

Matthew 28:1-15

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[0 : 00] Take your Bibles and go with me to the book of Matthew, Matthew chapter 28. We have finally come to the last chapter of the Gospel of Matthew. We will not finish it because we will save those parting verses of Matthew 28, often referred to as the Great Commission, for another week, if the Lord allows us to tarry until next week.

But this morning we will be looking at Matthew 28, verses 1 through 15. It is Matthew's account of the resurrection. Not all that can be told or declared about the resurrection of Christ is displayed in any single Gospel.

Mark probably has less of it than any other. The most ancient scriptures of Mark end at verse 8. That is Mark 16, verse 8, when the women went away in fear and amazement and wonder.

We know that there are other portions as we look at it because you can read the rest of that chapter that some translators will tell you was a scribal edition in order to make it be equal to the other Gospel accounts.

But if Mark was the earliest Gospel writer, then we can assume that. Matthew writes a lot, as does Mark, but he writes it to the Jewish people. And Mark gives a very brief account.

[1 : 24] Matthew gives a little bit longer, but still brief. We could go to the Gospel of John and we can read in the Gospel of John things which we do not see in any other Gospel. And I encourage you to do that because before you can get a full facet view of all that happens on Resurrection Sunday, you need to see all four Gospel accounts.

And then when we go to the Gospel of Luke, we see even greater details given to us. But there is this resonating theme. There is this resonating theme that the tomb is empty.

We will see it as described in the Gospel of Matthew. We will add to it, not our own opinions, but we will highlight some things which the other Gospel authors emphasize.

We will not turn there because I would encourage you to turn there this week as you go through your table talk questions. For those of you who did not get them last week and you wanted some, I have a few copies of those.

Kind of coincide with what we have going on this morning. But as you go through the table talk questions, I encourage you to read all four Gospel accounts. It does not take long to read all four Gospel accounts of the Resurrection.

[2 : 32] I read them this morning in one sitting really quick. I did not read them in a quick fashion. It just does not take long. Because when there is nothing there to talk about, there is not a lot to say.

The tomb is empty. I heard a great sermon one time in Pikeville, Kentucky. I was a young man being felt called to the ministry.

I went to Binghamtown Baptist Church. I was on a visit there talking with a mentor of mine. And he took me to church with him. Took Carrie and I to church with him. We went to Binghamtown Baptist Church in Pikeville, Kentucky.

Now you need to understand, Pikeville, Kentucky is a coal mining town. Some of those old-fashioned fire and brimstone preachers. Binghamtown is a very large church. And we were there.

It was a great honor that day because Boyd Bingham was actually preaching. William Boyd Bingham, who was the pastor emeritus. He didn't preach very often.

[3 : 34] He's kind of an older, feeble man. He walked up to the pulpit and he said, Today I want to preach to you about nothing. Some people say, Glory, Hallelujah, we're going to hear nothing today.

He preached longer about nothing than I've heard some people preach about something. And it was a good message. It was a really good message. I wish I had it on record. I wish I had it on tape.

They weren't videoing it back then, but I wish I had it. It was a good message about nothing. But when you have nothing to talk about in the tomb, there's not a lot to be said because the tomb was empty. And that's absolutely essential.

But this morning we will be in Matthew 28, verses 1 through 15. If you are physically able and desire to do so, I'm going to ask you to join with me as we stand together. And we read the first 15 verses of the Gospel of Matthew in the 28th chapter.

The Word of God declares to us, Now after the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to look at the grave.

[4 : 35] And behold, a severe earthquake had occurred, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rode away the stone and sat upon him. And his appearance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow.

And the guards shook for fear of him and became like dead men. And the angel said to the women, Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus who has been crucified. He is not here, for he has risen, just as he said.

Come see the place where he was lying. Go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead. And behold, he is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him.

Behold, I have told you. And they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy and ran to report it to his disciples. And behold, Jesus met them and greeted them, and they came up and took hold of his feet and worshipped him.

