

## **When the Grave Gives Up – The Resurrection of Jesus Christ**

### **Matthew 28:1-6**

#### **Introduction: The Grave is Supposed to be the End**

The grave is supposed to be the end. The stone is supposed to stay in place. The dead are supposed to stay dead.

We are here today to celebrate Easter or the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. Jesus went to the cross willingly and died to pay our penalty of death and hell. We deserve to pay the price of death and hell, but Jesus paid it all for us. He died on that cross. His body was buried in a tomb. When someone dies, they are supposed to stay dead.

But not this time. Because this is Jesus Christ. The Son of God. The Lamb of God slain from the foundation of the world. The One who said He would rise again—and did.

Today, we celebrate the one and only resurrection in history that forever changed eternity. The resurrection of Jesus Christ. And this morning, we'll see what happens when the grave gives up. Death versus Jesus Christ. The grave versus Jesus Christ. Who wins?

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### **I. The Grave Couldn't Keep What God Had Claimed**

#### **""Matthew 28:1-2**

In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre. 2 And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it.""

#### **""Matthew 28:3-6**

His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow: 4 And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men. 5 And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. 6 He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay.""

Jesus didn't sneak out of the tomb. He didn't have His disciples dig Him out. The grave gave Him up—because it couldn't hold what was never its to keep. Death and hell cannot hold God himself. Jesus is God Almighty. He's not the Father. He's not the Holy Spirit. He is the Son of God and God in the flesh.

Death and hell gave up. Why? Jesus is too much for death and hell. He's too powerful. He won. Thank God. He is not here. He is risen!

**""Psalm 16:10**

For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.""

He was always coming out of there. That's all the way back in Psalm Chapter 16. That perfect and holy Scripture was written about 1,000 years before it happened. The tomb wasn't a prison for Jesus—it was a proving ground.

**Application:** When God claims something for life, death has no authority to keep it. When God gave you everlasting life, hell has no hold over you now. Jesus is proving all of these things with his resurrection.

Point 1 is the grave couldn't keep what God had claimed. Death gave up. Hell gave up. The grave gave up. It's not possible to hold down Jesus Christ. He will always arise to the top because he's at the top.

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## **II. The Resurrection of Jesus Christ Was Promised and Precise**

**""Matthew 12:40**

For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.""

Hell is in the heart of the earth. Psalm 16 and Acts 2 says that his soul was not left in hell. Jesus himself knew what would happen from eternity. Three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. When Jesus died, his body was buried in a tomb and his soul went to hell just as the Bible says.

Our penalty for sin is death and hell. Jesus died on the cross and his soul went to hell for three days and three nights. The heart of the earth is the center of the earth. That is the location of hell. And this happened exactly like Jesus said it would happen before it happened.

**""Matthew 16:21**

From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day.""

Jesus died on Thursday at the ninth hour (approximately 3 PM)—exactly when the Passover lamb was killed. He was in the tomb and his soul was in hell. When?

- Thursday night
- Friday (day and night)

- Saturday (day and night)

And He rose after the third night and with the sunrise Sunday morning—just as He said. His death couldn't have happened on Wednesday because that would be four nights. Friday would be two nights. God spells this out for us very simply. He died on a Thursday and arose from the dead on a Sunday – which is the first day of the week.

**""Luke 24:6-7**

He is not here, but is risen: remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee, 7 Saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.""

He arose on the third day after he was buried. Friday, Saturday, Sunday is the third day.

**Application:** When God says something will happen, it doesn't matter what the world says. It will happen—exactly on time. God promised Jesus would be delivered into the hands of sinful men, be crucified, and rise again the third day. And he did exactly that.

People in today's world contact me often wanting to argue that the Bible is not real. God is not real. Jesus didn't exist. Hell isn't real. People tell me: "Hell isn't real." Look, Jesus went to hell. It's real. Hell couldn't hold him. It's real.

Your beliefs doesn't make something true. "Well, I don't believe in God" doesn't make God go away. He's there. "I don't believe in hell" doesn't make hell cease to exist. You aren't God. He made everything. What he says is the truth. He said Jesus would die, be buried, and arise from the dead and it happened.

Point 2 is the resurrection of Jesus Christ was promised and precise.

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### **III. The Grave Gave Up Because the Price Was Paid**

**""Romans 4:23-25**

Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; 24 But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; 25 Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.""

Jesus didn't do this for himself. God didn't need to do this for himself. Understand that. The grave gave up because Jesus paid the price. He was delivered for OUR OFFENSES. Not for his own. He's perfect. He was raised again for OUR JUSTIFICATION. He won. We only win through him.

**""1 Corinthians 15:16-17**

For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: 17 And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins.""

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is not a footnote to the Gospel. It is the Gospel. The death. The burial. And the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The resurrection is the seal of God's approval. It's the final stamp on the Gospel.

- His death paid the price.
- His resurrection proved the payment was accepted.

If Jesus, on his own, wasn't enough to pay for the sins of the whole world, he wouldn't have risen from the dead. And if he didn't arise from the dead, the word of God would be broken and none of us would be here right now. If the word of God is ever broken, that would mean God lied and he would be an evil God and we would be dead and suffering.

