

# Matthew 27:45-66

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] Matthew chapter 27, verses 45 through 46. If you are physically able and desire to do so, I'm asking you to join with me as we stand together and we read the Word of God, found in the 27th chapter, starting in verse 45.

If you remember, last time we were together, we looked at the actual crucifixion of Christ, the suffering Savior. He's on the cross. Crucifixion has already taken place. The mockery has already started and is continuing on.

But now we come to the 45th verse. Now from the sixth hour, darkness fell upon all the land until the ninth hour. About the ninth hour, Jesus cried out with a loud voice saying, Eli, lama sabachthani, that is, My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

And some of those who were standing there, when they heard it, began saying, This man is calling for Elijah. Immediately one of them ran and taking the sponge, he filled it with sour wine and put it on a reed and gave him a drink.

But the rest of them said, Let us see whether Elijah will come to save him. And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice and yielded up his spirit. And behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom, and the earth shook and the rocks were split.

[ 1 : 0 9 ] The tombs were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised. And coming out of the tombs, after his resurrection, they entered the holy city and appeared to many. Now the centurion and those who were with him, keeping guard over Jesus, when they saw the earthquake and the things that were happening, became very frightened and said, Truly, this was the Son of God.

Many women were there looking on from a distance who had followed Jesus from Galilee while ministering to him. Among them was Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of the sons of Zebedee.

When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea named Joseph, who himself had also become a disciple of Jesus. This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus.

Then Pilate ordered it to be given to him. And Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock.

And he wrote a large stone against the entrance of the tomb and went away. And Mary Magdalene was there, and the other Mary sitting opposite the grave. Now on the next day, the day after the preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered together with Pilate and said, Sir, we remember that when he was still alive, that deceiver said, After three days I am to rise again.

[ 2 : 3 0 ] Therefore give orders for the grave to be made secure until the third day. Otherwise his disciples may come and steal him away and say to the people, He has risen from the dead, and the last deception will be worse than the first.

Pilate said to them, You have a guard. Go, make it as secure as you know how. And they went and made the grave secure, and along with the guard, they set a seal on the stone. Let's pray.



Lord, we thank you for this day, and God, we thank you for the opportunity we have of gathering together as the people of God who are to read the word of God. We pray as we have gathered in your presence and we have read and heard your word now that your voice would speak to us, that it would penetrate every distraction, every hindrance, and every encumbrance to the clarity of what it is you want to say to us.

Lord, that there would be, if there would be any distraction within our minds or hearts, that it would be suppressed so that we in this moment could just hear from you, and that what we hear from you would radically change our lives, that it would shape and mold us and conform us to who you want us to be.

We pray when we come to passages such as this, that we would not run past them in a hurry, and we would not look over them in haste, but rather we would stand still and wonder at the Savior.

[ 3 : 45 ] Lord, may it be for your glory and may it be for yours alone, and we ask it all in Jesus' name. Amen. We have finally come to the point in the Gospel of Matthew where we see the death of the Savior.

The death of the Savior. Matthew is of Jewish descent. He is of Jewish heritage. He had forsaken that heritage by occupation because we also know him by another name, Levi.

We know that he was sitting at the tax collector's booth when Jesus found him and therefore had turned his back on his nation. Maybe not geographically, but at least politically, he had turned his back on his own people because to sit at the tax collector's booth was to be taking money from your fellow citizens in order to give it to the occupying power who would have been the Romans.

The Romans' occupation of the land of Israel was much hated by the Jewish people. Yet Jesus found him in that occupation and called him and led him into another life.

He called him and united him with people starkly different than him. Along with a tax collector, there's also a zealot. Now, there could not have been people more at odds than these two individuals as we count them among the disciples.

[ 5 : 00 ] Zealots were those who were actively opposing and by actively opposing, I mean they were going around in the middle of crowds and stabbing Roman soldiers in order to try to dismantle the Roman Empire so that the Jewish people could revolt and take over and Jesus called one of those and also one of those who was taking money for the Roman powers who was Matthew.

Matthew knows the anticipated hope of the Jewish people that they were looking for a savior, for a Messiah, for a king. Evidently, at some point, he had given up on that hope and he began to work for the king who occupied the land, king with a lowercase k and that would be Caesar.