Then Jesus said to them, Do not be afraid. Go and take word to my brethren to leave for Galilee, and there they will see me. Now while they were on their way, some of the guard came into the city and reported to the chief priests all that had happened.

[5 : 40] And when they had assembled with the elders and consulted together, they gave a large sum of money to the soldiers and said, You are to say his disciples came by night and stole him away while we were sleeping.

And if this should come to the governor's ears, we would win him over and keep you out of trouble. And they took the money and did as they had been instructed. And this story was widely spread among the Jews as it is to this day.

Let's pray. Lord, we thank you for this day. We thank you for the opportunity of gathering together, reading and hearing your word. Lord, we pray that as we have read it and we've seen it, Lord, now that you would speak to your people.

God, we pray that this great passage of scripture, which is before us, would be opened up to us. Lord, that we would understand it in all of its power and all of its glory and all of its splendor. That our understanding of it would transform our lives.

That it would change our behaviors. That it would direct our steps. And that we would live our lives according to it. And may it be for your glory and your glory alone. And we ask it all in Jesus' name.

[6 : 43] Amen. You may be seated. We have come to the resurrection of Christ. We have taken our time making our way through the 27th chapter. And we realize that as Matthew writes to his own people, to the Jewish people, Matthew is writing of the King of kings and Lord of lords.

He has exalted Christ. He has magnified Christ. He has lifted up Christ. He has shown beyond a shadow of a doubt that through his words and through his works, that Christ is who he came to be.

That is, he is the King of kings and Lord of lords. We have seen in the 27th chapter his suffering. The fact that the king suffered though innocent. The fact that the king was ridiculed though without fault.

The fact that the king was mocked. And that was our mockery that should have been poured out upon him. And then the king gave up his life. No one took it, but he gave it up. We have seen that the king finished the work which we could not do.

He finished what we started. We started, that is, mankind started the work of sin. And Christ came and he finished it. And he wrote it across a wooden cross on the hill called Calvary. We have seen how the king came and paid the great price.

[7 : 50] For the wages of sin is death. That's what we deserve. That's what we have earned. And that's what our works are gaining us. But we have seen that the king of kings and Lord of lords, he who sits upon the throne paid the price for the ones who will stand before it.

There is great news because the king who will judge us is also the king who died in our place. But now his death is not the end of the story. As a matter of fact, he is just one of a multitude of people who were crucified by the Romans.

There was at one time, according to Roman historians, that over 2,000 people lined along public highways that were killed by crucifixion. Crucifixion was a very popular form of Roman execution.

And they would do it in order to make a point as to what they were doing. History has shown. Archaeologists have dug up the bones and the fragments of one who still had the spike through his ankles.

We have seen the reality of crucifixion. But the death of Christ is not the gospel. It is that which purchases us. We have been bought.

[8 : 56] But as Paul says, But if Christ has not been raised, then we are of all men most to be pitied. Because it is the resurrection of Christ that is the good news.

We have been bought with the blood, and we have been raised to walk in the newness of life. And we have now come to the resurrection of Christ. This is the most pivotal point in all of history.

This is that which changes everything. This is that which comes with power, and it is that which must be reckoned with and reckoned to by all men. This is the thing which we must see and the thing which we must understand.

Because the resurrection is instrumental. And we see here with the resurrection of Christ just three things that we will look at. The first thing we see is the reality of the event.

It says, This is the last week when we were gathered together.

[10 : 20] You remember, There are some ladies you got to keep your eye on in the story of the gospel. There are some ladies you need to watch. There is Mary Magdalene. There is the other Mary. There is Salome.

There is these women that are gathered around. And I told you to keep your eye on them. That they are always there. They are in the background. Right? That when Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea were putting spices upon him.

When Joseph took him on the cross, people were scared because the ground had quaked and the rocks had split and the graves had opened. But the women were there. And Joseph took him down. And then Joseph went and found Nicodemus.

And then they took a hundred pounds of spices. And the women were there. The gospels tell us. People always ask me, Why did the women go back to the tomb with spices? And I say, You know, There is a word in the gospel you need to pay attention to.

