

Easter - He is Risen! He is Risen Indeed!

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- [0 : 0 0] Matthew chapter 28, and in Matthew 28 we'll be looking at the first 15 verses. 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.
- And behold, a severe earthquake had occurred, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled away the stone and sat upon it.
- And his appearance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow. The guards shook for fear of him and became like dead men.
- 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 and see the place where he was lying.
- [1 : 1 4] 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, 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 priest all that had happened.
- [2 : 1 9] 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 asleep.
- And if this should come to the governor's ears, we will 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, and is to this day. Thank you.
- And a little later on, we'll ask Gary to come back, and we'll read the account that is given by Dr. Luke in his gospel. The resurrection of Christ is a matter of record for all four of the gospels, and each one has a little different take on it.
- There are some commonalities that all of them have, but each presents a little different slant than do the others. And, in fact, that is what one might well expect.
- [3 : 3 4] So there is no surprise there. But as we meander over these four accounts, there are a number of things that strike me as we look at them. And the last one that Gary just finished with in verse 13, it's just downright comical.
- You know, there are almost no lengths that a person is willing to go to if they refuse to acknowledge the truth.

You can manufacture lies that just won't quit. And now we are dealing in our own culture, present day, with something that is called fake news.

You keep hearing more and more about that. Well, fake news is nothing more than the old lie, just under another name. But when one is, for some reason, unwilling to acknowledge the truth, you've got to come up with some kind of an explanation.

You have to manufacture something. If you're just unwilling to go with the pure, simple, naked, unadulterated truth, then you've got to engage in some imagination and some creativity.

[4 : 49] And what is it going to be? Now, they've got to explain here in Matthew 28, they've got to explain the absence of this corpse. Because corpses just don't come to life, get up and walk away.

Well, ordinarily they don't. But this corpse was different. And unless these chief priests and rulers are willing to acknowledge, yes sir, no two ways about it, Jesus of Nazareth, the one we enticed Pontius Pilate to crucify, has come back to life and he has been raised from the dead.

No doubt. Oh, God forbid. We can't let that go down. Well, what's it going to be? We've got to have some kind of an explanation. And then somebody came up with what they probably considered a brilliant idea.

And you know, most of the brilliant ideas that foster lies are rather asinine. And here is another. What's the explanation going to be?

We've got to give an answer. The body isn't there. And you've got Roman guards who are standing watch to make sure that nobody comes and pilfers that body.

[6 : 19] So what they come up with is this cockamamie story. The authorities tell the guards what they are to say. And you are to tell the authorities that while you were sleeping, his disciples came and stole away the body.

Now, that's not going to make you look good. In fact, it's going to put you in jeopardy. But I'll tell you what. We've got some connections and we'll pull a few strings and make sure that the authorities don't come down on you too hard for dereliction of duty.

We'll cover your tail. And it never occurred to them that somebody, somebody, just on the basis of common sense, is going to ask the question, well, if you were asleep, how do you know what happened?

How do you know that someone came and stole away the body? And how do you know that it was his disciples who did that? Now, it just goes to show you that most lies are really quite ridiculous.

Nothing works like the pure, good old-fashioned truth works. Sometimes, it hurts. Sometimes, it's embarrassing.

[7 : 41] Sometimes, it may even be costly. But there is absolutely nothing like it. It is our most precious possession.

The truth. Truth is the what-ness of life. Truth is that which corresponds to reality. The lie is what is not.

Truth is what is. And here, we have this set forth in dramatic terms about this whole resurrection event. A statement has been made by a number who are in position to account for things like these that there is more evidence to demonstrate that Jesus Christ was raised from the dead than there is to demonstrate that Abraham Lincoln was assassinated at the Ford Theater in 1865.

And yet, there are those who have no difficulty at all in believing that about Lincoln, but they have great difficulty in believing about the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

And in a sense, I can understand that because for dead people to come back to life again is completely outside our purview of experience. I've never noted that.