He was taking money and giving it to that king but yet there was another king one day who called him away from that occupation and completely changed the trajectory of his life. He met a man who called him out of that place and then met him where he was at and then went and sat down and had a feast with him and others like him and that man was Jesus.

And when Jesus called Levi from the tax collector's booth, he called him to himself which was a person and began to display to him that what you have been looking for can only be found in me.

Jesus had proved himself all throughout the ages. He has shown himself faithful to his people but he shows himself more faithful still and that he called people who were looking for him, had forgotten about him and were even fighting against him, called them to himself and revealed himself to them.

[ 6 : 23 ] Over a number of years, three and a half years of public ministry, Matthew becomes convinced that there's something more about this man, Jesus. Later on, he writes the gospel.



Some would say it's either the first gospel or the second, figuring on how you count the dates of Matthew and Mark. But either way, it's one of the earliest gospels. And he writes it to his own people, the people he had rebelled against, the people he had taken money from, the people whom he had enriched his own pockets and lined his own pockets from.

He had written it to the Jewish people and when he wrote to the Jewish people, he really displayed the reality that Jesus is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. But yet we find this oxymoron in that this King who has come to set up on the throne of David eternally has to venture into death temporarily.

He who has been appointed and called and promised to rule and to reign and as Isaiah said, that the scepter shall never depart from his hand.

He who would have a rod of iron and would rule over the nations of the world. Isaiah 53 and following. He who would put his feet upon the world, he who spoke it into existence, would subject himself to it and suffer from it and then eventually die because of it.

[ 7 : 47 ] But it is in the death of the Savior. See, in this moment, we're not worried about his kingship. We're worried about his saviorhood. He is the Savior.

And it's a wonderful news. We call it good news. Another word for that is gospel. When the king who sits on the throne is also the Savior who hung on the cross. When the one who rules over us is also the one who redeemed us.

That's great news. Because he who dictates how we should live our life is the one who died in the place of our life. And yet we find the death of Jesus here recorded in such ordinary words.

Recorded in such matter-of-fact statements. But we understand as we have taken our way through the gospel of Matthew and we understand as we have slowed down in the 27th chapter that this is us who should be hanging on the cross.

This is our death. This is our suffering. This is our price. This is our penalty of rebellion. And we finally have come to the point where someone dies for the sin of man.

[ 8 : 56 ] And as astounding as it all seems and as unthinkable as we can imagine, the one who dies for the sin of man is not man, but it is the king who rules over man. We see the death of Jesus.

But in the death of Jesus we see a number of things that are connected with it. There are things that are united to this death that take place and things which we must pay attention to.

Now surely as with every other thing recorded in the gospel, we do not have the entirety of it written for us by Matthew. You have to read all four gospels to get the full picture if you will.

You have to read all four gospels to get a full view of what is taking place. You need to have multiple witnesses testifying to you. We see those as the spirit moves the men of God to write the word of God and we have the gospel accounts.

If you take your time and you go through the table talk questions this week, you will be challenged to read those all four gospel accounts and see the seven sayings of Christ from the cross and see all that takes place because there are some voids that we will fill in a little bit here in Matthew that we see in their fullness when we see them in the other gospels but this is the death of the Savior.

[ 10 : 11 ] The first thing that we see is the darkness that preceded it. There's a darkness that preceded this death. It tells us in Matthew chapter 27 that Jesus is hung between two thieves.

He's counted with criminals in his death. They have been mocking him. The people around him have been mocking him. The soldiers were mocking him. The religious and political leaders of the nation of Israel have been mocking him.



The passerbys have been mocking him. Everyone has been ridiculing him. There's a placard that hangs above his head that says this is the king of the Jews. Everyone has made a mockery of he who is hanging on the center cross of Calvary.

And then all of a sudden the Bible tells us that about the sixth hour something happens. Now the sixth hour is noon, twelve o'clock. It says from the sixth hour until the ninth hour that is from twelve until three it goes completely dark.

All goes dark. Darkness it says fell upon the land. Now there's no reason for us to think that this was a worldwide darkness. Many people have tried to explain things scientifically and even understandably that maybe this was eclipse.

