

Jesus' Burial and Resurrection

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[0 : 00] Let's jump into Mark this morning. We are getting very close. We're actually going to venture into the last chapter of Mark, Mark 16, but we are going to start in chapter 15.

And last week, we ended off with Jesus, as the King James says, giving up the ghost or giving up his spirit, dying on the cross for our sins.

And what we're going to be looking at today is, well, what happened after that? There's a man named Joseph of Arimathea who takes up to have Jesus buried.

And then we see some women who were watching what was going on and where he was buried and made preparations to anoint him later on after the Sabbath was finished.

One of the things that we're going to look at this morning is how Jesus was buried. What are some of the details on there? There's some details that just seem a little particular, peculiar, I should say.

[1 : 16] And we'll look at those and how they relate to evidence that we can look at today that these things really did happen just like they said.

So we're going to start in Mark chapter 15. We're going to start with verse 42 and we'll read on to verse 8 of chapter 16. So follow with me as I read.

Now, when evening had come, because it was the preparation day, that is the day before the Sabbath, Joseph of Arimathea, a prominent council member who was himself waiting for the kingdom of God, coming and taking courage, went in to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Pilate marveled that he was already dead and summoning the centurion, he asked him if he had been dead for some time. So when he found out from the centurion, he granted the body of Joseph, or excuse me, to Joseph.

Then he bought fine linen, took him down and wrapped him in linen and he laid him in a tomb which had been hewn out of the rock and rolled a stone against the door of the tomb. And Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joseph observed where he was laid.

[2 : 29] Now when the Sabbath was passed, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Salome brought spices that they might come and anoint him.

Very early in the morning on the first day of the week, they came to the tomb when the sun had risen. And they said among themselves, who will roll away the stone from the door of the tomb for us?

But when they looked up, they saw that the stone had been rolled away for it was very large. And entering the tomb, they saw a young man clothed in long white robe, a long white robe sitting on the right side, and they were alarmed.

But he said to them, do not be alarmed, you seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He is risen, he is not here. See the place where they laid him. But go tell his disciples and Peter that he is going before you into Galilee, where you will see him as he said to you.

So they went out quickly and fled from the tomb, for they trembled and were amazed. And they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid. So Jesus has just, like I said, given up his spirit.

[3 : 40] It's just his body there on the cross. And it says that back in verse 32, now when evening had come, because it was the preparation day, that is the day before the Sabbath, this guy Joseph of Arimathea, who was a prominent council member.

Member of what council? Well, this was the council of Jewish leaders we call today the Sanhedrin, or they called it even back then the Sanhedrin. One little note here, it says that it was the preparation day, that is the day before the Sabbath.

Now there is a debate among Christians about what day was this, that Jesus was crucified. Now typically, right, we celebrate today as part of our Easter celebration in the spring.

We have a day called Good Friday, right? And Good Friday is meant to recognize the day when Jesus died on the cross. But there are many that have said, well, it just does not make sense in some of the biblical data that he would die on a Friday.

Now everybody basically agrees on the day that Jesus rose from the dead. There's almost no dispute about that, that he rose on the Sunday. In fact, what we just read, it says it was on the first day of the week, that's Sunday.

[5 : 02] But why is there a dispute about Friday? Well, one of the things that Jesus had said during his ministry is he pointed to Jonah and he said, just like Jonah was in the belly of the whale for three days and three nights, so I will be in the earth for three days and three nights.

That's in Matthew 12, verse 40, if you'd like to look that up later. So if you do the math, if he died on a Friday and rose on a Sunday, you can say, well, there was three days in there, not full days, but three days.

But there certainly is not three nights, right? It's only two nights. And so some have said, well, it must have happened on a Thursday. When it comes to some of the other data, though, here it says that this was the preparation day, the day before the Sabbath.

Now, the preparation day to the Jews was the day that you prepared for the Sabbath. And what day is the Sabbath? It's on Saturday. That's the last day of the week.

So Friday was called preparation day. Remember that the Jews, as part of the Sabbath law, you couldn't do any work. So you had to prepare beforehand all your meals and other things to make sure that things were prepared for because you weren't allowed to work on that Sabbath day.

[6 : 31] And so that would indicate that this is a Friday. Well, there is, but one of the things that also comes into play is that Sabbaths were not just weekly.

There were actually also other special Sabbath days, and they were called Sabbath days in the Old Testament. Certain holidays were Sabbath days that were required to rest.

And so some have said, well, maybe if we look at that, because there was a holiday, right? This is the Passover, and the Passover included the actual day of Passover, but then following that, seven days called the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

And if you look at the Old Testament scriptures, and I think we looked at this a month ago or so, that Feast of Unleavened Bread starts on the day after the Passover.

And that first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread was called a High Sabbath day. So some have tried to make the case, and to me, I don't know if I can go one way or the other, that Jesus was likely crucified on a Thursday, and the next day would have been that High Sabbath, the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

[7 : 46] And then the next day would have been another Sabbath, and then finally a Sunday. And so there would have been two Sabbath days in a row, the weekly Sabbath, and then that first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

I've looked into this a little bit, and I'm not sure that I can kind of put my stake in the ground on either one, but I figured I'd bring up that little debate there.

