

Prayer:

Slide # 1

Theme: *Christ the King*

Outline:

- Chps. 1-2 The Advent of the King. (Proving His LEGAL right to the throne by His genealogy.)
- Chp. 3 The Forerunner of the King and the King's baptism.
- Chp. 4 The Test of the King. (Proving His MORAL right to the throne by not yielding to temptation; and exhibiting His kingdom resume.)
- Chps. 5-7 The Pronouncements of the King. (Proving His JUDICIAL right to the throne as seen in the wisdom of His kingdom teaching.)
- Chps. 8-10 The Power of the King. (Proving His PROPHETICAL right to the throne by fulfilling prophecy.)
- Chps. 11-12 The Rejection of the King.
- Chp. 13 The Parables of the King.
- Chps. 14-16 The Revelations of the King.
- Chps. 17-20 The Instructions of the King.
- Chps. 21-23 Formal Rejection of the King.
- Chps. 24-25 The Predictions of the King.
- Chps. 26-27 The Passion of the King.
- Chp. 28 The Resurrection of the King.**

Early on “Resurrection Sunday” the tomb of Christ was discovered to be EMPTY. This was the greatest of news for the followers of Christ but the worst of news for the enemies of Christ.

Represented among the devoted women followers of Christ – we find they were last at the cross and first at the tomb on Resurrection Sunday. And coming to the tomb early in the morning they found the stone rolled away from the entrance of the tomb, and an angel announcing to them that Jesus ***“is not here; for He is risen, as He said”*** (Mt. 24:6). And then he instructed them to go and tell Christ's disciples.

And as they ran to tell the disciples Jesus personally met them and they worshipped Him. He then also instructed them to go and tell the brethren to go to Galilee where they would see Him (Mt. 28:9-10).

And this is where we pick up the narrative today as seen in Matthew 28:11.

Matthew 28:11–15 (NKJV)

11 Now while they were going, behold, some of the guard came into the city and reported to the chief priests all the things that had happened.

As I have said there was a lot happening on this morning in close succession. When the angel descended from heaven with a great earthquake and rolled back the stone the first ones to know about the supernatural truth of the resurrection was the Roman guards. And they were terrified out of their minds.

Slide # 2

Matthew 28:4 (NKJV)

4 And the guards shook for fear of him, and became like dead men.

Evidently, these guards upon reviving from their state of trauma immediately left the scene and the women shortly thereafter came upon the scene. As the women were then leaving the site of the tomb representatives of the guard evidently were ahead of them and entering into the city reported to the chief priests all the things that had happened.

They reported to the chief priest probably because they had been assigned a role under the Sanhedrin as instructed by Pilate the Roman governor.

Slide # 3

Matthew 27:65–66 (NKJV)

65 Pilate said to them, “You have a guard; go your way, make it as secure as you know how.”

66 So they went and made the tomb secure, sealing the stone and setting the guard.

So as granted by Pilate these soldiers were serving out the request of the chief priests and the religious leaders. Therefore, they immediately reported back to them. And they probably knew this would be much better than reporting directly back to Pilate, because to fail in your duty as a Roman Soldier could well mean you would die for it.

When Peter was supernaturally released from jail by an angel that did not go well for the guards.

Slide # 4

Acts 12:19 (NKJV)

19 But when Herod had searched for him and not found him, he examined the guards and **commanded that they should be put to death**. And he went down from Judea to Caesarea, and stayed there.

When a great earthquake shook the jail at Philippi to where all the doors were sprung loose the Philippian jailer was ready to commit suicide because if the prisoners escaped it would mean certain death for him anyway. Thankfully, none escaped and Paul and Silas shared the gospel with him and he got saved (cf. Acts 16:27-28).

The point is for a Roman guard to loose those they were guarding could very well result in the death penalty. So at all costs a Roman guard would never allow a prisoner to escape or in this case a dead body to escape.

It's almost humorous as they had the full power of the Roman government arrayed just to make sure this dead body did not get out of the tomb because He had predicted it. And then it happened just "as He said".

The Roman guard undoubtedly knew that these religious leaders had influence with Pilate and therefore it made sense to go directly to them about the situation. And as they did so they reported "all things that had happened."

Those things included what is recorded in verses 2-4.

Slide # 5

Matthew 28:2-4 (NKJV)

2 And behold, there was a **great earthquake**; for an **angel of the Lord** descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat on it.