[ 11 : 31 ] Maybe this was this. Maybe this was that. Maybe it was all these things. We don't need to explain it. We just need to accept it. It says that darkness fell upon the land. The reality that it was an eclipse has been debunked through history because you can see that in the time of year that this would have taken place then the moon phase and even the sun position would have been absolutely impossible for it to be a solar eclipse.

But what we do see is that he who created the light can also cut off the light. It says so it goes dark. Darkness fell upon the land. The Bible seems to imply that darkness fell upon the very location of where he was at.

And it was a darkness that fell upon all that were around him. And we'd have to at least imagine that when the darkness fell the people got silence. No longer is there a savior to see to mock because you can't see anything.

No longer is there a savior or a man hanging on the cross to ridicule because you can't see anything. And it reminds us this three hours of darkness remind us of something else that had happened.

For those of you that are following the reading plan you've read it already. You have made your way or you're making your way through the book of Exodus. Now remember when we on Sunday and Wednesday nights going through the Old Testament were preaching through the book of Exodus.

[ 12 : 49 ] We made this statement as we're going through the book of Exodus that we cannot understand our salvation without properly understanding the Exodus event. Not the Exodus book but the Exodus event. The Exodus event would have been the Passover, right?

The Passover event. What took place in the book of Exodus namely the Passover event. And without a full biblical understanding of the Passover we cannot fully comprehend what's taking place on the cross of Calvary because we see here the death angel coming and yet there being an intercession based upon the blood that is smeared and it is the blood of a perfect lamb.

But the similarities don't stop there because if you go back to the book of Exodus I'm not going to ask you to do that but if you were to go back to the book of Exodus and the Passover event when the death angel comes and we know that there's blood over the doorposts of the houses and they're inside the door of the house that means they're covered by the blood and they're eating the sacrificial lamb and there's the lamb that is slain and by the way these things take place on the preparation day the preparation day for the Passover which means this is the very day when they were to be killing the Passover lamb because Jesus is the lamb stay with me slain before the foundation of the world he is the literal fulfillment of the Passover lamb do you know what precedes the Passover event in the book of Exodus what's the ninth plague do you remember that three days of darkness it was dark for three days except for in the land of Israel where the people of Israel were at and I like how it's explained in the book of Exodus when Moses



Moses didn't go before Pharaoh on this one by the way if you remember in the plagues Moses doesn't declare all of them to Pharaoh there are some that he says this is about to happen and there are others that just take place but as he is there he tells Aaron to wave his staff across the sky and it says and darkness fell upon the land and I love how it's explained it says and it was a darkness that could be felt a darkness that could be felt have you ever been in that place where you've been in a darkness that could be felt and darkness fell upon the land for three days and then after the darkness then the death angel came the Passover lamb was slain darkness preceded the slaying of the Passover lamb darkness precedes the slaying of the lamb of God see this is a darkness with intentionality because it silences all because in that darkness the best thing to do is to be still

I remember when I was I don't know I was a teenager maybe 14 or 15 really good friend of mine I'm not going to call him out and I were with a youth group and we were in a cave system and we all had those headlamps we were you know going through this cave and we were following the guy who was leading us through this cave there was a number of us I wish I could remember the cave's name I can't remember it anymore because there's only one thing stands out but the farther we went the farther we went we got down there we got down there and finally it opened up to a great room in this cave and the guy who let us down there said okay now we're going to do an object lesson everybody turn off your headlamps so we did we turned off the lights and it just got dark and it was a darkness that could be felt and he said okay now I'm going to do something else you could feel that darkness he said now I want you to partner up everybody partner up and one of you is not going to have a light and the other one's going to have a light in order to ensure that it stays that way he who doesn't have a light is going to give me their batteries so my great partner decided I was going to be the one without a light so I didn't have a light he had a light and then the instructor said now you guys have to lead us out well being the great individuals we were and we spent a lot of time outside we thought that we would be the right ones to lead them out and it worked pretty good the gentleman and I that were going through the cave were leading everybody else out and the instructor kind of the guy was right behind us because he slipped through this hole that a rock was positioned right underneath to make his way to the next level and then turned his head to look and see where he was going and just told me to go through the hole