Because it says, And the women saw how they anointed his body. Some of you men didn't catch that. Sometimes your wife watches how you do something. And then she comes back and does it the right way.

[11 : 17] Right? They were there watching how they anointed the body. And how they did it hastily. And they did it to get over with. And they did it because they had to hurry up and get him in the tomb.

Because the Sabbath was coming. And they couldn't work on the Sabbath. And when they saw how they anointed the body. Because the women were there. They knew that it was done in a hurry. But their master, their savior, The one they had served for three and a half years of public ministry, Didn't need a hastily done job.

He needed to be properly buried. Right? That's at least in their minds. So, as they observed how they did it, They decided that as soon as we can go back, We're going to go back. And you notice, They watched where they laid him in the tomb.

You need to understand this. And I'll show you why in just a minute. Because the same women who have been watching all along Were the same women who went to the tomb on the first day. It says, As it began to dawn towards the first day.

Now, Matthew tells us, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary, The other gospels tell us, It's a whole court of women that are coming around. There's a Salome is there. Cleopas is there. There's all these other women who are coming.

[12 : 23] And they're coming to the tomb. And they want to see. Because they have a purpose for coming. They have purchased the spices. Because it's the first day of the week. It is Sunday. It's no longer Saturday. It's not Sabbath. Now we can work.

And the women need to get to work. And they're going to the tomb. And they have the question, Who's going to roll this stone away? And who's going to move these things? And yet, when they come there, God has opened the door to show them a reality.

You need to understand this. This has been said over and over and over again. But it's something that we must not miss. The tomb wasn't open so that he could get out. The tomb was open so that we could see in. Right? The stone was moved.

I like what Mark says. Mark says that the earthquake had shot the stone away. The word used there is the same word used for dynamite. It means that the stone was moved up a hill a great distance away from the entrance.

It wasn't just pushed aside where you could see in and peek inside. It was picked up and thrown over there. And we could do all the math. And we can do all the measurements and all these things.

[13 : 22] This thing weighed multiple tons. Okay? These are testified to in historical realities. But this thing had been picked up and moved away. And they get there.

And the tomb is empty. Now, I say all of this because we need to understand the reality of the event. Jesus had to raise from the dead. It had to happen.

The reason it has to happen is because it validates who he is. Jesus himself had declared he was the son of God.

He declared it. He said it. If there is no resurrection, there is no validation. And then it empowers all that he has said. If he is able to get up from the dead and walk away, then we must pay attention to what he says.

It is essential for without it, as Paul said, our faith is useless. If all we're hoping in is a dead man, then we're not hoping in much. There are a lot of people.

[14 : 25] There's a multitude of people around the world hoping in a dead man. Multitude of them. That's not much hope. It is absolutely essential for our faith.

The one we hope in is not dead. He's alive. He's able to help us today. He's as alive today as he's ever been. He was in eternity past. He'll be in eternity present.

He is eternally present. We'll see him. He is there in the future. He is alive, flesh and blood. It is essential for our faith. And it is necessary because it offers us hope.

Because if Christ has been raised from the dead, as he says he is, and he is, then he is the firstfruits of the resurrection. And firstfruits imply more fruit, right? You don't get a first without getting more.

And you understand he is the, as Hebrews tells us, the firstfruit of the resurrection. And since he is raised, and guess what? I, too, have the hope of a resurrection. Because if he can raise himself and if God can raise, all three members of the Trinity, by the way, are attributed to the resurrection.

[15 : 30] It says he was raised by the Spirit. It says he raised himself and it says God the Father raised him. If he can be raised, so, too, can I. See, now I have hope. There is hope because of the resurrection of Christ.

It is absolutely essential. This one thing changes everything. This one thing alters all of history. This one thing affects how we've read what he said.

If he, in fact, walked out of the tomb, if he is raised, then we must pay attention to what he has said. This is the thing we must reckon with.

It has been the most scrutinized. It has been the most politicized at times. It has been the most doubted event in history. But yet, with every thorough, accurate investigation, it has also been the most verified.

