

Morning Sermon October 13, 2019  
"The Burial of Christ" John 19:38-42

The Title "Christ" is the Greek for the Old Testament Title "Messiah." It means "The Anointed One" and for Israel, God's People, who recognized three anointed offices: Prophet, Priest and King; Christ or the Messiah was to be all three rolled into ONE! The Messiah was He, Who was to be the greatest Israelite ever! Certainly, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, Emmanuel, was all that and more!

Yet the title of my sermon is telling... Notice it mentions the burial of Christ, not the funeral, Jacob had a huge funeral, Jesus has none! Today we will consider Christ's burial –

I. See in this account of Christ's burial, the power of Christ's death upon timid hearts –

After this, Joseph of Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly, for fear of the Jews, 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 Nicodemus, who at first came to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds. John 19:38-39

1. Get to know these "timid / scared" disciples -
  - A. Joseph of Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly, for fear of the Jews... John 19:38
  - B. And Nicodemus, who at first came to Jesus by night... John 19:39

2. Joseph is specifically called "rich" –  
Now when evening had come, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who himself had also become a disciple of Jesus. Matthew 27:57

3. Both he and Nicodemus are important men –  
Joseph of Arimathea, a prominent council member, ... Mark 15:43 A

There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. John 3:1

Yet, they had a certain "fear" up to this point that has kept them in the shadows ... Probably at least partly a fear of losing their position – Nevertheless even among the rulers many believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they did not confess Him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue; for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God. John 12:42-43

4. At this point they gain a little boldness, Mark tells us – 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. Mark 15:43 - Joseph takes courage and Nicodemus joins him!

5. Jesus' death had this positive influence upon them – Better to go to the house of mourning Than to go to the house of feasting, For that is the end of all men; And the living will take it to heart. Sorrow is better than laughter, For by a sad countenance the heart is made better. The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning, But the heart of fools is in the house of mirth. Ecclesiastes 7:2-4

*So does trial elicit faith, and the wind, which quenches the feeble flame that plays around the outside, fans into brightness the fire that burns deep within, though for a time unseen." Alfred Edersheim*

6. Some may say, they should have / could have been bold earlier, yet it was all part of God's plan that Jesus would die – "For truly against Your holy Servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose determined before to be done. Acts 4:27-28

7. We know specifically that this particular deed was part of God's plan because it fulfilled prophecy –  
And they made His grave with the wicked— (referring to the cross) But with the rich (referring to Joseph of Arimathea) at His death, Because He had done no violence, Nor was any deceit in His mouth. Isaiah 53:9

When Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and laid it in his new tomb which he had hewn out of the rock; and he rolled a large stone against the door of the tomb, and departed. Matthew 27:59-60 A rich man's (Matthew 27:57) tomb!

II. See Joseph's and Nicodemus' preparation of Jesus' Body is an act of love –

1. Note, even what they do now could have hurt their standing among their peers, but now they don't care –

“taking courage” ... Mark 15:43

*This is a form of confessing Christ, it is certainly not denying Him -*  
“Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven. Matthew 10:32-33

2. When Joseph contributes his own new tomb Matthew 27:60 He is giving something of value!

3. Nicodemus contributes expensive perfume –  
And Nicodemus, who at first came to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds. John 19:39

4. Some might say this is lack of faith, as He will rise from the dead anyway, and yet this was meant to honor Him –

*Jesus valued the same thing when it was done pre-death –*

- A. Judas challenged what he thought wasting of expensive perfume -

“Why was this fragrant oil not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?” This he said, not that he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and had the money box; and he used to take what was put in it.

- B. But Jesus counted it a show of love, honor -  
But Jesus said, “Let her alone; she has kept this for the day of My burial. For the poor you have with you always, but Me you do not have always.” John 12:5-7

5. Their preparation and burial of Jesus Body was the best thing they could do at this point –

So there they laid Jesus, because of the Jews' Preparation Day, for the tomb was nearby. John 19:42  
*He deserved a full-blown funeral!*

III. Realize, at the same time there was also a preparation born out of hatred and fear –

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 that 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.” Pilate said to them, “You have a guard; go your way, make it as secure as you know how.” So they went and made the tomb secure, sealing the stone and setting the guard. Matthew 27:62-66

1. Works of hatred and fear lag behind labors of love -  
On the next day... Matthew 27:62 A

2. Never-the-less they still cover all their bases:

- A. They remembered what Christ had said, it worried them -  
Sir, we remember, while He was still alive, how that deceiver said, ‘After three days I will rise.’ Matthew 27:63

- B. They have both a seal and a guard at the grave -  
Pilate said to them, “You have a guard; go your way, make it as secure as you know how.” So they went and made the tomb secure, sealing the stone and setting the guard. Matthew 27:65-66

- “You have a guard, means Pilate is giving them Roman soldiers, - Matthew 28:12 makes this clear.
- Seal, string and a wax seal, there was a death penalty connected to the breaking of this seal.

3. Most importantly, none of this keeps Jesus down –  
“O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?” The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord. 1 Corinthians 15:55-58

*Nor does it keep Him from saving us –*

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. Romans 6:23

*Arnold Brevicek*