[ 17 : 05 ] I straddled the rock that was underneath that hole and that was a darkness that could be felt and from that moment on I realized I didn't like walking in darkness and I said I'll take your helmet I don't think he gave it to me I had to go the rest of the way without a light but I tell you what darkness does is it silences you makes everything be still and it makes you dependent upon one before the greatest light of the world could ever be cut on everything went dark and for three hours preceding his death the creator of the light cut the light off and he dealt with the sin of man and the darkness alone because in that moment no one else could take his place in that moment no one else could receive the weight in that moment no one else could bear the pain in that moment no one else could pay the penalty he dealt with the sin of man alone in the dark he dealt with my sin and your sin completely cut off and isolated from everyone else and we know that because the very next thing that he says when the light comes back on is my

God my God why have you forsaken me the darkness! the death of Jesus was preceded in darkness but it was accompanied by something far greater the second thing we see is the display of power and wonder that was united with it when the light comes back on about the ninth hour about three o'clock Jesus cries out my God my God why have you forsaken me a direct quote from Psalm 22 verse 1 I encourage you to read the 22nd Psalm Psalm 22 verse 1 many people would say that that is not a messianic psalm it is a psalm of David cried out when he is being chased and being kind of hounded by Saul but yet we see there's some absolute messianic messages in that psalm because it speaks of being surrounded by your enemies as Christ was when he was on the cross it speaks of the soldiers casting lots for his clothing as was taking place around the cross it speaks of bearing the weight but then that psalm which I believe is a messianic psalm



Psalm 22 speaks of a hope that is on the other side of the death that is going to be paid of the penalty that's coming and the hope that's on the other side so we have now come out of the darkness and we're looking at the hope and around this death there are things that happen because after he says this the people say oh he's calling for Elijah and we have here Matthew tells us that someone went and dipped a sponge in some vinegar and offered it to him for a drink but what we don't have recorded in Matthew but what we do have recorded in the other gospels is that before that sponge was handed to him Jesus cried out and it tells us in the gospels in order to fulfill the scripture he cried out I thirst to me just so you know as a side note a pastor that is the most astounding saying from the scripture he said I thirst why I find that so amazing this is just the way my mind thinks is that here is

Jesus in complete control hanging on the cross going through his mind of all that he has said in the past because he is the word of God so wherever we read the word of God Jesus himself has declared it and said it and there is this vague portion of scripture in the book of Psalms that says that he will thirst in his suffering and cry out in thirst and Jesus going through all of this in order to fulfill the scripture said oh yeah by the way I'm thirsty and he said it just to fulfill the scripture to the very T so they give him vinegar to drink people are saying now this is not the numbing agent that was offered to him at the first because he did not have any numbing agent this is something just to wet the lips so to say but here we see that Jesus in all of this is in absolute complete control because the word of God tells us that the people said leave him alone let's see if Elijah comes and then it says in verse 50 and Jesus cried out with a loud spirit loud voice now we know that is father into your hands

I commit my spirit that's what he says there in verse 50 and Jesus cried out again with a loud voice and yielded up his spirit don't lose! yielded up means he gave it up right he gave up his spirit no one took Christ's life no one he gave his life big difference there is no one powerful enough nor mighty enough no torture great enough no weapon formed that would be strong enough to take the life of Christ it says he yielded up he gave it up and that's intentional wording because it says and knowing when all things had been fulfilled he yielded up his spirit and with that with that death there's this display of power the most wondrous power we see is that

[ 22 : 29 ] Jesus himself is in absolute control not of only his life but also of his death he is in absolute control of how he dies when he dies where he dies and he dies with intentionality and he does it on purpose and he does it even though it seems as if the world may be winning he dies!

victorious and we see him doing these things but then it tells us in verse 51 and behold veil of the temple was torn into from top to bottom second great display of power is that veil that's in the temple you remember the veil right when you go into the temple you enter into what they call the court of the Gentiles there's a court of women the court of women are where everybody can congregate and everybody can get together and then you go through that court and you go into the court of Gentiles the court of Gentiles is where every other male is welcomed Jew and Gentile foreigners are allowed but the Jewish people themselves this is where they accused Paul of bringing a Gentile believer into in the book of Acts just as a side note but it's the court of the Jews once you go beyond the court of the Jews you enter into the place of the holiness that's where the priest would be at that's where Zechariah would have went when he burned incense there's where the altar of incense is and the candelabra all these things where the priest went into to offer the burning of incense and then once you went beyond the place of holiness you got to the holy of holies but before you could go into the holy of holies there's a veil there's this huge curtain heavy curtain hanging from floor to ceiling separating the holy place from the holy of holies because behind the holy of holies is the ark of the covenant but the ark of the covenant is just a!