But, thank God that he is not a liar. He cannot lie. Jesus arose from the dead.

The grave couldn't hold Him because sin had been paid for. God's justice was satisfied. His wrath was appeased. It was finished. The free gift of everlasting life has been paid for in full. It wasn't free to Jesus. He suffered for us. Jesus paid it all. 100% of it has been paid. You do nothing else to earn heaven. Jesus earned it for you.

**Application:** You don't need to wonder if God loves you. You don't need to try to earn your way into heaven. The receipt has already been stamped. Your debt has been paid. Your old account has been settled. Sin is no longer in your account. Debt free IF you have believed in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Point 3 is the grave gave up because the price was paid. It's paid in full. Jesus came out of death and hell.

Jesus is God in the flesh. He was made just like us. He had a will just like us. He had a body and a soul and a spirit just like us. His body and soul died. His body and soul were buried. His body and soul were resurrected. He was dead but now is alive forevermore.

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## **IV. The Grave Gave Up What It Had to—But It'll Take You If You Reject Him**

**""John 5:28-29**

Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his

voice, 29 And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.""

**So, Jesus paid it all for you. But you have to trust in Jesus in a single moment of your life. You must be born again or born of the Spirit. This is the good you must do. You must believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.**

If you reject Jesus your entire life and never put your trust in him, the grave will take you down and will not let go of you. Death and hell will overtake you. It doesn't have to be that way, though. Jesus can save you today. He has that power.

If you simply trust what Jesus did for you to save you from your sins, you have an amazing future ahead of you. But, if not, you have a horrible end waiting for you. There is a resurrection of life and a resurrection of damnation.

**""Revelation 20:13-15**

And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. 14 And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. 15 And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.""

Your name is permanently written in the book of life the moment you are saved. The rest will be cast into the lake of fire.

Jesus came out of the grave because He is life. Jesus says, "I am the resurrection and the life." But the grave will still take every man and woman who rejects that life. Reject Jesus. Reject life. Reject Jesus. Reject the resurrection. Believe in Jesus. Accept life. Believe in Jesus. Accept the resurrection of life.

You will rise too. Everyone will. But the question is—**which resurrection will you be part of? The resurrection of life or the resurrection of damnation? Choose life. Do not choose damnation. Reject Jesus and you will be damned to hell.**

**Call to Action:** You don't need to fear death—if you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. But if you don't believe, death is only the beginning. Hell will come after. Torment will follow. And the lake of fire is your future. Why go that way? You don't want to.

Point 4 is the grave gave up Jesus Christ because it had to. But the grave will overtake you and keep you if you reject the Savior.

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## **V. The Resurrection of Jesus Christ Gives Us the Victory**

**""1 Corinthians 15:54-57**

So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. 55 O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? 56 The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. 57 But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.""

The only way for you to be victorious is through the risen Savior. He already showed you that he is the Savior of the world. He died, was buried, and arose from the dead.

Because the grave gave Him up, we have:

- Victory over death
- Victory over fear
- Victory over sin
- Victory over hell

**Application:** The empty tomb isn't just a historical fact—it's a personal guarantee. He wasn't there. The tomb was empty. You don't have to be afraid of hell any more. Death cannot hold you because of Jesus Christ. All 100% of your sins are forgiven at the moment you trust that Jesus can save you. Do you believe that Jesus Christ can save you?

If you do, you have victory. Why? All because of Jesus. Not because of you and your life. Jesus is the way. He is the only way.

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## **Closing Invitation To Be Saved:**

If you're not saved—believe today.

**""Acts 16:30-31**

And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? 31 And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.""

If you are saved—start living like it. Don't walk around like Jesus is still in the tomb. He got up. He walked out. And one day—so will you. Believe that. Trust the Bible.

## **Final Charge to the Church:**

They sealed the tomb, but the seal couldn't stop Him. They set a guard, but the guard couldn't stop Him. Hell threw its worst, and Jesus still walked out. This is what happens **when the grave gives up.**

**Anyone or anything that comes up against Jesus will lose. That's the truth. That's the reality. He wins. You can either choose today to be on his side or you can choose the other side.**

I suggest you choose Jesus. He is the only one to die, to be buried, and to arise from the dead. All the other prophets in all the other religions are dead. The resurrection of Jesus Christ proves his power. Buddha is dead. Muhammad is dead. Confucius is dead. All the evolutionists are dead. All the atheists are dead.

Adam is alive. Noah is alive. Moses is alive. Sarah is alive. Joshua is alive. Rahab the harlot is alive. King Saul who committed suicide is alive. Ananias and Sapphira are alive. Paul is alive. Peter is alive. John is alive. Why? Jesus Christ is alive. That's why.

You can visit tombs all over the world. You'll find bones. The tomb of Jesus? He is not there. No bones. No body. Nothing. He got up and walked out. That's what happens when the grave gives up. Don't you want to get up out of your tomb one day? Don't you want to walk on out of there?

You will if you have believed in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Let's pray.