[8 : 59] I've never seen anyone who's come back to life again. So, in a sense, you can understand their saying, and this, by the way, is the position of those whom we would call naturalists.

And naturalists believe that there is no such thing as the supernatural. There's only the natural. And it isn't natural for dead bodies to come back to life.

Therefore, they define the resurrection of Christ out of existence by just definition. There is no such thing as the resurrection.

And if there is no such thing as the resurrection of the dead, then where does that put Christ? Dead. Not resurrected. And this is the argument that the apostle Paul sets forth, which time forbidding, time not forbidding, we will be looking at that briefly as well.

It isn't recorded here. I think it's in Mark's gospel. I'm not sure. I've done a lot of comparison between Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, and they all speak of the resurrection, but each one, as I mentioned, says something a little bit different.

[10 : 06] And it was just kind of amusing as I read one of these accounts. You see, what happened was when they took the body of Christ down from the cross, it was late afternoon, and the Jewish Sabbath was fast approaching, and the law forbade the existence of dead bodies on the cross being there on the Sabbath day because it would ceremonially contaminate the Sabbath.

So it was imperative that they be able to get the body down off the cross and get it in the tomb before sunset that day.

That meant it required a real hurried up affair because in these days when they embalmed a body, they didn't do it. The Jewish method of embalming wasn't anything like the ancient Egyptians did years ago, and it certainly wasn't anything like we do today when we embalm the body by replacing the blood in the body with embalming fluid and all of that.

But what they did was they smothered the body, they washed the body, and then they smothered the body and lathered it with aloes and spices and myrrh and things that were designed to be a preservative and an ointment, and it also helped to repel odor, sweet-spelling ointments.

And this could be purchased in large quantities, and it was quite expensive, but it was reserved only for occasions like this. Well, the problem was this burial had to be such a hurried-up situation because of the encroaching Sabbath that they did not have the usual amount of time needed to prepare the body for burial.

[11 : 53] So they just had to do a stopgap-type thing with the idea that when the Sabbath is over, we'll go back and finish the job. Meanwhile, that was the best they could do.

So, the body has been buried, the Sabbath is over, and a couple of women are on their way back to the tomb. And it just strikes me as kind of humorous because it isn't until they perhaps get about halfway there and one of them turns to the other and says, oh, we forgot something.

Here they've got, they're probably carrying baskets of these myrrh and aloes and all of these things. And by the way, as an aside, remember the gifts that the wise men brought? Gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

The gold is fit for a king, for it was the king of the Jews who was born. But the frankincense and the myrrh, those are burial perfumes.

Significant, is it not? And 33 years later they would be used. We don't know if they were the same ones. But the women are on the way to finish the job. And one of them turns to the other and says, oh, we completely forgot.

[13 : 16] How are we going to get into the body? Who's going to roll away the stone for us? And the account tells us, I think it's Mark's gospel, we'll not take time to go there, but the account tells us that the stone was very large.

This was a huge stone. It was round. It was probably about a foot thick and likely about five or six feet in diameter.

stone. This was a big round stone. And it fit in a trough before the cave, before the actual burial site.

It fit in a trough that was just wide enough to accommodate that stone. And the trough was cut into limestone and it was laid in there at an angle. So you would roll the stone down this little grade and it would close the entrance of the cave where the body was.

And in order to get in there, it would take a considerable amount of strength to roll that massive stone back up the incline far enough so that you could get in.

[14 : 28] Then you would have to block it so that it wouldn't come back on you when you were inside. And they never thought of that. Who's going to roll away the stone? When we get there, we won't be able to do what we came for because when they got there, an angel had rolled away the stone and was perched on it.

This is so cool, I tell you. I really enjoy this. And the angel just sitting there biding his time and these women walk up. They have no idea it's an angel.

They refer to him as a young man in a white robe. And that's the way these individuals are dressed because they had human-like characteristics. They just looked like men. And interestingly enough, these angels are always portrayed as young men.