I think it's also possible, right, that when the Bible is taught, when Jesus talked about being in the ground for three days and three nights and referencing Jonah, that, you know, it wasn't necessarily exactly three days and three nights, and that's a possibility too.

But going back to Joseph of Arimathea, Joseph of Arimathea says he was a prominent council member who was himself waiting for the kingdom of God, and he came and he took courage, it says, and he went to Pilate and he asked for the body of Jesus.

So who was this Joseph of Arimathea? Well, the only thing we know about him is this account. We know that he was a member of the Jewish council. He was a leader. He was very wealthy. But there are a few verses in some of the other accounts, or some of the other gospel accounts of this, and it will bring out a little bit more detail.

[9 : 07] In Matthew, it says this, who himself had also become a disciple of Christ. So this was a member of the Sanhedrin who considered himself a disciple of Jesus.

In John, chapter 19, verse 37, John says this regarding this account. It says that being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews.

And so Joseph of Arimathea took heed of the message of Jesus and became a disciple of his. He was convinced of the things that Jesus was saying, but he was not open about it.

He was, as we might say in today's language, in the closet as a believer in Jesus. In Luke, chapter 23, verse 51, it says this about Joseph of Arimathea, that he had not consented to their decision and deed, talking about the rest of the council members.

So remember, as we studied a few weeks ago, when they all came together this same morning to condemn him, he was not one to put in his vote. He did not consent to condemning Jesus to death and sending him to Pilate.

[10:25] It also says here that, interestingly enough, it says, who was himself waiting for the kingdom of God. And what is that a reference to? You know, today, a lot of times, it's common for Christians to think about the kingdom of God as a spiritual thing.

But as we've looked at, as we've gone through the book of Mark here, when Jesus talked about the kingdom of God and the way that all of the Jews basically thought about the kingdom of God, this was a very literal, physical kingdom on the earth.

And that's what Joseph here is thinking about. He's waiting for the kingdom of God. He is anticipating when God is going to bring a kingdom for Israel on the earth in which a Messiah, a king, will sit from the line of David, will sit on a throne in Jerusalem and restore the Jewish nation.

And not just restore them, but also actually give them preeminence over the whole world, where there will be peace and justice, not only in Israel, but all over the whole world.

So he asks for the body. And notice here how it says that he took courage. He took courage.

[11:42] You know, one of the passages that we read here, he was a disciple of Jesus, but he was a secret follower of Jesus. He was a secret disciple because he was afraid.

He was afraid of what the other leaders, the other council members would think. And so this action of asking for Jesus' body and burying him in his own tomb, this is going to out him, right?

He's going to come out of the closet as a believer in Jesus. And so this is an act of courage. He was fearful before, but here he takes courage.

By the way, I want to look at that a little bit more, but also bring out, as I've been doing, as we've worked through here these final days of Jesus' life and final hours, we see so many things, so many fulfillments of Scripture.

Here's another one from Isaiah chapter 53. That chapter comes up a lot. It's that chapter about the mysterious suffering servant. But in verse 9, it says this, And they made his grave with the wicked, but with the rich at his death, because he had done no violence, nor was any deceit found in his mouth.

[13:08] So there's this reference to his grave being among the rich. And that's exactly what we see happen here with Joseph's tomb. Just a couple of lessons, I think, here from the life of Joseph of Arimathea.

You know, when it comes to being wealthy, there are temptations that come along with that. You know, it's more difficult when you have power, prestige, money within the world's system to go against the world's system.

When you have a lot at stake, it's more difficult to walk away from that, to give up any of that power or prestige. When you don't have anything, when you're poor, when you don't have any power, when you don't have any money, there's not really anything to walk away from.

And so there's less of a temptation to have those things draw you away or keep you from turning to the Lord. Proverbs 30, verse 7 has this proverb.

It says, Two things I ask of you, Lord. Do not refuse me before I die. Keep falsehood and lies from me. Give me neither poverty nor riches, but give me only my daily bread.

[14:26] Otherwise, I may have too much and disown you and say, Who is the Lord? Or I may become poor and steal and so dishonor the name of my God. And so even, you know, this, I can't remember who this is, if it's Lemuel or who wrote this passage here in Proverbs 30.

But riches come with temptation. And so we shouldn't necessarily, even though there's nothing inherently bad or evil or corrupt with having riches, but the Bible says in many places it comes with temptation.

And so Joseph, it seems, at least for a while, succumbed to those temptations. And he feared to make known his trust and belief in Jesus as Messiah.

But what we see happen here is he takes courage. There's a change. There's a pivot. And when I read about this, I really see myself in Joseph of Arimathea.

And maybe you do too. Many times I can look back at specific things that have happened in my life where I should have said something. I should have stood up for the right thing.