3 His countenance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow.

4 And the guards shook for fear of him, and became like dead men.

These guards witnessed first hand the great earthquake, a glorious heavenly figure rolling the stone away, and his lightening like countenance traumatizing them to the point of passing out. And clearly implied is that they knew the tomb was empty which in context was the great issue they presented to the chief priests. This was their first-hand testimony.

It seems that very possibly the chief priests were informed about the empty tomb even before the disciples got word of it. Thus their worst fears were realized. They had done all they could humanly do to prevent this very thing. And then it happened anyway!

They say, “It is hard to keep a good man down” but here we find it is IMPOSSIBLE to keep the God-Man down! It’s really hard taking on Jesus! You always lose! Want to be a loser – just take on Jesus!

Jesus had made His resurrection the ultimate issue – the ultimate SIGN!

Slide # 6

Matthew 12:38–40 (NKJV)

38 Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered, saying, “Teacher, we want to see a sign from You.”

39 But He answered and said to them, “An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah.

40 For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

The clear implication is that just as Jonah was delivered on the third day so the Son of Man would be delivered from the heart of the earth [from the grave] on the third day. Clearly, these religious leaders understood Christ’s prediction that He would be raised to life on the third day.

Slide # 7

Matthew 27:62–63 (NKJV)

62 On the next day, which followed the Day of Preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees gathered together to Pilate,

63 saying, “Sir, we remember, while He was still alive, how that deceiver said, ‘After three days I will rise.’

Here it was the third day; and here the guard was telling them all that had happened! They had to be in shock! And yet in their full rebellion they would not submit to the truth of it.

This is an example of people who KNOW full well the truth and yet refuse to believe it. You see to truly believe in the Bible sense of saving faith is to personally accept and yield to God's truth. It is not enough to just intellectually know the truth.

Even the demons believe on an intellectual level and yet they are followers of Satan (Ja. 2:19).

Full blown apostasy is sinning with your eyes wide open. Apostates on one level know the truth but then abandon it. Full blown apostasy sins against "full blown" light for which there is no remedy. People are accountable for the light given and to whom much is given, much is required (cf. Lk. 12:48).

Balaam was a false prophet in the Old Testament. He wanted to curse Israel, but God wouldn't allow it. The sovereignty of God over the false prophet is shown in the fact that some wonderful prophecies came through Balaam entirely in spite of himself. His own confession was that he was a man who hears the words of God, has knowledge of the Most High, sees the vision of the Almighty and "**falls down, with eyes wide open**" (Num. 24:4, 16). Yet Balaam is clearly depicted as a false prophet who while having knowledge of the truth never truly accepted it (cf. 2 Pet. 2:15-17; Jude 11; Rev. 2:14).

Judas served in the role of "apostle". He had first-hand knowledge of the truth seeing the light up close and in person like few others have ever known. Yet Jesus said of the betrayer that it would have been better for him "if he had not been born" (Mt. 26:24). He flagrantly sinned against the truth with his eyes wide open.

In Matthew 12 the religious leaders ascribed to Satan the miracles that Jesus did in the power of the Spirit. This sin against the light was so egregious that Jesus said, "the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven men." (Mt. 12:31)

Hebrews 6 describes those who have had intimate contact with God and the things of God and yet apostatize from it. The writer says for those who sin against this level of light it is impossible to renew them again to repentance. They have crossed the point of no return.

In like manner in Hebrews 10 willful rejection of *“the knowledge of the truth”* puts one in the position of rejecting the only God-provided sacrifice for sins and facing *“a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries.”* (Heb. 10:26-27). Sinning against the light of God’s truth in such a flagrant manner amounts to full blown apostasy against “full blown” light.

Peter says for those who have known “the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” and then to reject it...

Slide # 8

2 Peter 2:21 (NKJV)

21 For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them.

What we have represented in these religious leaders is full blown apostasy that is completely closed to God’s truth no matter how strong or clear the evidence may be. They knew full well the truth of the empty tomb (and by implication of the resurrection) but yet refused to accept it.

At the foot of the cross they said...

Slide # 9

Matthew 27:41–42 (NKJV)

41 Likewise the chief priests also, mocking with the scribes and elders, said,

42 “He saved others; Himself He cannot save. If He is the King of Israel, let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe Him.

How about if He rises from the dead on the third day as He predicted He would and which they were fully aware? How about if He does one better than coming down from the cross, but rather coming out of the grave?