Now, I'm just a dab offended at that. I don't know why an angel can't have a few years on it, but they always seem to be young men.

And one account talks about an angel, another talks about two angels, angels. And some see a discrepancy there, and I don't think that that's really necessary at all. Sometimes it just means one angel did all the talking and the other one was standing there.

[15 : 44] But it was a fascinating thing, and I've just relived this incident so many times in my mind, and to me it is just very, very real. in your bulletin you see a phrase used that I introduced to you, and some of you are familiar with it because you're familiar with some Latin, maybe you've studied some Latin, I guess they don't teach that anymore.

And I never took Latin either, I had all I could handle with English. But the phrase is sinequanon, three words in the Latin, sinequanon.

And what does that mean? It literally means this, without which not. Well, what does that mean?

Without which not. It all depends on what the which is. And in this case, the which is Christianity.

And it's talking about the resurrection of Jesus Christ being the essential, indispensable component of the Christian faith.

[17 : 07] Translated, it means this. If there is no resurrection of Christ, then Christianity is a dead issue.

it has no validity at all. You cannot sustain it. You cannot support it. It just has no validity. Everything about Christianity rises and falls with the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

And down through the years, a number of scholars have recognized that and have written profusely on it. And I want to pass this on to you because it is something that is well within your doing if you want to pursue it, and I heartily recommend it.

There is a film being shown now called The Case for Christ. And in this film, it depicts the story of Lee Strobel, a young man who hadn't been married but a few years, and he is a

lawyer. He is the legal editor for the Chicago Tribune. And being newly married and happily married and having a good, responsible job and a bright future and all the rest, everything was looking up for him.

[18 : 24] And then one day, his wife came home and made the most troublesome announcement that he had ever heard. she said that she had given her life to Jesus and she was now a Christian.

Well, the bottom of Lee Strobel's world fell out because he thought, here all the while, I thought I had married a normal girl and look what she has turned into.

I didn't bargain for this. And they had some rather lengthy and involved discussions about her newfound faith. And he was coming from the position of agnosticism or atheism and was quite convinced that there was no validity to this thing at all.

And in fact, that his wife had just been sold a bill of goods. And he took it upon himself to educate his wife out of this. And he was going to do a thorough research job on the subject of Christianity and the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

And when he had gathered all of the evidence together, demonstrating in an ironclad way that Jesus Christ really never rose from the dead and the whole thing called Christianity and people putting their faith in this pie in the sky by and by is just so much hooy.

[19 : 49] I will be able to rescue my wife from this brainwashing that she has undergone and I will get back the girl that I married. well it was quite an undertaking.

He really did his homework. He examined all of the evidence that he could find. Never in his wildest imagination did he suspect that he would get too close to the evidence and it would grab him.

And it did. And Lee Strobel has become one of the most brilliant apologists for the cause of Jesus Christ that the 21st century has seen to date.

I recommend you go see that film. Take someone with you. It's called The Case for Christ. Very well done.

Before I let you go I want to spend a little bit of time in while we're in the Gospels. Let's go to John chapter 12. This is an amazing passage too.

[20 : 58] I just want to share with you some of the more outstanding features regarding the resurrection and the life that we have in Christ. It's just did I say John chapter 12?

Okay. I meant 11. John chapter 11. This is in connection with the raising of Lazarus and I have used this with great results of comfort and confidence for a number of funerals.

It is a powerful, powerful passage. Lazarus is dead. Not only is he dead but he's been buried for four days. So he is really dead. He is so dead that when he orders the stone of Lazarus' tomb to be rolled away, Lazarus' sister who had been mourning the loss of her brother took Jesus aside and said, don't want to do that.

Don't want to roll away the stone. He's been dead four days. The odor will be overwhelming. Don't do that. Well, they rolled away the stone and Jesus said, Lazarus, come forth.

And of course, out he came. But nobody had any idea that that was going to happen. And as soon as Jesus arrived there, in verse 21, Martha said to Jesus, Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.