behind the holy of holies is the manifest presence of God and it is behind that veil that only one time a year one person a year can go in with a rope tied around his ankle and bells around the hem of his garment and he goes in not through the middle but from the edge he lifts the curtain and he goes in on the day of atonement with a bowl full of blood and he goes in and he sprinkles blood for his own sins and he comes back out and he sprinkles blood for the sins of sinner he will die that's what the rope's for so they can drag him back out when he dies because you can't go in there and get him only the high priest once a year there's this veil and really what it's symbolizing is there's a veil that stands between the people and the presence of God you know this right you understand it but when Christ dies that veil is ripped in two from top to bottom which tells us that the presence of God has been made accessible through the blood of Christ the author of the book of

Hebrews says therefore we go boldly into his presence through the blood of Christ we don't walk with a rope tied around our ankle with bells around the hem of our garments we don't go in through the corner hunkered down with a bowl full of the blood of a lamb no we walk in knowing we have been washed in the blood of the lamb of God we are covered not carrying in a bowl but carrying in our hearts and in our lives we are covered in the blood of Christ and because of the death of Christ the most wonderful the most magnificent the most powerful thing happens I don't have to be afraid of falling down dead in the presence of a holy God no one has to be on the other end of the rope to pull me out because listen to me because of the death of Christ I am welcomed into the presence of a holy God I'm not going to die there I'm not going to fall on my face there because Jesus has already died for me to be there now if I try to go in in my own power and in my own goodness and in my own worthiness if I try to go in without the blood there better be a rope tied around my ankle so you can pull me back when I die but when I'm going through the blood that veil has already been torn into it has been made accessible to you and I now I can walk with boldness into the presence of God this is why I don't understand why our prayers seem to be so weak because we have to have boldness to go into a place where for centuries people were not allowed to go now we have the opportunity to go through the blood of Christ into the very presence of the throne of the holy God and we can go before his throne in confidence knowing we belong there not because of who we are but because of who he is we belong there what a great display of power and just to validate what he's doing on the inside of the temple he does some things on the outside of the temple as well and it says and then there was a great earthquake now earthquakes are common to that region but evidently not earthquakes like this as we'll see later there's a great earthquake and then the rocks were split and the earth was open and in the company in the earthquake there were these graves that were opening up too and it says and then the tombs were opened but not just every tomb pay attention to this



God's even selective in this there's this earthquake and the tombs were opened and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised that meant like God could walk through the the tombs and the gardens where the the tombs are all that and he's like this one this one not that one but this one this one this one these are only certain tombs that are open because it's only particular bodies that are raised it's the bodies of the saints now I know there's some word play here and we understand this and we get it it says and after his resurrection they went into the city and appeared to many I think it's absolutely important that they don't appear to any until after his resurrection because Jesus is the first fruits of the resurrection so if they had went into you know if they were raised and went in apart from his resurrection then he wouldn't have been the first but they were first fruits he is the first fruits of the resurrection and then it tells us and in the centurion and those who were keeping guard with him when they saw the earthquake and they saw the rocks splitting now Roman soldiers are not just you know weak in the knees individuals these are battle-hardened trained soldiers especially around Jerusalem in the time of the Passover it says and when the centurion and those who were keeping guard with him when they saw these things this display of power they were greatly afraid and declared surely this man was the son of God now do we need to give them salvation as a result of this no that does not necessarily imply salvation because there are many sons of God God's lower case g among the Roman belief there even Caesar himself was referred to as a son of God but we can also see here that at least to the Gentiles Romans the power that was put on display was testimonial enough to capture your attention so here we see darkness we see a display the third thing we see with the death of the