[15 : 43] And I was afraid. And not necessarily afraid for my life, though there have been circumstances throughout lots of history where there's certainly been the case where people have either stood up or failed to stand up because of fear for their life, but just a fear of man, we call it, a fear of man.

What are people going to say? What are people going to think about me? Cowardice certainly is a shameful vice. And we ought to, at all times, be willing to stand up for what is true and what is right and what is good.

But I'm sure many of you, like me, can think of times when we failed to do so, or we succumb to the weakness of our flesh.

But, you know, God is so gracious to us. And he's willing to not just, not overlook, but be kind, be gracious, understand our weakness.

You know, he experienced the same weaknesses that we do, yet didn't give in to cowardice like so many of us have. But here, Joseph, he takes courage.

[16 : 58] There was this event that happened, and he decided, you know what, I'm going to do the courageous thing. And we don't know what happened to Joseph. Maybe he was ejected from the council.

Who knows? But there was definitely a risk here. And life is risky. And as a good friend of mine would always say, he would say a lot, you know, we should do what's right and risk the consequences, whatever they might be.

They say something about the best time to plant a tree. What do they say? The best time to plant a tree was 30 years ago, right? Or something like that.

But what's the second best time? Right now, right? And so many of us, you know, may have had lots of opportunities to take courage, and we failed. And so the best time to take courage was 10 years ago, 20 years ago, 30 years ago, to be bold about our faith, about Jesus, and what he's done in our lives.

But the second best time to take courage is right now, today. Say, you know what, I'm going to talk to my friend that I've never really shared the gospel with, but you know what, I'm going to take an opportunity to do that.

[18 : 11] So let's consider that in the life of Joseph of Arimathea, that we might take courage just like he did. The next verse, verse 44, says this, Pilate marveled that he was already dead, and summoning the centurion, he asked him if he had been dead for some time.

And so he marveled because it was not actually very common for somebody to die after just a few hours on the cross. It was actually more common for someone to suffer on that cross for several days, if you can imagine.

And so, especially somebody who's 33 years old, like Jesus was, in, I'm sure, very good health. Even with all that happened to him, typically people would languish on those crosses for several days.

But he went and he asked the centurion for his advice. Somebody's asking him for the body. He wants to make sure he's dead. That's important to him.

One, because the Jews really want to make sure he's dead. So he's going to ask the centurion. This is the guy who's overseeing the executions here. And I'm sure he's had lots of experience with crucifixion, and he knows probably really well when somebody has finally died through all of his experience.

[19 : 35] Interestingly enough, this little piece of the story would contradict one of the theories about Jesus' death or fake death.

There's a lot of people that don't believe in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. But there's a lot of evidence from these witnesses that Jesus actually did die, that he actually was buried, and that he actually rose again, or at least his body was not in the grave.

And then there are eyewitnesses who actually saw him face to face and even touched him. So there's all that evidence to deal with. So some people have come up with a theory that is called the swoon theory.

The swoon theory says that Jesus, he actually was crucified, yes. He was actually put in a grave, yes. And the grave was actually empty later. But what may have happened was Jesus didn't

actually die on the cross.

He just swooned. And we've heard stories, I'm sure, right, of people who were thought to be dead. In fact, people maybe even preparing their body in some way.

[20 : 53] Maybe they're in a casket, and then all of a sudden they wake up. Now, it's not something certainly that happens very often. But especially, you know, in times past, that would happen very, very occasionally, where you might think somebody's dead and they're not actually.

And so here we have experts who are witnesses saying that for sure, yes, Jesus really did die. Now, there's something else that happened. It's not described here, and I didn't write it down, but it's in one of the other Gospels, that they did to make sure that he was dead.

You remember what they did? They took a spear and they put it through his side. And there was actually evidence based on what came out that those were the kinds of fluids that would come out for somebody who had already expired.

Verse 45, so when he found out from the centurion, he granted the body to Jesus. So he took the centurion at his word as an expert that Jesus was definitely dead, and he granted the body to Joseph.

And by the way, why would Joseph want his body? It was because typically they would allow someone's body to hang on the cross for several days.

[22 : 09] Now, in this case, they weren't going to have anybody up on the cross because it was a Sabbath day coming up, so they would take them all down. But after they were done, they would just throw all these bodies into a common grave, just a pile.

And so Joseph was concerned he didn't want that to happen. It says this with Joseph, Then he bought fine linen, took him down, and he wrapped him in the linen.

And then he laid him in a tomb which had been hewn out of the rock, and he rolled a stone against the door of the tomb. There's a lot of details in here. I want to look at each one. The first one is the fine linen. So he buys some really expensive.

Fine linen is expensive. So he finds some fine linen as what they call grave clothes. They would wrap a body in grave clothes. And we actually see that these grave clothes come back into the story at the resurrection.

And it's not actually described in Mark, so I'll just reference it briefly here. But after the women find the tomb empty, they go back and find the disciples.

[23 : 19] And Peter specifically, it says, runs back with some of the other disciples. But he goes in and finds the tomb empty. But it specifically says that he finds grave clothes sitting there without a body in them.