[22 : 29] He had already performed a number of miracles, and many of them were healing miracles in the body. And Martha is quite upset because Jesus is late. She thinks he's late getting there.

And now he's been dead and buried for four days, and she is lamenting the fact that if only you had been here, if you could have come more quickly, you, I'm sure, could have prevented him dying.

You could have healed him. But now, it's too late, of course. He's beyond healing. He's dead. And you don't heal dead people. You just bury them.

And Jesus said, your brother, verse 23, shall rise again. And Martha said, well, I know that. I understand that. That he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.

And Jesus is saying, no, no, no. That's not what I mean. That's not what I'm talking about. I am the resurrection and the light. You say, he will rise in the resurrection of the last day.

[23 : 32] I want you to know, dear lady, the resurrection is front and center, right here before you. I am the resurrection. What an audacious claim to make. What an incredible statement to make.

What do you make of a man who walks around saying, I am the bread of life. Really? I am the water of life. I am the light of the world.

What do you think about a man like that? Is he a megalomaniac? Or does he really know what he's talking about? Are these things really true of him?

When he says he's the resurrection and the life, really? Really? He, verse 25, Jesus said to her, I am the resurrection and the life.

He who believes in me shall live even if he dies. Well, now that we can handle, especially Christians. You die, you shall live.

[24 : 36] Because for the Christian, death is not permanent. It's only temporary. temporary. And if he had stopped right there, it would have been okay. But, he continues and says, and everyone who lives, those who are presently alive and believes in me, shall never die.

Now, that is something else. what, then, do you call all of these corpses of Christians who are lying around in funeral homes waiting to be buried?

He who lives and believes in me shall never die? those of you who have been a grace any length of time know that I have labored long and hard to establish the reality that there is another dimension to your being that is just as real as your body, but there is nothing physical about it.

It is spiritual. And if I may go so far as to say, it is the real you. The real you is not the physical appearance by which we identify you and distinguish you from someone else.

That's just our method of identification. No one has ever seen the real you. That's that spirit being inside of you where your intellect, your memory, your creativity, your volition, all of those things dwell in that immaterial part of your being.

[26 : 27] And when the body dies physically, that immaterial part of your being leaves, exits the body.

We call it the life principle. Some call it the soul. I prefer to call it the spirit. James chapter 2 tells us that the body without the spirit is dead.

And when you believe on Jesus Christ as your personal savior, God makes the real you alive spiritually to him.

You see, physically we are alive to each other. we may be alive to each other, but we're not alive to God. We're dead to God, dead in trespasses and sins.

But, when we receive Jesus Christ as our savior, we receive the righteousness of Christ applied to our account, and that makes us alive on the inside.

[27 : 33] That's the part that doesn't die. It's transferred, translated, this is what Paul meant when he said our citizenship, the place where we really live, our real official place of residence, is in heaven.

It's not on earth. Remember, one of the seven sayings that Jesus uttered when he was on the cross was, Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit.

And we're told he bowed his head, and gave up the spirit. And nobody saw, nobody said, oh, look, there goes the spirit. No, the spirit is immaterial, invisible, and this, of course, is what leads people to say it doesn't have any objective existence.

If you can't put it in your laboratory, and measure it, and weigh it, and take a picture of it, and put it under a microscope, and say, there it is. If you can't do that, then it doesn't exist.

And we call these people naturalists or empiricists. They call themselves scientists. We question that, but that's the title they often go by.

[28 : 56] And understand, we have no bone to pick with science. We are all in favor of it. And I cannot tell you how greatly benefited we have been from science.

We are all beneficiaries of scientific achievement and advancement, and I think it's wonderful. I'm not interested in going back to 19th century living. I like it here too much.

But, worshipping at the altar of science is something else. Because science has demonstrated that it is an unworthy deity.

It has been wronged too many times about too many things. so we do not put our eggs in that basket. This spirit part of our being, that is what is regenerated.