It is probably the most verified event that has ever taken place in any history because there has been more scrutiny applied to it than any other thing. The reality of the event must be settled.

[16 : 31] We don't have time to go through every one of them. There are great apologetics that deal with the fact that this did happen, the fact that it can happen, the fact that it must have happened. There are any number of things.

And I would love to sometimes just to go down through them. But the first testimony we can see, remember those women I told you never to lose sight of, is the fact that the women are attributed to be the first bearers of the gospel.

Ladies, I don't mean this to be any disregard or disarm to you, but women kind of ranked there with shepherds. They didn't really have a great place in society. And for the new faith to, not once, not twice, but in all four gospels, account for the reality that women were the first ones at the empty tomb is a testimony to the fact that it happened.

No other Jewish man would ever do that. He would never do that. The fact that the tomb was sealed, but yet, all of a sudden, the seal is broken. And we'll meet the soldiers later, so we don't want to go there.

The presence of the soldiers is a testimony to the fact that it did happen. The grave cloths that are lying in the place. Listen, if you're going to take a body, you don't unwrap the body.

[17 : 44] It tells us in the Gospel of John that when they went there, the grave cloths were still in their place, not unwrapped, just unfilled. But the headpiece had been taken off and folded.

And if you're still in a body, you don't take time to fold the napkin, even if you decide you want to take it off of his head. Remember when Lazarus came out of the tomb. Lazarus came out of the tomb, what? Bound in his grave cloths.

And Jesus said, unbind him. But yet, these sat there. There are any number of things that we can go through and say, this validates it, this validates it, this validates it. The fact that the lie is propagated and all the enemies had to do is say, well, there you go.

You can go back and we'll show you the body. Some people will tell you the women went through the wrong tomb. That's why I tell you never to lose sight of the women. They knew where they had laid him. There's no wrong tomb theory.

All of these things would go to it. It is the reality of the event. Look at what it says. It says, we know who you seek. Do not be afraid, for I know that you're looking for Jesus who has been crucified.

[18 : 46] He is not here, for he has risen. Just as he said. Again, verifies his words. Come and see the place where he was lying.

This is a real event. Even Josephus, the Jewish historian, who was not a believer, in his book, The Antiquities of Jewish Wars, testified.

I believe it was in the 18th chapter. In the third portion of the 18th chapter of his book of Antiquities, Josephus writes that Pilate killed at the swing and the pleading of prominent men, a man named Christ, who Josephus says was the Christ.

But after the third day, this is what Josephus, the secular historian, says. But after the third day, he appeared alive to his disciples, and they continue to testify to it to this day.

There's extra-biblical evidence. Friend, listen to me. Christ really raised from the dead. The resurrection is real.

[19 : 54] It's an actual event. So many times we live as if this life is it. This is all we get. So many times we live like the tomb is the end, like the grave is the period at the end of our lives.

So many times we live as if when we die, it's over. Jesus died and came back and walked out of it and went to heaven to live forever in glory. Amen. See, the power of the resurrection is the hope that we have for our lives.

See, Jesus says in the Gospel of John, he who has believed in me has already passed out of death and into life. That is, his resurrection is our resurrection.

When this old body gets tired and worn out and you lay me in the ground, when you gather around, I've given instructions and I know my family doesn't like it when I give instructions and I've given songs and I've talked about all this and I said, you know, I want to have mine in church.

I want you to put the screen down or whatever kind of screen we have at that time. And I want to preach my own sermon. And they said, that'd be weird just hearing you talk. Well, that's fine because I'll be talking up there.

[20 : 57] Right? I'm not gone. The resurrection is real. It's a step in the glory. Because his tomb is empty. My grave may have bones in it, but I'm not there.

It is a real event. And it's something that changes the course of history. Which leads us to the second thing. Not only the reality of it, but secondly, the rejoicing because of it.

Reality should bring with it rejoicing. Celebrating. Look at what it says. It says the ladies went to the tomb. And as they got to the tomb, they saw the angel.