And so just more evidence that the body, you know, if somebody was going to come steal the body, would they leave the grave clothes there?

Maybe. There's today in Italy, there's a, I think it's a city called Turin, if I remember correctly.

But there is what's called the Shroud of Turin in Italy. Has anybody ever heard of that? Yeah, I see a lot of nodding of heads. And it is considered to be, by many, the actual grave clothes of Jesus.

Now, when it comes to religious relics, I think that we as Christians should be skeptical. There are a lot of people throughout the centuries that have looked to relics, especially like in the Orthodox Church and even among Catholics.

[24 : 30] Relics are venerated. And I think way too much emphasis is put on these kinds of things. In fact, over the centuries, people have claimed that they have pieces of wood from Jesus' cross.

And if you were to take all of those little pieces, those little shards of wood that have been claimed to be part of Jesus' cross, you'd be able to make ten crosses out of all of them. And so it's certainly suspicious.

And really, when it comes to a shard of wood, how would you know that that was Jesus' actual cross? There's not really a lot of evidence that you can even look at, really none that I can think of, that it was actually a cross that Jesus was on.

And there were certainly many crosses throughout history. But I've actually, in looking, I have a friend of mine who has kind of changed his mind.

He was skeptical at first and actually became more convinced that very possibly this shroud that is in Italy might actually truly be the grave clothes of Jesus.

[25 : 45] Just a few little descriptive points. I don't want to spend too much time on it. But this thing has been around for several centuries. I can't remember the exact date, but it's been there in Italy

for many, many centuries.

And if you fold out this shroud, and it has an image of a man, but it's very distorted. It's a distorted image. And it's, but it's, the whole concept is that when Jesus, when the resurrection power of the Lord came into Jesus' body, that there was like a, you know, light or heat that came out, and it created this imprint on his grave clothes.

And when you actually look at the details of, and inspect this cloth, it would really indicate something like that. The shape of it.

When you spread it out, it's distorted. But if you were to, you know, put it over a human being, it would actually match, you know, what would be imprinted from a man's features.

Thinking of like going, taking an image from like 3D and stretching it out into a 2D image. If you actually look at the image on the shroud, it's not any kind of ink or pigment of any kind.

[27 : 05] It actually truly is some kind of burned, burning of the threads. And that burning of the threads is only on one side of the threads. It's not burned, it hasn't burned the whole thread or charred the whole thread, but just one, one side.

Ostensibly the inside of the burial cloth. The image, and we've only had photographs, right, for the last century or so, right, where we can actually take photographs of things.

So they've had this for hundreds of years. And when you look at it, it looks kind of strange. You can tell it's the shape of some kind of a man. But when they first photographed it, over 100 years ago, the person who photographed it for the first time looked at the negative.

I'm sure many of us, maybe not the young people, but some of us older ones, we've seen negatives before. And they look strange. And they look strange because it's actually right the opposite of a regular photo.

The dark places are light, and the light places are dark. And so when they looked at this negative, the image of the man just became so much more pronounced. And so the idea is that light of some kind came out of Jesus' body and kind of burned an image onto this cloth.

[28 : 34] Also, they've actually inspected for materials. There's actually blood on this cloth. And interestingly enough, the image is burned over top of the blood, which is really interesting.

And then also, as they've looked at the intensity of the image on that cloth, the places where the cloth would be closer to the skin, like the nose and the cheekbones, the forehead, things like that, are much more pronounced than the other parts.

And so there's so much. And those kinds of things, if you were to maybe fake those or try to replicate something like that, even today, with all of our modern technology and computers, would be extremely difficult to do.

So many people have found all of these details to be very compelling evidence that this shroud of Turin may actually be legitimate.

Now, does that have anything to do with, you know, is this something we're going to stake our faith on? You know, if it's found out that this thing is a fake? No. But, you know, there's so much evidence, even if some of the different points of evidence that we find for the resurrection of Jesus are found to be false.

[29 : 54] And this one I would put probably at the bottom of the list. There's so many other things, I think, that are so much more notable. There's so much that piles up that we can point to.

One of the other details here from this passage, his tomb, this tomb was hewn from a rock. So this was not a, like a natural cave.

It was actually just the face of some kind of a rock face, and it was hewn out. So not a natural cave, but a, one that's man-made, which, by the way, would have been extremely expensive to do, take months of work from a skilled laborer.

Also, it's described as a new tomb. And when we get to the end of this message, we're going to talk about how some of these align with some of, there's actually a site today called the Garden Tomb that you can go to, and many of you, I think, maybe have out there in Jerusalem.

But in John's account, it actually says this was a new tomb in which no man had ever been laid.

Jesus was the first, at least, maybe even the last, but the first, at least, to be laid.

[31 : 02] In this tomb. And then they rolled a stone against the face of this tomb to secure it. We'll talk about that garden tomb in a little bit.