That's what's made new in Christ. That is the part of you that is saved. Your body isn't saved. Your body isn't redeemed, hasn't been redeemed, and will not be redeemed until Jesus Christ returns.

[29 : 59] And that's what Romans 8 is all about, because then the whole creation groans and travails in pain together until now, waiting to it for the redemption of our bodies. That's why even though you are a Christian and have been forgiven of your sin, and heaven is your home, you're still going to die.

You're still going to die physically, because the death of Jesus Christ has never been applied to your body. It's only been applied to your spirit. And that's the part that exits the body, absent from the body, present with the Lord.

the time is coming when that body is going to be rejoined with that spirit, and it'll be a glorified body, like unto the body that Christ had.

Now, if you will come with me, please, to Luke's gospel, we'll ask Gary if he'll come back and read some verses from Luke, and then we will close with 1 Corinthians.

please turn to the gospel of Luke, chapter 24, and we'll be looking at the first 12 verses.

[31 : 23] But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they came to the tomb bringing the spices which they had prepared.

And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. While they were perplexed about this, behold, two men suddenly stood near them in dazzling clothing.

And as the two women were terrified and bowed their faces to the ground, the men said to them, Why do you seek the living one among the dead?

He is not here, but he is risen. Remember how he spoke to you while he was still in Galilee, saying that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men and be crucified, and the third day rise again.

And they remembered his words, and returned from the tomb, and reported all these things to the eleven and to all the rest.

[32 : 48] Now they were Mary Magdalene and Joanna and Mary the mother of James. Also the other women with them were telling these things to the apostles.

But these words appeared to them as nonsense, and they would not believe them. But Peter got up and ran to the tomb, stooping and looking in.

He saw the linen wrappings only, and he went away to his home, marveling at what had happened. Ah, boy, these last couple of verses, really.

Verse 8, heard, and they remembered his words. That is so significant because Jesus told them this was exactly what was going to happen days before it happened.

But when he told them, it didn't register with them. And one text tells us that these things were hidden from them that they should not know them.

[34 : 02] But they were able to recall, yes, you know what, he did say that. I remember hearing him say that. Couldn't put it together, didn't make any sense, I didn't understand what he meant, but I remember him saying that.

And this is the text that then they remembered his words. And you know, it was very, very important that for the record, Jesus gets this on the table so that they would be able to look back on it and know that if it was all planned out.

None of this was happenstance. This was all part of the plan. And he told them in advance so that when it did happen, they would be able to look back on his saying that and recall that's exactly what he said.

But it didn't register with us at the time. And you know one reason why it might not? It just seemed so far-fetched. They could have said, well, we know that that's what he said, but that couldn't have been what he meant because that's just too impossible.

So they may have just dismissed it. And now it has actually come to pass. And they are able to recall that is exactly what he said.

[35 : 22] And then I love verse 12. Peter arose, ran to the tomb, stooping and looking in. He saw the linen wrappings only. This is probably the famous shroud that is referred to, kind of like the grave clothes, the linen.

And Peter, it says, Peter went away to his home marveling at that which had happened. I'd love to have been able to just peek into old Peter's brain and see what he was ruminating with.

I wonder if he was saying, man, this is really something. Is he actually alive?

That's the way it looks, but how can that be? It really, he is perplexed. And you know, one of the most encouraging things, helping to establish the validity of the resurrection and that of the eyewitnesses is this, and I don't know if you've ever thought of this or not, but I have a number of times.

Who were the people, who were the people who would most have wanted Jesus to be alive? Well, the disciples, the apostles, of course.

[36 : 48] They had more of a stake in Jesus, more writing on Jesus, more confidence in Jesus, more love to Jesus than anybody. And I think it is tremendously significant that these were the very same people who were the first ones to deny that he had come back from the dead.

None of them are saying, well, it's obvious he's resurrected from the dead. Yes, sir, believed it all along, didn't have any doubt at all. No, no, you don't get that. When the women come and tell them, we have seen the Lord, I'm telling you, he is alive.