The angel said, we know who you're looking for, but he's not here. Come and see where he was lying. It says, and then they left the tomb with fear and great joy. Fear and great joy.

What a mixture of emotions to be joyous and afraid at the same time. Now we know when we coincide this with the other gospel accounts that the majority of the women left.

[21 : 59] Mary Magdalene hangs back. She encounters Christ in the garden. She expects him to be a gardener. We understand this. But there's fear and great joy. Mark ends with that statement that they left in fear and amazement.

You ever been joyous and afraid at the same time? Something that is so wonderful that it scares you to the very core of your being. But yet, in the depth of that fear, there's also this great joy because you understand the reality.

Something amazing has happened. And we see these emotions. But it says, as they were leaving, because they were given a word. It wasn't just come and see and stay. You don't go linger. There are many faiths around the world in which you go to a tomb and you linger at the tomb and that's it.

You don't linger at the tomb of Christ. You don't linger at the grave of any great Christian. It says, come and see and then go and tell.

Right? Once you see the reality, the angel says, that it is empty, then go and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead. So they leave because you don't hang out in an empty tomb. There's nothing to see there.

[23 : 01] And since he is not there, you need to be where he is. And it says, now, go and tell. So they leave and they're in fear and joy. And then they meet Christ. All these emotions are running.

But emotions become, feelings become a reality when you actually meet him. And they meet Jesus. And he greets them.

He literally says, shalom. It is, all that is for your peace be extended to you. It's a great word to use that encompasses a whole sentence. Shalom. And they grab a hold of him and they worship him.

They worship him because now feelings, they had felt like this was true. Now they knew it was true. Feelings can be misleading. Encounters with Christ cannot.

So now all of a sudden they know, in a shadow of a doubt, this is true. No more fear. Now it's just joy. But look at this rejoicing. Something that we would miss if we're not careful.

[24 : 00] In verse 10, Jesus said to them, do not be afraid. Two times they're told not to be afraid. Two times. The angel says it and Jesus says it. Go and take word.

Here it is. Look at this rejoicing. Go and take word to my brethren to leave for Galilee and there they will see me. Here's rejoicing.

He's speaking about his disciples, right? We get the great commission. We know they're gathered around. His disciples are there. He says, go and tell my brethren.

Now, the last time we met the disciples, they were forsaken and denying him. All forsook him. Peter denied him three times.

Jesus turns and looks at him. We get that in the Gospels. None are with him. John is at the cross. We see that. John is there, but that's about it.

[24 : 57] He'd been forsaken. He'd been denied. They'd all abandoned him. They were sad. But look at how he describes them. Go and tell my brethren.

My brethren. Friend, just stop right here just for a moment. In case you feel like you have failed Christ so much that he doesn't care about you. At the lowest point in their spiritual life, Christ refers to them as brethren.

Look at the transition in the life of the disciples. Jesus encounters them. John chapter 1 and then John chapter 2.

You've read that the last couple of days if you're going through the reading plan. They come and see. And he calls them as disciples. His disciples went with him to the wedding feast.

Jesus and his disciples. Now, disciples are learners. Anyone sitting at the feet of a teacher or an instructor is a disciple. In biblical times.

[26 : 03] Jesus is the rabbi. They are the disciples. There are a multitude of disciples around the world at that point. These are just some. So they're disciples. There's this large group of disciples. At some point, there are thousands who are disciples.

Sermon on the Mount is kind of the pinnacle of his teaching. And there are thousands gathered around. So he calls them as disciples. And then he spends a night in prayer. The same group of people.

He spends a night in prayer and goes to the Father. And then he comes down and then he appoints 12 apostles. So now they went from disciples to apostles. They have been learners. Now they're going to be people who are sent out to be an apostle.

To be one who is sent out from. So they have become learners. And they went from being learners to being appointed apostles. And then on the night of his betrayal.

John 13, 14, 15, 16. Jesus looks at them in that final discourse. He said, no longer do I call you disciples. Now I call you my friend.