This proves they were absolute total hypocritical LIARS! It didn’t matter how much evidence there was – they were steeled in their rebel unbelief! There is never enough evidence for hardened unbelief!

Slide # 10

Luke 16:30–31 (NKJV)

30 And he said, ‘No, father Abraham; but if one goes to them from the dead, they will repent.’

31 But he said to him, ‘If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead.’ ”

The evidence is sufficient! The testimony of the Word is sufficient! If people won’t believe the powerful testimony of the Holy Spirit working through the Word they would not be convinced even by a resurrection from the dead. These religious leaders prove this. They did not lack evidence – they just did not want to accept it.

The heart that is hardened to God will not be persuaded by any miracle or by any amount of evidence, no matter how compelling.

– **John MacArthur**

12 When they had assembled with the elders and consulted together, they gave a large sum of money to the soldiers,

This was a crisis so they immediately convened the entire supreme court known as the Sanhedrin to deal with the situation (cf. Mt. 12:14; 22:15; 27:1, 7). They quickly came up with a conspiracy scheme involving bribe money by which they might deceive the public. They wanted to frame the narrative and to ensure that their propaganda got out they bribed these first-hand witnesses (namely the guards) with a LARGE sum of money.

They say every man has his price, well to ensure that these soldiers told the lie they had fabricated required a LARGE amount of money. It would take a large sum because Roman Soldiers would never easily betray themselves by saying they were negligent in keeping their post. That would be to admit the unthinkable negligence which could result in the death penalty. Only a very large sum of money could sway Roman soldiers to betray their honor in this way.

How much money was involved we are not specifically told – only that it was enough to buy them off. The word “money” (Gk. argurion) literally means “silver” and is the same word used in Matthew 26:15 in reference to the betrayal money given to Judas.

Judas was bought off rather inexpensively as they paid him thirty pieces of silver which was the price of a slave (Ex. 21:32; Zech. 11:12-13; Mt. 26:15; 27:3).

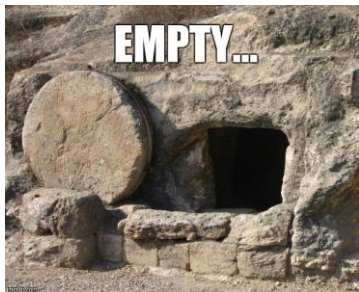
This just proves how corrupt these religious leaders really were. They were not interested in the TRUTH, rather it was all about their own power, influence, and position and no price was too high to protect their own selfish interests.

For these religious leaders to admit the truth of the empty tomb as clear evidence of the resurrection – exactly as Christ had prophesied (Mt. 16:21; 17:22-23; 20:17-19), would have been to acknowledge the claims of Christ as true and to admit their grievous guilt as having committed the greatest crime in the annals of history.

To admit their guilt and align with the truth of Christ would have been repentance – which is a change of mind that acknowledges your sin and aligns with God's truth. But there was no way they were about to do that. Instead, they concocted a huge lie to try and explain away the empty tomb.

But here is the MAJOR POINT! No one, not even Christ's very worst enemies ever denied that the tomb was empty!

Slide # 11



No one denied the fact of the empty tomb! The only question was how to explain it! That was the great issue!

The empty tomb demands an explanation! And that is true to this day.

On the one side, you have Bible prophecy in Psalm 16:10 written 1000 years before the time of Christ saying, that the Holy One would not see corruption; and you have the Person of Christ plainly prophesying that He would rise on the third day. An empty tomb is totally consistent with this.

On the other side, you have this absurd claim that the religious leaders hastily concocted and then bribed the soldiers to say.

13 saying, “Tell them, ‘His disciples came at night and stole Him away while we slept.’

This lie was so ridiculous as to not even be a good lie! It has no credence whatsoever! But this is what happens when you have nothing! You come up with sheer foolishness and then try and sell it. They had to come up with some explanation and this is the best these great thinkers could come up with.

Let’s start with the disciples. Realize that trying to rob a grave itself could incur the death penalty, but then defying Rome in breaking a Roman seal and defying a Roman guard would mean certain death.

Did the disciples ever show such courage? When they came to arrest Jesus all the disciples forsook Jesus and fled into the night (Mt. 26:56). Peter who spoke so boldly then in cowardly fashion denied Jesus three times in the crucible of the high priest’s courtyard. None of the disciples (other than John) were even at the cross; none were at His burial; and after the crucifixion we find them hiding behind bolted doors for fear of the Jews (Jn. 20:19).

