money if they are willing to lie and say that the disciples came and stole the body of Jesus. In addition, they promise protection to these soldiers should the governor find out about their failure to effectively guard the tomb.

Normally, a guard who failed to execute this kind of assignment would be put to death.

A humorous letter to the editor to a Christian magazine accurately evaluated the "Swoon Theory":

Dear Eutychus: Our preacher said, on Easter, that Jesus just swooned on the cross and that the disciples nursed Him back to health. What do you think? Sincerely, Bewildered

Dear Bewildered: Beat your preacher with a cat-of-nine-tails with 39 heavy strokes, nail him to a cross; hang him in the sun for 6 hours; run a spear through his heart; embalm him; put him in an airless tomb for 36 hours and see what happens. Sincerely, Eutychus

Religious leaders were not really looking at the evidence. but had already made up their mind
Tower of Terror

III. The Joy of Mary² [Why the Resurrection Produces Joy] (28:1-10)

At dawn on Sunday morning, Mary Magdalene and Mary, the mother of James the lesser, come to the tomb of Jesus. They had also been present during the burial (27:61)

Friday often feels hopeless - MLOA

When they arrive, there is a great earthquake and an angel descends removing the stone.

The Roman guards are present and are paralyzed with fear. The text also says that both Mary's had fear, but they also had joy. The angel tells them not to be afraid because Jesus is risen and instructs them to go and tell the disciples.

On their way to announce this good news to the disciples, Jesus meets them. Jesus tells them to rejoice and echoes the charge from the angel to not be afraid. They worship Him and he instructs them to tell the disciples to meet Him in Galilee.

Time for a Scripture bomb - let's let the resurrection produce a God given joy in our souls:

1. The Resurrection Confirms that Jesus is God's Son: (John 10:17-18) "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. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father."

2. The Resurrection Verifies the Truth of Scripture:(Psalm 16:10) "For You will not leave my soul in Sheol, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.", (Psalm 110:1) "The Lord said to my Lord,"Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool."

3. The Resurrection Assures Us of Our Future Resurrection: 1 Thessalonians 4:13-14., "But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus." -

(1 Corinthians 15:42-44) "So also *is* the resurrection of the dead. *The body* is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body."

4. The Resurrection is the Basis for Christ's Heavenly Priesthood: (Hebrews 7:23-28) "Also there were many priests, because they were prevented by death from continuing. But He, because He continues forever, has an unchangeable priesthood. Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them. For such a High Priest was fitting for us, *who is* holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens; who does not need daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the people's, for this He did once for all when He offered up Himself. For the law appoints as high priests men who have weakness, but the word of the oath, which came after the law, *appoints* the Son who has been perfected forever."

5. The Resurrection Assures Our Future Inheritance: (1 Peter 1:3-5) "Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."

6. The Resurrection Confirms that Our Sins are Forgiven: (1 Corinthians 15:17) "And if Christ is not risen, your faith *is* futile; you are still in your sins!"

7. The Resurrection Gives Us Power for Christian Living: (Romans 6:14) "Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."

Romans 8:10-11 "And if Christ *is* in you, the body *is* dead because of sin, but the Spirit *is* life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you."

Communion: We remember today that Jesus' body was broken and His blood was spilled so that we could be reconciled to the Father and so we could live in His resurrection power