[27 : 02] So look at it. Follow the transition. They went from disciples to apostles to friends. They're a friend of Christ. I mean, the king of kings is calling them his friend.

It's a wonderful thing to have friends in high places, right? He who can feed the multitudes with a prayer. Walk on the waves and call them to see. He who can raise the dead is our friend.

That's a really cool friend. After the resurrection, he calls them brethren. Why? Why?

Because now they're part of the family. They've been blood bought with the lamb. They've been adopted and they can cry out, Abba, Father. Because the price has been paid.

The adoption fee has been covered. Now they're no longer a friend of the family. Now they're in the family. No longer do they have friends in high places.

[27 : 59] Now they have a brother on the throne. And they are heirs with Christ of the spiritual inheritance. They have went from disciples to apostles to friends to brethren.

And in their darkest moment, he calls them brethren. Why? Because the resurrection changes everything. And it leads to rejoicing.

Friend, you may falter and you may fail. There will be times where you stumble. There are times when I do. But because of the price that he has paid for us, he calls us brethren.

For those of us who have put our trust and confidence and hope in he and he alone. It is surrender. But he gave them something to do, right? He didn't just say, you're my brethren. Now go do whatever you want to.

He said, you're my brethren. Now come and meet me. He gave them something to do. We see the rejoicing that is a result of this event. They were celebrating.

[29 : 03] The two disciples walking on Emmaus Road. Remember that? Luke tells us of these two people who were on Emmaus Road. They're kind of downcast. And I know I'm covering a lot of ground.

But it's worth repeating. They're kind of downcast that day. Because a lot has happened. They're confused. The one they were trusting in was dead and buried. Women came back and said the tomb was empty. They didn't know what to do.

So they were going back home. They were going to Emmaus. And they were on their way. And Jesus met them. And they didn't know who he was. They didn't recognize him. And Jesus talked to them. And in the breaking of the bread, their eyes were open.

And they said, did our hearts not burn within us when he talked to us? Was there not something different about the words he said? Was there not rejoicing? Rejoicing. And it says, and they got up that very hour and ran all the way back.

They had taken a long journey. But they made it again just to go back and say, we've seen him. It's worth telling and it's worth rejoicing. See, the resurrection brings rejoicing.

[30 : 01] Number three. Those are good things, right? We see the reality and the rejoicing. Number three, we see the rejection of it in spite of all the proofs. Look at the rejection.

Matthew is the only one who talks to us about the soldiers. And it says, and some of the soldiers went back to the religious leaders and the elders.

Now, this is amazing to us because Roman soldiers really don't report to Jewish leaders. But a Roman soldier who knows that he has just lost his prisoner, even though that prisoner was dead, would report to anybody but his leader.

Because the penalty for failing in service was execution. Remember when the Philippian jail fell down in Acts 16.

Paul and Silas are in the Philippian jail and they're in there having them a worship service in the middle of the night. They're in there singing and they're praising God for everything they're suffering. And then the earthquake comes and the jail cell falls apart and the Philippian jailer wakes up and he pulls out his sword and he's getting ready to kill himself.

[31 : 05] He's going to take his own life because he knows that he just lost his prisoners. Then he will be executed. So he'd rather die at his own hands than to be executed because he failed. And Paul says, do yourself no harm. And this is probably the greatest miracle.

It's not the fact that the jail cells were open. The greatest miracle is Paul declares, we are all still here. Not just Paul and Silas, but every other prisoner too. You show me any other prison that falls down and everybody stays.

Just saying. We are all still here. The soldiers knew that if they failed in this task of guarding even a dead body, they had been entrusted, the seal had been put, the tomb had been secured, and they were in place.

And if they failed, they would die for their penalty. So they go back to the religious leaders and they say, here's the problem. This is what happened. You know, an earthquake came.

We were like dead men. And we fell down. The tomb was open. We get up and there's nobody there. We don't know what happened. And look at what it says. It says in the 13th verse.