I submit to you this cowardly band was in no way up to even thinking about trying to overcome a Roman guard and rob the tomb. They didn’t even have the resurrection on their radar. When Jesus was dead they thought it was over. When Jesus on Resurrection day talked to the two disciples on the Emmaus Road they spoke of the crucifixion and death of Jesus and then said, “we were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel.” (Lk. 24:21). They were hoping this, but now that hope was gone!

It is crazy to even think the disciples were even thinking about taking the body of Christ – and to what end. Were they going to stage a resurrection? They were not even contemplating such a thing!

And the line about the disciples doing this in the middle of the night while the soldiers slept is equally preposterous.

Think about this for just a moment! If you are so sound asleep as to allow this to happen then how could you possibly know it was the disciples who did it? Imagine one of the soldiers in a court of law swearing to tell the truth before a jury: “Sir can you describe to us what happened while you were sound asleep?” Of course not! If he was sound asleep he has no knowledge of what happened. This story is self-contradicting on its face!

In short order the whole thing falls apart!

Very possibly there was 12 to 16 soldiers involved here. Are we to believe that ALL the soldiers were sound asleep – all of them at the same time?

Are we to believe that all of these soldiers would be so negligent and cavalier as to put their lives on the line in this way?

Are we to believe that ALL of these soldiers were so sound asleep that they would not be aroused by the noise that would be involved in moving this huge stone away from the entryway of the tomb?

How is it that they managed to get the body out of the grave clothes so neatly without disturbing them? They must have worked amazingly fast and very quietly.

If they knew it was the disciples then why were the disciples not promptly arrested for robbing the tomb?

And if they knew the body was taken why did they not make diligent search until it was found? All they had to do to stamp out the message of the resurrection was to produce the dead body. They didn't even try to find the dead body, knowing full well it was gone from the tomb with the grave clothes fully intact remaining behind!

This concocted story is beyond ridiculous and with a little bit of thinking and investigation is shown to present a whole bundle of absurdities!

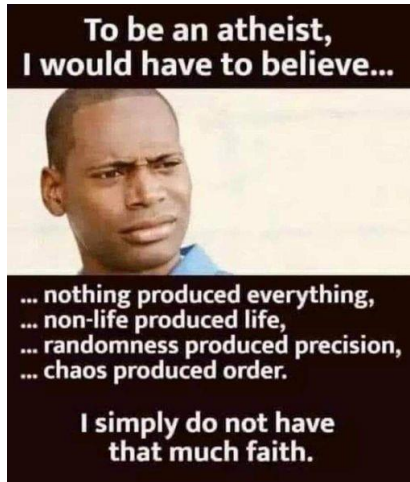
Various theories have been put forth to try and provide an explanation for the empty tomb. One theory is that the women went to the wrong tomb but what about the disciples who also went to the same tomb and saw the grave clothes? Then there is the swoon theory that says Christ was not fully dead when they put Him in the grave and that somehow He revived in the tomb and managed to escape.

A plain, simple understanding of these evidences of the resurrection of Jesus answers all of these theories, and shows they take far more faith to believe than the Biblical account does. – **David Guzik**

How true that is. Unbelief is more willing to accept far-out theories with no factual basis than it is to accept the straightforward clear evidence of the truth. Take for example the lie of atheistic evolution.

It has NO basis in logic or fact, and yet multitudes of people believe in it and in fact, they call it “science”.

Slide # 12



The evidence for the resurrection of Christ is compelling – starting with the historical reality of the empty tomb. With all the theories and attempts to explain it away, there is no better explanation than it was the fulfillment of Christ’s own prophecy that He would rise from the dead on the third day.

14 And if this comes to the governor’s ears, we will appease him and make you secure.”

When it comes to lying and hiding the truth one lie begets another and there is no end of it. “Truth is self-verifying, a lie has to be supported by countless other lies.” (William MacDonald).

These religious leaders were all “players”. They had manipulated Pilate into ordaining the crucifixion of Christ when he didn’t want to and they were now prepared to influence him in regard to this conspiracy as well. They were pulling out all the stops to circulate the lie that the body had been stolen by the disciples as an explanation for the missing body.