But I wanted to read this passage from John chapter 19 to just add a little bit of extra detail. John chapter 19, verse 38, says this. After this, Joseph of Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus, but

secretly, for fear of the Jews, he asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus. And Pilate gave him permission. So he came and took the body of Jesus. And here's, this is interesting, because here's another character that we've heard of before. And Nicodemus, who at first came to Jesus by night, also came bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds.

Then they took the body of Jesus and bound it in stripes of linen, or strips of linen, with the spices, as the custom of the Jews is to bury. Now in the place where he was crucified, there was a garden, and in the garden, a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid.

So there they laid Jesus because of the Jews' preparation day for the tomb was nearby. So they did prepare his body somewhat, but it was kind of a rushed job, which is why we find later that these women, they're kind of paying attention, they're seeing where they bury him, and then it says that right after that, they started preparing these anointing mixtures to be able to anoint his body later on after the Sabbath day, or maybe two Sabbath days is complete.

[32 : 34] So then it, and we'll, by the way, with Nicodemus, he was also another leader of the Jews, but a secret disciple. We remember in John chapter three, right, where he's talked about he came to Jesus by night, at night, he didn't want to talk to him when everybody else was around, he wanted to talk to him in secret, but he was a believer in Jesus, and he actually contributed along with Joseph with the burial of Jesus, at least his body.

Verse 47, back to Mark 15, and Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joseph observed where he was laid. So they're just checking it out, they want to make sure he's given a proper burial, and so they're taking note, and they're making plans to come back after the Sabbath.

On to verse, chapter 16, verse one. Now, when the Sabbath was passed, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices that they might come and anoint him.

So they had already prepared these, I think, and brought them this morning to come and anoint him. But these are three women.

In other accounts, it talks about even more women, but at least these three are named. I think we talked about this in the last week or two. Mary Magdalene, she was the one who was a prostitute who Jesus had cast demons out of.

[33 : 55] Mary the mother of James, which was either the mother of Jesus or the mother of James and John. So it's not necessarily clear here, but both of them, it says earlier, were there at the crucifixion.

And why would it be the mother of Jesus? Well, Jesus actually had a brother named James, and so that's why. And then Salome, actually, I'm getting this mixed up. Salome was the mother of James and John.

So we talked about that a couple weeks ago. And so the mother of James, I think there is talking about Jesus' own mother. So they were going to anoint him, and this was a common burial practice among the Jews.

Like I said, Nicodemus and Joseph had already done some of this, but it was a rush job because Sabbath was right on their heels. And so they wanted to come and do the full ritual that they would do with his body.

Remember when we were studying Mark chapter 14, there was a woman from Bethany, and she came and used this really expensive oil. This oil was so expensive, it was like a year's salary worth of oil, and she broke the whole thing or poured out the whole thing on his head and on his feet and anointed him, which was kind of a strange thing to do.

[35 : 11] But one of the things that Jesus said was, she's doing this for my burial. So Jesus was anointed several times in his before and after his death.

But these ladies, they're going there to anoint a dead body. That's what they're going there for. That is what they are expecting when they are going to this tomb.

They're not expecting a stone rolled away. In fact, they probably, I don't know if they knew the guards were there or not, but they might have been expecting guards.

You know, who knows? But they were, really, they probably didn't think it all the way through because we see that when they get there, they're like, oh wait, we should have brought some men here with us to help us roll the stone away.

They didn't really think about it or think it through. But Jesus had talked about his resurrection, that he would die and raise again. But as we've seen over and over, the disciples didn't really grasp all this.

[36 : 12] I mean, this person in front of them is the Messiah that is going to establish a kingdom over the whole of Israel, and even over the whole world. So you're going to die and then rise again.

What is going through their heads? I don't know, but they just did not compute. Maybe they were thinking, this is some kind of metaphor for something or other. And so when Jesus died, they thought, well, this is, this is it.

But very early in the morning, it says right at sunrise, on the first day of the week, they came to the tomb when the sun had risen. This is the first day of the week. This is Sunday. You know, the week, we have many parts of our calendar, right?

We have a year. And a year is measured by our rotations around the sun, right? And we also have months. Months, actually, and it's not exact, but months represent how long it takes the moon to go around the earth, right?

But when it comes to the week, the seven-day week, there is no astronomical events that would point to seven days. It's actually, it's, it's, it's very, I want to say made up, but it's not made up, right?

[37 : 26] The seven-day week points back to creation when God created the earth in six days and on the seventh day, he rested. But, basically, the entire world uses seven days as their week.

You know, there have been times throughout history when people tried to change that. Is anybody familiar with what happened during the French Revolution? During the French Revolution, it was very atheistic.

And, they wanted to try to move away from all this Christian garbage. And so, one of the things they tried to implement was changing the week and also the rest days.

And so, I think, if I, and I'm doing this from memory, but I think they tried to change a week from seven days to ten days. And there have been other times in history where they've tried to change the week to like five days and all of it's utterly failed.

It just seems like the way that God designed us is to where after, you know, around seven days that it would be normal for us to take a break and take a rest.

[38 : 30] And we, you know, in this, we're a grace church. We don't teach that, you know, God's going to be mad or that there's even anything wrong with doing work on the Sabbath. Now, under the Jewish law, there was. You were not allowed to do that at all.

That was part of the law. But in this Christian dispensation, that's not the case. But it is still, I think, wise to take a break on a regular basis, right?

And I think a week, you know, one day a week is certainly, and for the whole world, has been found to be a great time to do that.

But if you're going to take a break, take a day off, would you take a day off on the first day of the week? Or probably, wouldn't it be the last day of the week? And that's what the Jews did, right?

It was the last day of the week when they took a break. So why, in America, and in Europe, and even in Asia, and India, and basically the whole world, everybody takes the day off on Sunday?

[39 : 28] Why is that? It's because of this story. Because of this account. Because this is the day that Jesus rose from the dead. And that event has had an impact not just on one small region of the world, but over time has come to impact the entire globe.

So that you will be hard-pressed to find anywhere in the world where on a Sunday you can walk into a bank and transact. They're all going to be closed.

It's a day of rest. Not just for Christians, but for so many all over the world. Just another piece of evidence for the veracity of what happened on that Sunday.

Verse 3, And they said among themselves, Who will roll away the stone from the door of the tomb for us? And so I think, like, I'm sure many of us have experienced this. You got an action plan.

In fact, the other day, I went to the store. We were working on our front porch and I had to pick up some lumber and some rather large pieces.

[40 : 36] And I went and I drove and I drove our minivan. And when I got there and we bought the stuff, I thought, because we have a bigger van, I was like, why didn't I bring the big van? How am I going to be able to bring all this stuff back?

So I actually had to make a separate trip to get the bigger stuff. And so I think maybe that's the kind of thing that happened there. These ladies, and it's not totally clear how many of them, but at least three of them, go to this tomb and on their way, they're like, wait a second, what are we doing?

We're not going to be able to get this tomb open. But when they get there, that stone is rolled away. Just a little bit about what this would have looked like. So this is a kind of a rock face and then right

in front would have been some kind of like a channel for a stone.

And it would have been circular in shape. And something like this would have been about four to six feet tall. So maybe about the tall of, about the height, excuse me, of a person.

And then maybe one or two feet wide. And, you know, if you think about something that size, how much does that weigh? Well, it's one or two tons. You know, four to six thousand pounds.

[41 : 47] And when you have a grave like this, typically you have that groove or that channel where you rolled a stone in. And typically the channel is depressed right in front of the entryway. So when you roll the stone, it kind of drops into place.

And that makes it a little bit easier to close it. But it also makes it harder to get it back open to move that stone away. And so moving a stone like this would have, would have required half a dozen men.

Strong men to be able to open. And by the way, just another piece of evidence that, you know, would have been, made that much more difficult to secretly steal a body from a tomb like that where you have to have that many men.

And remember, there were guards put in place. In fact, let's read about that in Matthew chapter 27, verse 62. We'll read this part of the account from Matthew. On the next day, which followed the day of preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees gathered together to Pilate, saying, Sir, we remember while he was still alive how the deceiver said, after three days I will rise.

Therefore, command that the tomb be made secure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night and steal him away and say to the people, He has risen from the dead. So the last deception will be worse than the first.

[43 : 04] So Pilate said to them, Well, you have a guard. Go your way. Make it as secure as you know how. So they went and they made the tomb secure, even sealing the stone and setting the guard.

So there was a guard put there. There was a seal put in place to make sure that nobody could come by deception and take the body away. And so it's not clear if these women knew that that's what happened.

This actually, when this happened, it was actually the next day that this whole interaction we just read happened. So these ladies very well may not have been privy to the guard or the sealing of the tomb because they just were there.

the night before and watched where they put him. So they may have gone not suspecting that there might be a guard there or any kind of seal around the tomb. So they get there and it says in verse 4, But when they looked up, they saw that the stone had been rolled away for it was very large.

And entering the tomb, they saw a young man clothed in a long white robe sitting on the right side and they were alarmed. So they see a young man there and, you know, you can probably surmise what kind of a man this is in a long white robe.

[44 : 22] This is an angel. Now it doesn't say that here but in other accounts it mentions the angel, actually multiple angels in other accounts. But there's an interesting detail here.

I'm going to talk about it in a little bit. It says that he was sitting on the right-hand side. That's kind of a bizarre detail to add to a story like this. Don't you think? It's just like he was sitting on the right-hand side?

How does that relate to the story? Well, we'll look at that in a second or in a few minutes. Verse 6, But he said to them, Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth who was crucified.

He is risen. He is not here. See the place where they laid him. So the angel's there to give them a message like one of the jobs of angels is to be messengers. And he's there to tell them Jesus is alive.

He is not dead. And this alarmed them obviously. You know, we see this many times when someone is confronted with an angel or sees an angel. It causes fear, alarm, amazement are the words used here.

[45 : 31] But then the angel says this, But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going before you into Galilee where you will see him as he said to you. That's what Jesus had told them before he was crucified.

He says, Afterward, I want to meet you in Galilee. I'm not sure what was going through their minds. So they went out quickly and fled from the tomb for they trembled and they were amazed and they said nothing to anyone for they were afraid.

Now, eventually they said something but I think it means on their way they didn't say anything to anyone because they went to the disciples, found the disciples and actually told them what they found.

One of the things, I'm just going to briefly note here that, and I know, we don't have a particular translation that we push or necessarily promote here in this church.

Some churches do. They say you have to, it's usually with the King James, you have to use the King James, all the other ones are, you know, are uninspired maybe or something like that. But many Bibles actually stop the account and the entire Gospel of Mark right at this verse.

[46 : 40] And it might seem odd to somebody as you're reading through that it would end with and they said nothing to anyone for they were afraid. That seems to be an odd place to end the story about the resurrection of Jesus, right?

And I think it is. In the next week or so, the next week or two, we'll actually talk about that because the rest of it, there's other verses in some Bibles and in fact, I think most Bibles actually have these additional verses today but a lot of times they'll just have a little note about manuscripts and we'll talk about that and talk about should the rest of these verses nine on be in our Bibles or not.

But stay tuned for that in a week or so. I want to talk and just finish up because we're going to end there but I want to talk about this garden tomb.

So today, you can go to Jerusalem and go to Israel and there is a site called the garden tomb and there, lots of people go there, there are tours and you can go to an actual garden and there's a tomb there and I don't know that anybody makes the claim that this has to be the tomb of Jesus but there is a lot of evidence pointing to this very likely being the tomb of Jesus and at the very least, in the general vicinity of where Jesus might be buried and like a tomb in which Jesus would be buried. So a little bit of history. There are actually two spots in Israel where it's believed that Jesus was both crucified and buried because the Bible says that he was buried very close, just nearby to where he was crucified.

[48 : 27] So they're in the same general small area. The first one is called the, currently there's a church there, a Catholic church or chapel called the Church of the Holy Sepulcher and that's actually been there for centuries.

It actually dates back, and I don't know when the church was actually built, but the site was identified back in the, during the time of Constantine, which I can't remember if that's the 300s or something like that.

Very early on, just a few centuries after Jesus. Constantine was the first emperor, right, who actually, he legalized Christianity.

Unfortunately, and I think it is unfortunate, he didn't just legalize Christianity, he actually mandated it. You had to be a Christian. So many people got baptized and did all these things, which, what happens when you tell people you have to become a Christian?

You end up with a lot of fake Christians, right? And so, anyway, that's just a little bunny trail, but he actually, and I don't know if he sent his mother or his mother actually went to Jerusalem to look for like holy sites and these types of things.

[49 : 34] And she identified there was actually a Roman temple over top of this area that right now is this Church of the Holy Sepulcher. And for whatever reason, and I don't even know if we know the details, but identified this as the spot where Jesus was both crucified and buried.

And for this many centuries, especially the Catholic Church, has identified this as the place, the location where Jesus was crucified and buried. As I looked into this just trying to find evidence, I didn't find really a ton.

Really, the biggest thing, I think, that goes counter to evidence that this was the actual location where Jesus was crucified and buried is its location in the city. Because, as far as people can tell where the old city walls were, this location is inside the city walls.

And Jesus was buried, the Bible says, outside. He was crucified and buried outside the city walls. And so that's a pretty big piece of evidence that that church is not the actual location.

About 150 years ago, back in about the mid to late 1800s, Jerusalem was still a lot of ruins and it wasn't built up nearly as much as it was today.

[50 : 49] And so people were excavating and building houses and all kinds of different things. But they found some features. And so there were two things that were kind of discovered within the same generation anyway.

One was this rocky outcropping that people who lived there, they called it Skull Hill or something like that. And that's a strange name.

Hey, that sounds familiar, doesn't it? And the reason they called it that is because you look at this out, this rocky outcropping, it's like this hill with a, it's almost like a cliff and kind of a sheer face, but it's very rocky.

And so if you look at it, it kind of looks like a skull. You see some eye sockets and a hole for the nose. And so it looks kind of like that.

And then as they were excavating around this, I think that was found first. As they were excavating around this, they found many tombs, but one in particular. And there's a guy named, he was a general in the, I think, in the British military, but his name was Gordon.

[52 : 00] And I think I talked about this, about the two locations. The location that we're talking about right now, some people call Gordon's Calvary, because he kind of popularized it.

He didn't necessarily discover it, but he popularized it as what he thought was the location of Jesus' burial. I think today, Protestants, in general, prefer as a potential, a likely potential location of the actual tomb of Jesus, the garden tomb that we're talking about.

And, and Catholics prefer the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, and you can imagine why. You know, tradition is a very powerful, powerful thing. But I think, you know, there's other things to consider, evidence as well.

But I want to give a few points on why I think, you know, we might at least consider that this garden tomb that you can go to today is very possibly the actual tomb in which Jesus was buried.

One, they've actually found tons of evidence that this tomb is in an, was an actual garden around the first century or some, somewhere around that time. And how would you know?

[53 : 11] Because when they discovered this tomb, there was no garden there. It was just a mess. In fact, really, it was like a garbage dump when they found it. And today, it's actually been turned into a garden.

But how do we know that back in the first century it was a garden? Well, they found two things over the years. One is a huge water cistern. And what would you use a water cistern for?

Well, to store water. Today, if we want to water our gardens, what do we do? We hook it up to a spigot to our house, right? It comes from a well or city water or whatever it is. But back then, you didn't have, you know, you didn't have hoses to hook up to.

You didn't have spigots. So you would have a cistern that would collect water, usually rain water.

And you could use that to water your garden or vineyard. The other thing that they have found is a huge wine press.

This is all stuff that they found over the years in this area. And so a cistern and a wine press. Well, why would you need a wine press somewhere? Well, where you have grapes, where you have wine.

[54 : 13] And so typically, you would put a wine press right there where the vineyard is. And so this is an ancient vineyard, this area. So there's evidence that this was a garden setting in the first century.

Also, like I mentioned before, that this was outside the city walls. And so, as people have kind of studied the ancient ruins of Jerusalem, they seem to identify where the original walls of the city were.

And this location is just outside of the city walls. I think it's just north of the city of Jerusalem, the old city anyway. Also, it's near, and it's near this skull or skull hill, this place that seems like it could be Golgotha.

And so this garden tomb is just right next to this skull hill that they found. And so that seems to also be evidence. The tomb itself is very interesting.

And by the way, I'm going to, I found a video that gives you like a tour of this whole garden area and the tomb that I'm going to, if you're on the email, by the way, if you're not on the church weekly email, let me know so we can add you.

[55 : 30] But I'll include this video as a link in there. This tomb has a groove right in front of it that you would use for a rock, for a circular stone to put in front of it.

And it's not a natural cave. It's very easily identifiable as something that was hewn by man. It's man-made.

And so that points to what the scripture says. Also, the scripture tells us that it was a new tomb. Now, how in the world could we possibly look at a tomb and know that it was new 2,000 years ago? Does it even seem plausible that you could do that? Well, here's some interesting facts about this tomb. When you walk in, there are three, like, they call them benches or like beds where you would lay a body.

One of them is complete. The other two look to be unfinished. They were never completely dug out. And that just seems strange, doesn't it?

[56 : 47] That there would be a tomb in which it just never got finished. But you could imagine, right, that Joseph of Barimathea is building a tomb for himself and his family and he decides, maybe before it was finished, that I'm going to use this to bury Jesus.

Jesus was buried there. And after the whole resurrection event, is he going to use this for his family now? Maybe he would, right?

But very likely, no, I'm not going to use this for my family. I'm just going to leave it as is. Anyway, just an interesting little tidbit. The last thing we'll point to as far as evidence that this tomb that you can go to today is the actual tomb of Jesus has to do with its layout.

So there's a door or an entrance. There's not a door there, but it's just an entrance that you can walk into. Today it's about man's height, but they say that it probably originally was just maybe four foot tall or something like that.

But when you walk through that entrance, there's two chambers. The first one that you walk into when you walk straight in through the door, and then off to the right is another chamber, and that's where these three beds are.

[58 : 09] And what did we read about these women when they walked in to this tomb? tomb? It says that there was an angel to their right. It's just so bizarre that that little interesting detail would be in there, that that angel was to their right.

And so you can imagine, considering this tomb that you can go to today, when you walk in, you walk into the tomb, you turn to their right, there's another chamber, and there that angel would be. And then he says, Jesus is not here, and he points behind him, see where he was laying? He's not there. Anyway, I just thought those were interesting points, something to point to.

We could find out later, right, that this tomb, maybe there's evidence pointing, this couldn't actually be the site where Jesus was laid. But the evidence, I think, is quite compelling.

We talked, I don't know, months ago, when we talked about the evidence, that all the evidence that there is for the resurrection, and there certainly is a lot.

[59 : 19] Christianity rises or falls on the resurrection. If Jesus did not rise from the dead, as Paul says, then we're still in our sins. And Christianity is meaningless.

Christianity is not some religion where you just follow some wise teachings. If Jesus did not rise from the dead, then we're still in our sins, and all we have to look forward to is death.

But Jesus rose from the grave. His dead body was animated with new life. He was given a new body, the same kind of body, an immortal one, that we will receive.

And because of that, because we can have confidence that Jesus rose from the dead, we can have confidence that we, who trust in him, will live forever with that same kind of immortal body that he has even today.

Amen? Anybody else looking forward to that? Amen. All right, let's pray. Father, this is such exciting material for me. I just love that you put so many interesting details in these scriptures that you made available to us.

[60 : 24] I thank you so much for all the witnesses and all the evidence. I know many of us can be skeptical, but you provided so many details that we can look to and have confidence that Jesus rose from the dead and that our sins can be paid for if we just trust in you.

We can look forward to eternal life forever with the God who created us. And we thank you for all these things. In Jesus' glorious name, amen.