[32 : 12] Well, let's go back to the 12th verse. And when they had assembled with the elders and consulted together, they gave a large sum of money to the soldiers. It said, you are to say his disciples came by night and stole him away while we were sleeping.

There's the lie. There's the lie. By the way, you need to understand the world is still trying to explain the empty tomb. Because as Ricky Ricardo used to say, and I love Lucy, there's a lot of explaining to do because the tomb is actually empty.

You don't have to explain things that you can prove, but when you can't prove it, you've got to explain it. Right? There's a lot of explaining. So the world is still trying to explain it. That's why you have all these theories. It's much easier just to accept the truth.

But man doesn't want to accept the truth because if the resurrection is real, then Jesus is real. And if Jesus is real, then I must pay attention to what he said. And if he is real, then my sin is the problem. My life needs to be changed.

And I need to submit my life to him. And he deserves to be Lord and master of my life. That's why man tried to explain it away. Because of the implications that come as a result of it. But look at what it says. I want to tell you something, friend.

[33 : 12] Maybe you've never come to the place where you actually accepted the resurrection. Maybe it seems too far-fetched for you. You reject it long enough and it will continue to cost you more and more and more and more. The rejection of Judas.

Now don't check out on me yet. I want you to pay attention to me. Their rejection of Jesus caused them to pay Judas a little bit. 30 pieces of silver were given to Judas in order to betray him.

That's just a small sum. They didn't like Jesus. They didn't want anything to do with Jesus. They wanted to get rid of Jesus. They rejected Jesus. So they paid Judas a little.

You reject him and it's going to cost you a little. But then Jesus does the unthinkable. He walked out of the tomb. He conquered death, hell, and the grave.

He's not there. He opened the door for all to see. This isn't a private event. This is a public event. He went public with it. Paul says he appeared to over 500. So they paid Judas a little and then all of a sudden the Roman soldiers come back and it says, and now they have to pay a large sum.

[34 : 25] Rejection costs more each time you do it. They paid Judas a little. But in order to reject the resurrection, they had to pay the soldiers a large sum. And then they said, and don't worry, if it comes to the governor's ears, we'll take care of that.

You know what that means? Because Pilate is historically known as being one who takes bribes. So Judas got a little. The soldiers got a lot. Guess who even got more? Probably Pilate.

Friend, the more you reject him, the more it will cost you. And the longer you reject him, the greater you will pay. Until the day comes where no wide variety of money, no amount of money will get you out of the conundrum you find yourself in.

And that will be standing before the resurrected Savior giving an account for your rejection of him. That's not a scare tactic. That's a biblical tactic. They didn't want to believe it, so they paid Judas.

They couldn't believe it, so they paid the soldiers. Rejection is an expensive thing. Because the resurrection of Christ changes everything.

[35 : 38] The believer and unbeliever alike, it changes everything. Where do we stand in light of his resurrection? The whole reason we gather on Sunday is because this is resurrection day.

This is resurrection day. Not just Easter. Every Sunday is resurrection day. By our gathering together on Sundays, we testify to the reality that it took place.

And we stand amazed that the tomb is still empty. The Savior is seated upon his throne. The king is putting his feet upon his footstool, which is the world.

And someday every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus is Lord. How much better to confess now than in a day where the price can no longer be paid.

We see in Matthew 28, verses 1 through 15, the resurrection of Christ. May it be the very thing that changes our life as it's changed all of history.

[36 : 44] And may the question we ask ourselves be, where do we stand in light of it today? Let's pray. Lord, we thank you. Thank you for the empty tomb.

We thank you for the evidence that abounds to the reality of it. Lord, we know that we've just touched the tip of the iceberg. Lord, we know that because the tomb is empty that hope is offered.

The good news of the gospel. That you have overcome death. And that you come and offer us the free gift of eternal life. We ask that our lives will be changed as a result of it.

And Lord, we ask that if there's any here today who have never experienced it, that their hearts will be softened. Their minds will be open. That they will be tired of paying the price for rejection.

And Lord, submit to the lordship of Christ. And we ask it all in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Amen.

[38 : 47] Amen.