And if the governor got word that the soldiers had let this dead man get away they would “appease him”. How, they would do this we are not told. Maybe they would buy him off too or maybe they would threaten him in some way. The assurance is that they would protect these soldiers – if only they did as they were told and propagated the lie of the stolen body.

15 So they took the money and did as they were instructed; and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day.

Matthew was writing 20-30 years after the fact and the lie was still being circulated that the body of Christ had been stolen by His disciples.

It is interesting that after His resurrection Jesus appeared only to believers. The unbelieving world only saw the evidence of the resurrection and not the resurrected Christ Himself.

It is like God presents enough evidence for people to believe but not so much that they are forced to believe. And people in their fallenness are very prone to believe a lie.

Joseph Goebbels was Hitler's propaganda chief. He is credited with saying, "If you tell a lie big enough and keep repeating it, people will eventually come to believe it."

This is the devil's thing. Jesus said of him, "When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it." (Jn. 8:44).

Slide # 13

Revelation 12:9 (NKJV)

9 So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, **who deceives the whole world**; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

The devil is a liar and a deceiver and he is good at it. This is what life is about. It is a battle for the mind – it is a truth war. The devil is out to deceive and God presents the truth.

There is an old saying that says, "A lie gets half way round the world before truth gets it's boots on." It is true that lies have speed, but truth has endurance. Lies ultimately do have an expiration date. They will all be brought to light in eternity before God.

"Justin [Martyr] says that such stories were still being actively disseminated in the middle of the second century (*Dialogues* 108). The fact of such propaganda in itself indicates that it could not be denied that the tomb was empty; what was questioned was how it came to be empty." (R.T. France)

In a turn about sort of way the lie of these religious leaders turns out to be a great apologetic for the truth of the gospel.

The truth of the resurrection is so absolute that even a lie against it helps prove it. Whether the testimony is from Jesus' friends or His enemies, the same conclusion is inevitable. No other historical event is so thoroughly attested by sound evidence as is the resurrection of Jesus Christ. – **John MacArthur**

And the concerns of the religious leader proved to be valid – if the truth of the resurrection got out that would be a radical thing that changed the trajectory of history – and it did – even reaching into the core of the priesthood in Jerusalem.

Slide # 14

Acts 6:7 (NKJV)

7 Then the word of God spread, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and **a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith.**

The evidence was too strong – even many of the priests in Jerusalem [the very place it happened] came to believe.

The fact of the empty tomb is compelling evidence of the truth of the resurrection. It is not all of the evidence but an important part of it.

Consider this: When the disciples began to preach the truth of the resurrected Christ they did not begin in some far-off obscure place. No, rather they started right in the heart of Jerusalem – the very place where Christ had been crucified and buried. They could not possibly have done this had the tomb still been occupied. Everyone knew it was empty and their preaching provided the reason WHY!

It is very hard to fight against God's truth! As Jesus told Saul (turned Paul) "It is hard for you to kick against the goads." (Acts 9:5). The truth is stubborn – it just won't go away.

50 days after the resurrection of Christ, Jesus sent the Holy Spirit empowering His people to be His witnesses. Peter preached on the Day of Pentecost and 3000 people got saved. So much for doing away with Jesus Christ.

And then in chapter 3 Peter in the name of Jesus healed a man who was lame from birth. He went walking and leaping, and praising God (Acts 3:8-9). All the people were filled with wonder and amazement. As Peter addressed the crowd about 5000 came to believe. The religious leaders promptly arrested Peter and John being greatly disturbed that they preached “in Jesus the resurrection from the dead” (Acts 4:2).

This was turning out to be a problem that would just not go away. These Jewish leaders had long been trying to get rid of Jesus. They accused Him of doing miracles by the power of Satan (Mt. 12). They accused Him of being a friend of sinners. They accused Him of being a lawbreaker and violating the Sabbath. They accused Him of blasphemy for claiming to be God’s Son. They perverted justice and all manner of law to have Jesus arrested and then put forth on trumped-up charges. They blackmailed Pilate to get the verdict of crucifixion. And then they used the government to do everything possible to keep Jesus in the grave. And then they corruptly bribed the soldiers to lie. And yet, here just a few weeks after the resurrection thousands of people in Jerusalem were coming to believe in the risen Christ.

