

#### 4.1.18 ~ God the Son Demonstrates Eternal Life

Today is a Day of Good News, the Best News! Jesus Christ was crucified on a Friday (paying the penalty for our sins, taking our punishment); and the following Sunday, He rose from the grave (demonstrating His authority to provide eternal life).

There have been more paintings, songs, and books produced about Jesus Christ than any other person who has ever lived. Why all this attention given to a Jewish carpenter from Nazareth?

The OT records hundreds of prophecies about Jesus [Christ, Messiah, Servant Savior], most of these were written 500-1500 B.C., telling how He would be born in a manger in Bethlehem, to a young Jewish virgin named Mary; yet His Father was Almighty God; one prophecy was made in 4000 B.C., foretelling the birth of Christ, His church [body] that He would be Head of, and His victory over Satan's dominion and authority (Genesis 3:15; Romans 16:20; Revelation 12:17; 1John 3:8).

The OT records that Jesus will die as payment for man's sins, yet live again; His people (the Jews) would reject Him; but Gentiles (non-Jews) would receive Him.

The NT records the fulfillment of these prophecies; the greatest of which, was Jesus' death and resurrection, which declared Him to be both God in the flesh and sovereign Lord and Savior (see **Romans 1:1-4**).

Christianity stands or falls on the truth of Christ's resurrection! If Jesus didn't rise from the grave, we have no hope of eternal life.

Let's look at some of the evidence surrounding His resurrection and consider whether or not it confirms that Jesus rose from the grave like He said that He would. See **John 19:31-37...** [no bones broken, Exodus 12:46; the one they pierced, Zechariah 12:10; Revelation 1:7].

*Dr. C. Truman Davis wrote an article in the Arizona Medicine Journal in March 1965, vol. 22, pp. 183-87), Dr."Apparently to make doubly sure of death, a soldier drove his lance through the fifth interspace between the ribs, upward through the pericardium and into the heart. That is, there was an escape of watery fluid from the sac surrounding the heart (**John 19:34**, "bringing a sudden flow of blood and water"), giving postmortem evidence that our Lord died, not the usual crucifixion death by suffocation, but of heart failure due to shock and constriction of the heart by fluid in the pericardium."*

Jesus died on a Friday afternoon and was placed in a tomb, by Sunday morning His body was missing. If He did not rise from the grave, someone took His body.

**See Matthew 28:1-15...**

**1.** The **Jewish Leaders** didn't want Christ's body removed from the tomb; a missing body would be perceived as a resurrected body, and that would look bad for the Religious Leaders; so, they pressured Pilate to put a seal on the tomb and place a Roman guard unit there (cf. Matthew 27:62-65), to keep the body in the grave, for Jesus had said, "after three days I will rise again."

**2.** The **Roman Guards** would have no reason to steal the body, they were stationed there to make sure it stayed put; moving it or allowing it to be taken, was punishable by death; therefore, they made sure Christ's body remained in the tomb, at all costs, against all foes, except for the mighty angels who rolled away the stone.

**3. Jesus' Disciples** wouldn't dare move the body and falsify the resurrection of their Lord; for if they knew Jesus did not rise from the grave, they had no hope of eternal life, it would have been better for them to quickly and quietly get out of town, change their names, and deny any prior relationship with this Jesus of Nazareth.

Why would the Disciples continue to proclaim the risen Lord, if it indeed were not true? And why did the Jewish authorities have to bribe the Roman Guard to spread the "stolen body" story if it indeed were true?

The only reasonable explanation is the one that is repeatedly recorded in Scripture: Jesus Christ rose from the grave, just like He said that He would.

Jesus told His disciples on several occasions, that He would be arrested, put to death, and on the third day He would rise from the grave. He told them He would go to the Father; but at a future time, He would come back to gather all Christians to be with Him in heaven, forever; and all this would happen according to God's own sovereign plan and purpose.