[ 29 : 32 ] Savior is a decision decision that was made so the centurion makes this great profession and those who are with him they're afraid and all of a sudden the scene kind of shifts we're reminded of those ladies that were there gathered around the cross pay attention to those ladies follow those ladies by the way you need to see them you need to hold on to them if the Lord allows us to carry until next week don't lose sight of them always keep an eye on them they're in the background they're just there and you need to follow them because they're absolutely important I'm not going to tell you why you just need to follow them here we see the ladies are there but then we're introduced to someone completely different someone we've never met before someone we haven't seen come on the scene and we meet a man from Arimathea no one knows where Arimathea is from there are some speculations but more than likely he is from a very wealthy region there are some things spoken of in the historical work of Josephus there's a region that seems to be the same place that is one of people were well you know it's like the rich neighborhood okay there's some places that maybe if

I said well I live over here you would be greatly mistaken to think well that man must be rich but because there's some places I just don't belong and places I don't fit in well that's where Joseph is from he's from one of those places I wouldn't hang out because I probably would not have the financial resources to live where he's at and that's fine I'm content with that but what we see here is this individual who's a very wealthy individual from Arimathea and it tells us he's rich his name is Joseph Joseph of Arimathea is how we refer to him we meet him in the other gospel accounts too but all of a sudden Joseph is forced to make a decision because see for the Jewish people it was absolutely horrendous for a dead individual to hang upon the cross overnight it would not only defile the person it would defile the land God had declared and again why does God declare in the book of Leviticus you ever thought about this why did God declare in the book of Leviticus that the Jewish people should not leave a condemned criminal hanging on a tree overnight it would defile the land what difference does that matter because in all around the world and everybody else's practice and everybody else's custom and I know this is kind of hard to believe they just left them hanging there but all of a sudden God says in the book of Leviticus you don't do that you bring them down because you would defile the land why did God declare that in the book of



Leviticus well I'll tell you why it's because he was going to come one day clothe himself in humanity take on human flesh and be called Emmanuel and there would be a day where he hung up on a tree and he had to be laid in a tomb so that there would be no doubting what takes place all that said for this moment for this moment of Joseph's decision it would defile the land to leave the dead bodies there so Joseph is faced with this now the other gospels tell us that Joseph was a wealthy man he was a man of means but then we also meet him as a disciple he himself had become a disciple of Jesus and now the gospels tell us yet secretly and the reason he's a secret believer is because he's also a member of the Sanhedrin you remember the Sanhedrin right that's the one that put Jesus on trial in Jewish court that's the Jewish court so we say see here that Joseph of Arimathea was not consenting to the death of Christ he probably wasn't even present when they had court because you didn't have to have all 70 present and if you knew or suppose that there are a couple of people who maybe have come to believe in

Jesus like Joseph and Nicodemus more than likely you didn't invite them to the trial because you wanted to swing the vote so to say that happens I don't know if you realize that that happens even today so these probably were left out of that but here we have Joseph we know that Nicodemus joins him as well and I used to have a problem I'm just being honest with you I used to have a problem with these two individuals because they were what we refer to as secret believers couldn't they have said something couldn't they have done something couldn't they have shown up couldn't they have made this statement but all this thing is Joseph is a disciple of Christ yet secretly because he was a member of the Sanhedrin and he was wealthy but yet the reason I had in my own mind to move past my problems with Joseph is because God had reserved him for a moment one moment all we know about Joseph is the one decision he makes one and that one decision is to go before Pilate and he goes before Pilate and he asked for the body and in his asking for the body a number of things are fulfilled they pierce aside to ensure that he's dead they don't break his legs they get him down all these things you can read them in scripture but because he made a decision to go before Pilate and ask for the body of Jesus think about this this is the day of preparation stay with me the day of preparation in which they would slay the Passover lamb do you remember why the religious leaders would not go into the praetorium before Pilate they didn't want to go into the praetorium because they did not want to defile themselves and therefore make themselves unclean and not be able to eat the Passover