And the text says, and their words seem to them as idle tales. These are just a bunch of high-strung women who are all hyped on Jesus being alive.

They just can't deal with the reality of his death, and they want him alive so badly, they believe they really saw him. Now, isn't that just women for you? Now, doesn't that sound like a male chauvinist pig?

Isn't that the way women think? They just want something so bad, they just wish it so bad. This is called wish fulfillment. You want something to be true so bad, you just convince yourself that it is.

[38 : 09] Yes, sir, that's what's wrong with these. There isn't anything wrong with this woman that 20 minutes on a good shrink couch wouldn't take care of. Yeah, he could talk around that. It's amazing.

They were the first ones to say, idle tales. Couldn't be. That lends great credibility to the reality of the resurrection.

And I want to close quickly with 1 Corinthians 15 because it talks about believing in vain. And I shared some of this with our men's class that meets every Thursday morning. We've been meeting down at Collier's for several years now.

This is a class that started back in 1965. And we meet every Thursday morning and anybody is welcome. Any men are welcome to join us.

You see, we haven't been thoroughly well, you know what I mean. Okay. But we do let the ladies in for the prophecy class on the last Tuesday. Every morning we have breakfast too.

[39 : 15] So, Paul is closing his letter to the Corinthians and he says, I make known to you, brethren, the gospel, the good news, which I preach to you, which also you received, in which also you stand.

In other words, this is where you have your stability, your confidence, in which also you are saved if, this is a condition, if you hold fast the word which I preach to you, unless you believed in vain.

How do you believe in vain? And what does this word in vain mean? We sang a hymn earlier that talks about vainly they sealed his tomb, Jesus my Savior.

Vainly, what that means is they sealed the tomb, but their doing so was vain. In other words, it was empty, it was worthless, it was to no effect.

It was a lost cause when they sealed the tomb, because that certainly wasn't going to hold him. And this word vain here means to no good end, to no fruitful purpose. It is nothingness unless you believed in vain.

[40 : 33] How would you believe in vain? Well, let's read on. For I delivered to you as of first importance. Now that, that is important. Paul is saying, listen, out of everything that I've ever said to you, this is job one.

This tops the agenda. There isn't anything that takes precedence over this. This is number one. Christ died for our sin.

That's the start of everything. According to the scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day, according to the scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas and then to the twelve.

After that, he appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time. I don't know where or when that was, but Paul was familiar with it. And he says, and not only did he appear to five hundred brethren at one time, but let me tell you, most of them are still with us.

You can find these people and talk to them. Some have fallen asleep. In other words, some have already passed on. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles, and then Paul says, and last of all, as it were, to one untimely born, he appeared to me also.

[41 : 49] For I am the less, the least of the apostles, who am not fit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. And then in verse twelve, he drops a thunderbolt.

He says, there obviously are some unbelievers mingling there in the congregation at Corinth. I don't know if these people are relatives, if they are friends or neighbors or who they are, but it is apparent that some are disavowing the resurrection of Christ from the dead.

And he addresses that in verse twelve when he says, now if or since, actually the word is better translated since, now since Christ is preached that he has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead?

This was a position that many had taken for many, many years, and that is that dead people do not live again. Do you know anybody who did? I mean, the record stands very reliable for hundreds of years, for thousands of years, that they kept records that nobody has ever come back to life after having died.

It just doesn't happen. Deal with it. Some people think that Christians insist on the resurrection of the body simply because they can't bring themselves to face their own mortality.

[43 : 13] They just cannot abide the thought that their life is going to be terminated when they die, and that's the end of it, period. Over and out, no hell, no heaven, no nothing.

People can't deal with that. So they conjure up this story that makes them feel good. That there's going to be life after this life, and that makes it easier exiting.

It's just a psychological ploy that people use when they don't have the courage to deal with their own mortality. That's a common view out there today. And, some no doubt held it in Paul's day.