**Matthew 17:22-23; Mark 8:31; Luke 24:44-48** He said to them, "*This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about Me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms.*" Then He opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. He told them, "*This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things.*"

After His resurrection, before ascending back into heaven, Jesus made appearances to His followers:

- 1.** Mary and other women near the tomb (Mt 28:9-10)
- 2.** 2 Disciples walking to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-32)
- 3.** Peter (Luke 24:33-34)
- 4.** 10 Disciples, Thomas absent (John 20:19-25)
- 5.** 11 Disciples Thomas present (John 20:26-31)
- 6.** 7 disciples by the Sea of Galilee (John 21:1-14, 25)
- 7.** The Disciples just before Christ's ascension back into heaven, Jesus gives His last instructions to them (Acts 1:3-11).

8. 500 disciples (1Corinthians 15:6)
9. James (1Corinthians 15:7)
10. Paul (1Corinthians 15:8)

The Bible declares everyone guilty of sin (**Romans 3:23**), the penalty of which, is death (**Romans 6:23a**); but God, in His mercy has provided forgiveness for sin and eternal life through Jesus Christ (**Romans 3:24; 6:23b, 5:8; 8:1**).

**G R A C E** is expressed in and through the sacrificial death and sovereign resurrection of God's One and Only Son (**John 3:16-18; Ephesians 2:1-10**).

If you repent of your sins and trust in Jesus' death on the cross to provide forgiveness for your sins, you will be saved. Paul writes (**2Corinthians 6:2**), "I tell you, now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation," (**Romans 10:13**), for "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

Christ's resurrection demonstrates God's sovereign power and authority over sin, death, and judgment; for He sovereignly crushed Satan's head (cf. Genesis 3:15).

**1John 5:11-13**, "And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life."

So, he who has the Son has eternal life. Do you "have" the Son of God? If you are not sure, let me tell you how to "get" or "receive" the Son of God?

**ASK God to forgive you, repent of sin (Acts 2:21)**, "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved," (**Acts 2:38**), "Repent... in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins."

**BELIEVE Jesus died for your sins (Hebrews 9:26)** "He [Jesus] appeared once for all... to do away with sin by the sacrifice of Himself," (**Hebrews 10:10**), "we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."

**CONFESS Jesus as Lord (Romans 10:9)** "That 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," (**Philippians 2:9-10**), "God exalted Him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

**DEMONSTRATE your new life in Christ, by your obedience to God (2Corinthians 5:17)**, "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come," (**Galatians 2:20**), "I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me," (**John 14:23**), Jesus said, "If anyone loves Me, he will obey My teaching. My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him."

In John 13 Jesus celebrates Passover/Lord's Supper with His disciples for the last time, telling them that one of them will betray Him and He will soon be taken away from them; this brings great distress and despair to the 11, for Judas had already gone to carry out his treachery, at which time Jesus said to them (**John 14:1-3**), *"Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in Me. In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with Me that you also may be where I am."*

These same disciples were with Jesus when He visited Mary and Martha, after the death of their brother Lazarus, when Jesus said (**John 11:25-26**), *"I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in Me will never die."* Jesus then went to the tomb where Lazarus was buried (**John 11:39**) and said, *"Take away the stone,"* (**John 11:43-44**), *Jesus called in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!"* The dead man came out, his hands and feet wrapped with strips of linen, and a cloth around his face. Jesus said to them, *"Take off the grave clothes and let him go."*

This was a preview of what Jesus would do for Himself on the Sunday morning after His death on "Good" Friday.

In Paul's instruction to us, about the Lord's Supper, which was given to him by Jesus Christ Himself, he writes (**1Corinthians 11:26**), *"whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes"* [as in, until he comes back for us].

Jesus grants eternal life to everyone who believes in and follows Him, meaning, all Christians, whether we die and go to be with Christ, or we are alive at His return and are taken up by Him into Heaven, we will be alive with Him forever.

That is good news, good news, for you and for me: Jesus arose and He lives don't you see! Good news, good news, let's tell it to others; that they too may know of this wonderful Savior Who loves us all so.

*Pastor Mike ~ <'(((><*