Passover Joseph determines I don't have to eat the Passover lamb because I know where he's at and he goes before Pilate he asked for the body and the moment he touches the dead body he makes himself defiled the very moment he takes Christ down off the cross he is defiled and cannot eat the Passover lamb as Warren Wiersbe said what good is a meal when you're already holding the lamb in your arms so he makes this decision and he is forever recorded in history because of one decision friend listen to me maybe your whole life you haven't been as upfront and outspoken about your faith as you should be maybe God has reserved you for one decision we know that Joseph had a tomb hewn out we know that he made it that he had prepared it something that he had prepared it for this purpose because surely his own tomb would not have been there if he lived in Arimathea why would he have a tomb in Jerusalem we don't know but we know he had prepared in advance for this and we also know that the moment that he puts a condemned criminal in his tomb his tomb is defiled so think about this decision he himself is defiled and cannot eat the Passover meal and in his tomb is defiled and can never be used again that's why the tomb is still empty today no one else could ever go into it because it had been defiled because a condemned criminal had been laid in that tomb unjustly condemned yes but according to the law condemned yes you know why because my sin and your sin was laid upon him and therefore he bore our sins and he was guilty for our sins not of his own he made this one decision and that decision was to take Christ wrap him in that linen cloth we know according to the gospels a hundred pounds of spices were put upon him he and Nicodemus did it pay attention to those women by the way because the scripture tells us and they watched how they did it you just need to hold on to that one you need to understand that they watched how they did it so they did it hastily because the night was coming and they laid him in a tomb and then rolled the stone in place Joseph might not have lived his life as he had thought he should have lived his life but he did live his life not without hope because there was a moment he could make a decision and that decision could change the rest of history and sometimes it's only one decision that you have to make it's only one we don't know anything else about Joseph after this we don't know anything prior to this because this is what God had called him to do friend if



[ 36 : 58 ]    God calls us to do one thing do that one thing well if he calls you to do multiple things and do those multiple things well but do what he's called you to do fourth and finally and I'll be done we see the darkness that preceded it the display of power united with it we see the decision made following it the fourth and final thing is we see the denial of some in spite of it Jesus dies victorious on the cross but yet there are still some who deny we see it on the next day it says in verse 62 on the next day the day after the preparation the chief priest and the Pharisees gathered together with Pilate so their festival being celebrated their meal being eaten now they can come before Pilate and they said sir we remember that when he was alive that deceiver said after three days I am to rise again now isn't it ironic that those who feared him the most in his life also fear him in his death isn't it ironic too that the enemies of Christ remember what he said but the disciples could not you need to understand this your greatest enemy probably remembers more scripture than you do this is why we ought to study to show ourselves approved those who seek to refute us and to condemn us and to belittle us quite often know more than us they knew what he said the disciples had forgotten it because they were in fear they forgot everything that had been told them it was not open until the resurrection but yet we see they remember what he said so therefore give orders for the grave to be made secure until the third day otherwise the disciples may come and steal him away and say to the people he has risen from the dead and the last deception that will be worse than the first so there's still this doubt and denial and Pilate said to them you have a guard go make it as secure as you know how so though they had seen these the veil being torn though they had seen the earthquake though they had seen the rocks with though they had seen the tombs open though they had seen all these things there's still a denial that this is not who he says he is you just need to know that in verse 66 and they went and made the grave secure and along with the guard they set a seal on the stone I am thankful they did that because this action actually leads to one of the greatest validations of the resurrection their denial and their attempt to secure the tomb actually becomes the greatest apologetic for the empty tomb the fact that the seal is broken that the car the guards are are cast down the fact that though man had put his greatest greatest efforts to hold him in this is the thing that shows the greatness of the resurrection because there are all a number of things any number of of accusations that people make regarding the empty tomb we'll get to those next week but each and every one of them none of them can stand against the reality of the fact that they tried to hold him in you need to understand this no matter how great the death of Jesus no matter how wondrous it is seen no matter how much it is lifted on high no matter how glorious the victory is presented there will always be those who deny but may that denial not be our denial may we see the death of Jesus and may the death of Christ may the death of the Savior on the cross be the thing that motivates us to live our lives for his glory and his alone let's pray Lord we thank you for this day we thank you for the truth of Scripture we thank you for the price that has been paid for the Savior who has died in our place Lord we ask that you be with us now as we come to a time of invitation Lord that you show our hearts and our minds to us that you search us oh

God that you know us and help us to know ourselves as only you know us and we ask it in Christ's name amen so so Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[ 43 : 44 ]    Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.