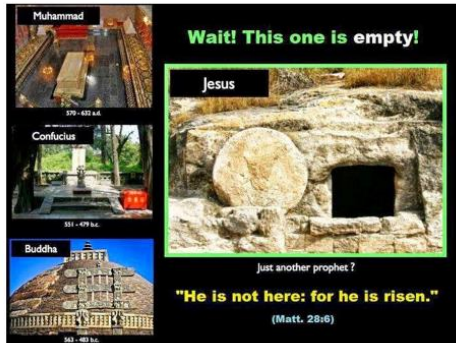
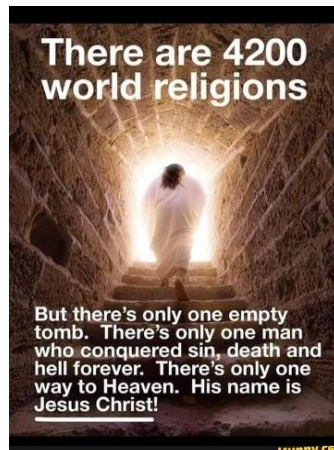
It's hard to keep a good man down and impossible to keep the God-Man down!

Matthew 28:11-15 presents the story of two lines that continues to this day. One line presents the religious leaders and their bribed accomplices presenting a LIE to try and suppress the truth. The other line presents the witness of devoted followers. The spread of the lie is countered by the spread of the truth – which will be further dealt with in the great commission which rounds out the book.

This is what the whole history of the world is about. It is a battle between the spread of Satan’s lie through his people and the spread of God’s truth through His people. This is the great issue in life!

Slide # 15



Slide # 16**Slide # 17**

Years ago a man by the name of G.B. Hardy wrote a book about life and destiny which was titled, “Countdown: A Time to Choose”. In the book he noted that there are essentially two questions that need to be answered with regard to destiny.

- 1) Has anyone ever defeated death? And 2) If so, did he make a way for us to do it also?

His answer was “Yes” to both of these questions as found in the resurrected Christ. Yes, Jesus has defeated death and yes in conquering death He has made a way for us – and it is through faith in Him.

When the Sanhedrin arrested Peter and John and demanded an explanation for the healing of the man born lame. Peter then went on the offensive.

Slide # 18

Acts 4:10–12 (NKJV)

10 let it be known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by Him this man stands here before you whole.

11 This is the 'stone which was rejected by you builders, which has become the chief cornerstone.' [Fulfillment of prophecy.]

12 Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."

Matthew builds to the climax of Matthew 27-28. And in this climax we have the FULL gospel. The word gospel means "good news" and it is the story of Who Jesus is What He has done to provide salvation.

In Matthew 27 we find that at the moment of Christ's death the veil in front of the holy of holies in the temple was torn from top to bottom showing that we now have access to God on the basis of Christ's finished work on the cross (27:51). Jesus paid it all. We can now be reconciled to God on the basis of Christ's work on the cross. This is grace – God's unmerited favor. This is the truth of Christ being our Savior. But that is not the full story.

The rest of the story is found in Matthew 28 where Christ is raised from the dead as Lord over all. The cross presents Christ as Savior - the resurrection presents Him as Lord and this is a package. Savior and Lord goes together with His death and resurrection. As Savior He died for all our sins – as Lord over all He arose again. This is the full gospel that must be believed.

Paul in 1 Cor. 15 says the gospel is that Christ died for our sins, was buried and rose again (1 Cor. 15:1-4). As our Savior He died for all our sins – as our living Lord He arose again the third day. A saving faith believes on Him as personal Savior and Lord.

The resurrection of Jesus is fundamentally connected to His LORDSHIP.

Slide # 19**Romans 10:9 (ESV)**

9 because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

The empty tomb is a Lordship issue! This was the fundamental problem for the religious leaders. They could not accept the Lordship reality of the resurrection!

However, true followers do. True believers believe on Jesus as personal Lord. As the women met Jesus on resurrection morning they worshipped Him as seen in Matthew 28:9. The resurrection of Christ is a Lordship issue and God's promise is...

Romans 10:13 (NKJV)

13 For "whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved."

In salvation we call on Jesus as Lord – that is we believe on Him and openly confess Him for Who He is as Lord and Savior.

What say you? Who is the Lord Jesus Christ to you? Is He your Savior and Lord? Have you openly confessed Him as such? We believe in our hearts and we confess with our mouths! Have you in faith confessed Him?

Now is the accepted time! Come and talk with us. Openly confess Christ as your Savior and Lord today.

Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved!