

Matthew 27.62 -28.15

Time to Decide

Near END of Study Matthew, NEVER Preached thru Before > Learned, Loved

FULL Disclosure – I have been trying to CONVINCING You! COMPELL You!

Title I chose for Study: *“The King we Follow”* – Jesus is King, We are to Follow

Matthew’s Gospel written PERSUASIVE ESSAY > GOSPEL = GOOD NEWS

IF this is MYTH > NOT GOOD News > BIG Outrageous LIE

Matthew – APOSTLE & EYEWITNESS – Claims it is ALL VERY TRUE

NOT – HIDDEN AGENDA --- FAITH VIEWPOINT --- Right UP FRONT:

...Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. Matthew 1.1

“you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.”

Matthew 1.21

MATTHEW writes HIS STORY into THE STORY...

Jesus...saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax booth, and he said to him,

“Follow me.” And he rose and followed him. Matthew 9.9

Gospel Tightly-Structured account of Jesus MINISTRY and MESSAGE

Built around 5 Thematic Sermons – culled “Greatest Hits” of Jesus’ Sermons

Nature, Mission, Purpose, Growth, Conflict, Endurance of KINGDOM of God

Jesus: “Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters.”

Matthew 12.30

NEUTRALITY is Not an OPTION – In or Out, Lost or Found, Heaven or Hell

As we Step into Story: Jesus DEAD & BURIED Tomb – Joseph of Arimathea

Burial > Jesus was Really Dead and His Resurrection was a True Resurrection

“Jesus endured not only pain and suffering and the curse of death but even the terror of the grave, so that he could save his people from this forever.”

Herman N. Ridderbos

1. Those who Feared to Believe

Matthew makes clear that FOLLOWING Jesus COSTS – A lot! Everything!

Jew or Gentile – Male or Female – Young or Old > PRICE is Exorbitant

Ones who knew MOST About Jesus were Religious Leaders > Most Afraid

We BOO and HISS when they Appear > Real People, Real FEARS

a. Scared – *Something will be Lost*

Pilate that DONE with Jesus when Consented to Crucifixion & Washed Hands

Then Joseph of Arimathea – respected Sanhedrin – Comes, Asks for Body

Now those irritating Jewish Leaders Back Again > Asking for Guards at Tomb

v. 62 The next day, that is, after the day of Preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered before Pilate

Most IMPORTANT Religious and Political Leaders in Israel

Combined FORCES & Staked their Careers on KILLING Controversial Teacher

Still TRYING to Completely Get Rid of Him – DEAD but NOT Gone!

v. 64 Therefore order the tomb to be made secure until the third day, lest his disciples go and steal him away and tell the people, ‘He has risen from the dead,’ and the last fraud will be worse than the first.”

Fear of “this last deception” > More AFRAID of Resurrection than Disciples

Claims He made still STIRRED in their Minds – 3 Days, Rebuild Temple

Eager to do ALL they Could to STOP His Words from being TRUE

Jesus INVITED these Leaders to FOLLOW – Prayed for Them from CROSS

More you HAVE – MORE you can LOSE

Many LANDS – Poor, Outcasts Come to Jesus – Nothing Much to Lose

Here we See TOP DOGS of the Nation – Fighting to Stay ON TOP

Jesus: “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.”

Matthew 16.24,25

b. Soldiers - *Something Not Legal*

v. 65 Pilate: “You have a guard of soldiers. Go, make it as secure as you can.”

Pilate was Annoyed by their Religious Superstitions – All Mumbo Jumbo to him

They were Asking for ROMAN Soldiers to Guard the Tomb

He did NOT give them > “You have a guard” LIT. i.e. their own Temple Guard

“Go, make the tomb as secure as you know how,” said w/ Amusement & Scorn

NOTHING New HERE > City of Man ALWAYS Attacks City of God

One way or Another FORCE of Human Gov’t TURNS against God & Church

Today Battleground > BASIC Rights – Abortion – Marriage – Gender Issues

GOVERNMENT Turned on Jesus even from HIS BIRTH...

KING Herod, when he saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, became furious, and he sent and killed all the male children in Bethlehem and in all that region who were two years old or under... Matthew 2.16

Jesus Set TERMS of His MINISTRY – in Hostile CLIMATE

Jesus: “...that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins”—he then said to the paralytic—“Rise, pick up your bed and go home.” And he rose and went home. When the crowds saw it, they were afraid, and they glorified God, who had given such authority to men. Matthew 9.2-8

FIRST CHRISTIANS were asked to Make REVOLUTIONARY CONFESSION

In a Roman World where all MUST Confess "Caesar is Lord"

If you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. Romans 10.9

WHEN OUR FAITH becomes SOCIALLY ACCEPTABLE - WATCH OUT!!

Once the foundation of the church is established on the common ground of patriotism and political ideology as opposed to Scripture and sound doctrine, the church is constrained to praise the actions of those in power as righteousness itself. Only by a narrative held apart from the self-justifying rhetoric of political ideology can the church gain the high moral, spiritual, and intellectual ground necessary to offer society prophetic insight and guidance. Thomas Alan Harvey

c. Seal – *Stacked with many Layers*

v. 66 So they went & made the tomb secure by sealing the stone & setting a guard

PILATE Gave Permission to Seal and Guard the Tomb with THEIR Soldiers

Guards from Same Company that arrested Jesus in Garden > Trusted Men

Guard was Set > All in order > Nothing to Troubled them > All Seemed Well

Who would DARE Break THEIR Seal?

To BREAK Seal Open DEFIANCE of Powers of RELIGION and of ROME

Matthew Clearly DOCUMENTED Unrestrained Power of RULERS...

Those who had seized Jesus led him to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders had gathered... the chief priests and the whole council were seeking false testimony against Jesus that they might put him to death

Matthew 26.57,59

FORGED New Friendships in their NET of COMPLICITY

Herod and Pilate became friends with each other that very day, for before this they had been at enmity with each other.

Luke 23.12

Even the SPEED BUMP of a Resurrection will NOT STOP their ADVANCE

v. 14 And if this comes to the governor's ears, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble."

From Standpoint of Gospel – World is NO FRIEND of Jesus or His Followers

Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

1 John 2.15

WORLD'S Leaders in FEAR and PANIC over Man brutally Murdered, Buried

NATIONS of World – STILL AFRAID of this Nazarene they Claim is DEAD

"Do your worst, try your wit and strength to the uttermost; but if he be of God, he will rise in spite of you and all your guards."

Charles H. Spurgeon

d. Spin – *Somebody is Lying*

vs. 62-64 the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered before Pilate and said, “Sir, we remember how that impostor said, while he was still alive, ‘After three days I will rise.’ Therefore order the tomb to be made secure until the third day, lest his disciples go and steal him away and tell the people, ‘He has risen from the dead,’ and the last fraud will be worse than the first.”

REALLY!?! His Wimpy Disciples had Scattered with the Wind

They were Not Imposing when He was ALIVE, much Less Now that He’s Dead!

Out of 12 – 1 Suicide – Only Peter and John even mentioned in Neighborhood

What LEADERS Feared was the Resurrection - been Watching Jesus 3 Years

Seen Him Heal Sick, Give Sight to Blind, Cleanse Lepers, Made Deaf Hear!

Just Few Days before these Events > Raised Lazarus of Bethany from Grave!

No Denying Miracles - Leaders tried to at First - too many Miracles & Witnesses

After a while, Acknowledged the Miracles > but Attributed them to Devil

Now Wonder in Fear – Can this Amazing & Powerful Teacher Rise from Dead?

If So He would Shatter their Small Religious World Forever!

vs. 2-4 And behold, there was a great earthquake, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. And for fear of him the guards trembled and became like dead men.

Now Official Seal was Broken and Tomb was Empty! Guards were Toast!

Not Only Women knew about Resurrection > Matt says Soldiers also Knew

v. 11 While they were going, behold, some of the guard went into the city and told the chief priests all that had taken place.

Reported to Religious Leaders: “Angels came! Opened tomb! Body not there!”

BODY was Gone – But their UNBELIEF still HOLDING ON TIGHT!

NOW Need Plan C – Gotta EXPLAIN WHY the Tomb is Empty!

How PERVERSE are the SINFUL HEARTS of MEN!

Just hours before they TAUNTED the DYING Jesus...

He is the King of Israel; let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him. Matthew 27.42

Now Jesus done something Even Greater! > But They would Not Believe!

Hated Jesus, so drew Soldiers into Evil Conspiracy – MONEY and LIES

vs. 12-15 And when they had assembled with the elders and taken counsel, they gave a sufficient sum of money to the soldiers and said, “Tell people, ‘His disciples came by night and stole him away while we were asleep.’ And if this comes to the governor’s ears, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble.” So they took the money and did as they were directed. And this story has been spread among the Jews to this day.

What “day”? > Day Matthew was Writing

Lie of Leaders still Circling Globe – Various Forms – Right up to TODAY

Perspective of Gospel > There is Truth of Jesus and then EVERYTHING ELSE...

Jesus: “If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”... Why do you not understand what I say? It is because you cannot bear to hear my word. You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies.”

John 8.31,32,43,44

Jesus claims to BE THE Truth! Sets Himself Up Against all OTHERS

Don't Believe in Jesus – Don't Believe the Truth – HE says You are a LIAR

If NOT on Jesus Side > On the Side of the DEVIL – who is FATHER of Lies

CLEAR, Adequate, Convincing EVIDENCE of Resurrection of Jesus Christ

IF Someone WILL NOT BELIEVE > CHOICE > Abundant, Solid EVIDENCE

FAITH NOT WISHFUL THINKING: Power of God, Visible Activity in History

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the best attested fact in history. Matthew Arnold

Christian Worker in INDIA - Preached THIS Gospel to a MUSLIM Man there...

MUSLIM "We Muslims have something better than you have, in Medina we have the grave of Muhammed - and his coffin is there. You Christians go to the tomb in Jerusalem and find nothing."

CHRISTIAN "that's just the difference, Christ is alive forever, holds all power in heaven and on earth."

2. Those Forced to Believe

Following Jesus NOT EASY for Anyone – Religious Leaders or Regular Guy

Testimony of Some of Us – Compelled by the FACTS, Called by The FATHER

v. 1 Now after the Sabbath, toward the dawn of the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb.

Women Came to Tomb NOT Because believed they'd See Him ALIVE
FINAL ACT of DEVOTION > Respect of DEAD > Preparation of CORPSE
JEWS > SOUL of DECEASED Hovered over CORPSE for THREE DAYS
WOMEN > Maybe Soldiers be KIND ENOUGH to HELP OPEN His Tomb??

a. Shaken – *New Creation*

vs. 2,3 And behold, there was a great earthquake, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow.

Matthew gives SHOCKING NEWS > Literally ROCKED World

Still Did Not Know WHAT was Happening – No Categories for a Resurrection

Perhaps MUTILATED Body of BELOVED > NO FINAL REST > STOLEN!

Critics complain about Discrepancies in Resurrection Accounts

Gospel writers have UNIQUE Focus but Not Unaware of what Others Wrote

ALL AGREE on MAIN Point – Jesus is ALIVE! World FOREVER Changed!

Variations in the tellings of an obviously identical story actually attest to the reliability of the narratives. They prove that these are independent accounts, not imaginary tales worked out in collusion by the writers, and their essential agreement proves that the four independent records are factual. James Boice

Movies about PASSION of Jesus are VIVID and Clear – We FEEL His Pain!!

Often FILM Versions of Resurrection take us to FAIRYLAND – Lights, Sounds
Wind – Shadows – Fuzzy Images – RARELY CLEAR, Believable Resurrection

Would that have CONVINCED these DESPAIRING DISCIPLES?

Would Thomas have Declared “My Lord and My God” without Real Jesus?

Jesus Not just REVIVED Spirit, or Nice REMEMBRANCE of Him

He had Resurrection Body – Touch Him and See! – Eats Food with Them!

Without this All the GOSPEL Promises are FALSE – He Failed His Mission!

RESURRECTION makes it All REAL – PROMISES are PROVEN True!

b. Spoken to – *New Command*

vs. 5-8 But the angel said to the women, “Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here, for he has risen, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead, and behold, he is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him. See, I have told you.” So they departed quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples

History can declare only that Jesus body disappeared, but this baffling fact fails to communicate the gospel. The event of Jesus resurrection is open to understanding only through a word of revelation received in faith. William Lane

Angel’s Message 4 Imperatives – For Women and the WORLD-WIDE Church...

1. *Come* > Much might have hindered the women from coming.

Risking their Security, perhaps their Lives, at this SENSITIVE Location

ROMAN Seal forbade them Draw Near – TEMPLE Guards Blocked their Way

Alone – Dark – Guards – Dangerous – No One to Help Them! AFRAID!!

It is STILL NOT Safe to Come to Jesus TODAY – But He still says COME!

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls”
Matthew 11.28–29

Have You Come? Obeyed Invitation? Can only MEET God by Coming to Jesus!

2. *See.* v. 6 Angel said, “Come and *see* the place where he lay”

What should we see when we look into the tomb?

Charles H. Spurgeon preached this verse, Suggested we SEE 5 Things....

First, we should see in Christ’s grave *the condescension of Jesus Christ*. Jesus was not a man for whom death would be natural. Jesus is God. He was with the Father from all eternity and will be with him forever. We would never expect Jesus to die. But Jesus did in fact die for us...placed in a tomb to save us.

Second, we should see *the horror of our sin*, for it was our sin that put him there. Death is the punishment for sin. But Jesus had no sin; he was sinless. Why then did Jesus die? The answer is clear: “He was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed” Isaiah 53.5

Third, we should look into the tomb to be reminded that *we too will die*. Unless the Lord returns for his own before that moment, we will also die and be separated from those we know and love. The tomb speaks of our mortality and warns us that there is a life beyond this life for which we must prepare.

Fourth, and most important, we must look into the tomb to see that *Jesus is not in it*. He is risen as he said. He has conquered death

The fifth reason we should look into the tomb is to learn that *we shall also rise, as Jesus did*, if we are joined to him. Jesus did not come to earth merely to teach, die, and rise again, so that in the end he might lose those for whom he died. He came to save his own “completely” (Hebrews 7.25), to take them to heaven to be with him.

3. *Go*. Strong Reminder much Gospel Work Remains to be Done we must Go!

My LEAST FAVORITE ‘G’ in ZGC Motto – Gathering, Growing, Going!

Love to HANG OUT and ENJOY All the People here FOREVER

But we are Commanded to Go – Go and Perform KING’S BUSINESS

Go in His Name – Faithful to His Gospel – Keep Going Until He comes Again

THEN we will GATHER Forever with Joy in His Presence!

“Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you”
Matthew 28.19–20

This is the greatest work any person can ever have, and it is for all Christians.

4. *Tell*. We Come – Seen Tomb Empty – Go out in Confidence – Tell the World!

If we BELIEVE and UNDERSTAND Gospel > We must TELL IT to Others

Resurrection > Greatest News World Ever Heard - because of What it Proves

Victory over Sin, Death, and Hell for all who TRUST in Jesus as Lord

c. *Seen - New Communion*

Not ONLY did they See an ANGEL – They SAW THE RISEN JESUS

vs. 9,10 And behold, Jesus met them and said, “Greetings!” And they came up and took hold of his feet and worshiped him. Then Jesus said to them, “Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee, and there they will see me.”

Now WE have ALL KINDS of Brothers from a DIFFERENT MOTHER

New FAMILY of those CONVINCED and COMPELLED by Resurrection

Even People of STATUS that had A LOT TO LOSE!!...

...a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who also was a disciple of Jesus.

Matthew 27.57

GALILEE – Place DESPISED by ELITE of Jerusalem – Village HILLBILLIES

As Matthew promised in Beginning of Gospel – Their Light has DAWNED

Perhaps in Galilee that MORE than 500 People saw Risen Lord at One Time

We cannot Touch BODY of our LORD > TIED to Him by WORDS of FAITH

John was Young Teenager – Beloved Disciple – Witness of LIVING WORDS

As OLD MAN LOOKED BACK on DAY of DAYS at GOLGOTHA wrote...

That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched-this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. 1 John 1.1

Why did Jesus Not APPEAR to PILATE, CAIAPHAS, SANHEDRIN - WHY?

THE SCRIPTURE IS THE KEY TO UNDERSTANDING JESUS

JESUS IS THE KEY TO UNDERSTANDING THE SCRIPTURE

LOOK back Many Times Matthew grounds this Gospel on Scripture / 2 of 28...

All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet... Matthew 1.22

This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet Matthew 2.15

Then was fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah: Matthew 2.17

Keep in Mind > MOSES Wrote 1300 yrs Before Jesus, David 1000, Zech 500

In FULLNESS of TIME > God Sent His Son > Born under Law, to Fulfill Law

"He said to him, 'If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.'" Luke 16.31

RISEN JESUS ONLY APPEARED TO BELIEVERS - KNEW SCRIPTURES

For with you is the fountain of life; in your light do we see light. Psalm 36.9

Through the Preaching of the Word – You can See Jesus Crucified and Risen

This was Paul's task to give GOSPEL SIGHT to the Blind in Galatia

Galatians! ...It was before your eyes that *Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified.* Galatians 3.1

CONCLUSION – Time to Make DECISION – What will you DO about Jesus?

God so loved the WORLD He sent his SON AND SCRIPTURE

Want to MEET God? Must KNOW JESUS >> Want to Know Jesus? Read Bible

For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance : that Christ died for our sins 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 Peter, and then to the Twelve.
1 Corinthians 15.3-5

Matthew is Volume # 40 in God's 66 Volume collection > God's HOLY Book

August begin Study of Volume 8, September begin Volume 56

MUST COME to KNOW HIM as YOUR OWN SAVIOR & LORD - BY FAITH

FAITH Comes BY HEARING – By Word of Gospel God calls...

All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out
John 6.37

Have you been confronted by the power of Jesus' resurrection? Or are you still trying to make your life secure against Jesus? Perhaps you have heard of Christ's gospel, but you have been trying to keep Jesus politely in his place. I warn you: Jesus is not that easily contained. You can push him down, but he will crop up again. You can banish him from your thoughts, but he will come back when you least expect him. What are you going to do against the power of the one so many call Lord? How are you going to make yourself secure against Jesus? James Boice

Maybe you're TOO BUSY with Other Things to Come to Jesus....

Bright Lights of Wudoakou – Dim Light of Web and all its COOL SITES

Foot Lights of Theater and all its Shows – Fluorescent Lights of LIBRARY!!

Lots of Ways to NOT THINK about Him who is LIGHT of the WORLD

Too Busy for Bible Reading – Too Cool for Church – Too Proud to Pray

Lots You can do to Make your Life SECURE Against Jesus – Stand Guard

God's Earthquake can Shake Your Plans and Shatter your Protections

Smartest Response to Jesus was what WOMEN Did at TOMB

v. 9 they came up and took hold of his feet and worshiped him.

William Cowper – England in 1700's – One of Most Popular Poets of Time

Christian: Writing Gift to Fight Slavery w/ Wilberforce & Pastor John Newton

Cowper was Christian filled with FEARS, DEPRESSION, Self-DOUBT

Encourage you to STUDY his Life – Lived Well – God being HIS HELPER

Following Jesus is NOT Easy – Christian Life Not Always VICTORIOUS

Preachers who Promise ALWAYS have Health & Wealth Need to Study Bible!

Wm Cowper Made Several Attempts to Commit Suicide > Sent Mental Asylum

Life of Struggle with DEPRESSION, DOUBTS, FEARS >>> also FAITH

After recovering, Cowper came to realize how God can erase the stain of any sin.

Wrote some GREATEST Hymns in History of ENGLISH Speaking church...

There is a fountain filled with blood drawn from Emmanuel's veins;

And sinners plunged beneath that flood lose all their guilty stains.

The dying thief rejoiced to see that fountain in his day;

And there have I, though vile as he, washed all my sins away.

Dear dying Lamb, Thy precious blood shall never lose its power

Till all the ransomed church of God be saved, to sin no more.

E'er since, by faith, I saw the stream Thy flowing wounds supply,

Redeeming love has been my theme, and shall be till I die.

Matthew 27.62 The next day, that is, after the day of Preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered before Pilate 63 and said, “Sir, we remember how that impostor said, while he was still alive, ‘After three days I will rise.’ 64 Therefore order the tomb to be made secure until the third day, lest his disciples go and steal him away and tell the people, ‘He has risen from the dead,’ and the last fraud will be worse than the first.” 65 Pilate said to them, “You have a guard of soldiers. Go, make it as secure as you can.” 66 So they went and made the tomb secure by sealing the stone and setting a guard. 28.1 Now after the Sabbath, toward the dawn of the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. 2 And behold, there was a great earthquake, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. 3 His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. 4 And for fear of him the guards trembled and became like dead men. 5 But the angel said to the women, “Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. 6 He is not here, for he has risen, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. 7 Then go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead, and behold, he is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him. See, I have told you.” 8 So they departed quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. 9 And behold, Jesus met them and said, “Greetings!” And they came up and took hold of his feet and worshiped him. 10 Then Jesus said to them, “Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee, and there they will see me.” 11 While they were going, behold, some of the guard went into the city and told the chief priests all that had taken place. 12 And when they had assembled with the elders and taken counsel, they gave a sufficient sum of money to the soldiers 13 and said, “Tell people, ‘His disciples came by night and stole him away while we were asleep.’ 14 And if this comes to the governor’s ears, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble.” 15 So they took the money and did as they were directed. And this story has been spread among the Jews to this day.