Some say there is no resurrection of the dead. Now, if there is no such thing, if that is absolutely impossible for the dead to ever live again, if that is a flat-out given, then you have to insert Jesus Christ into that mix and say, that's true of him too.

And because the dead rise not, that means Christ, having been dead, didn't rise. No matter how much you wanted to, he didn't. I'll say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead.

[44 : 27] And, the logical conclusion is, in verse 13, if this is true and there is no such thing as the resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised. And, if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is vain, your faith also is vain.

That's what he's talking about in the earlier part of the chapter when he says, unless you have believed in vain. And, let me tell you something. Every one of us here, right now, if you have put your faith and trust in Jesus Christ as your Savior, and he really did not come back from the dead, your faith is vain.

It's empty. It's worthless. Because, if Jesus Christ could not arrange for his resurrection, resurrection, what makes you think he could arrange for yours?

That's what he means when he says, unless you have believed in vain, and if Christ is not raised from the dead, you have believed in vain.

You've been sold a bill of goods. either he did, or he didn't.

[45 : 54] You have to take one of those two positions. There is no in between. I've often said, Jesus Christ did not rise from the dead, kind of. Kind of?

He did or he didn't. You see, there is objective truth, and there is subjective truth. And objective truth comports with reality and it says that he really did rise from the dead.

There really was a tomb. He really was in it and he really did exit that tomb and he is alive and he is ascended on high just like the Bible says.

Or it is all a hoax. It's all just one big religious scam. And millions, untold millions of people who have put their trust in Jesus Christ down through the last 2,000 years, all of their faith, all of them, is in vain.

It's all worthless. It won't hold water. Nothing there. Big scam. And people who made sacrifices in order to live for this one, in order to die for this one as a martyr, all died in vain.

[47 : 20] They were just misled zealots. You have to take one or the other. You can't believe both.

That's a logical impossibility. You cannot reject both. That's a logical impossibility. That's what Jesus was talking about when he said, he that is not with me is automatically against me.

I talk to people all the time who say things like, don't get me wrong, I don't have anything against Jesus. I think he was a pretty cool guy. Now, if you are not in Christ, that means you are in a rejection mode.

Because there is only acceptance and rejection. There is no fence to straddle. It just doesn't exist. So, if you are in a rejection mode, that means you're on the outside.

If you are in an acceptance mode, that means you're on the inside. But the only reason, the only reason to be accepting is because you are persuaded that the evidence is valid.

[48 : 31] And you want to go with the truth. there we are. Apart from that, this having gone on for 2,000 years, I don't have a blooming thing to say to you that's new.

It's just this old, old story. And I love telling it because it's ever new, no matter how many times I tell it. I never get tired of it.

That's a precious and a precious thing. Would you stand with me, please? Father, we talked about some wonderful things and we've talked about just about everything that we have talked about leaves us with questions, more information that we would like to know, more ramifications.

But we do believe that you've been pleased to reveal enough. And for anyone here who remains in a rejection mode for whatever reason, Father, may they be willing to ask themselves just how much evidence would be enough?

How much evidence do I need? For some, it seems like no matter how many of their arguments are answered, they always manage new ones.

[50 : 06] It's hard to believe that they do not believe because they don't want to believe. And even that would be a revelation, so we pray that if that's the case for anyone, you will show that to them and gently, as only the Spirit of God can, woo them and melt that stony heart and bring them to the realization that the evidence is not merely satisfactory, it is overwhelming.

And a reluctance to believe it may very well be tied to a moral impediment than an intellectual one.

May they have the courage to be honest with themselves if that is their portion. Thank you so much for validating the resurrection in so many ways and changing so many lives so radically through the years.

We can account for it being true and nothing else will suffice. Thank you for the presence of each one here today and thank you for the glorious truth that because Christ lives, we too shall live.

We look forward to that resurrected body when it will be fashioned like under the body of our Lord. Most of all, we look forward to being gathered together with Him and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

[51 : 42] In His wonderful name. Amen. God bless you. You are dismissed.