

**Subject: *The Burial and Resurrection of Jesus***

**Scripture: *John 19:38-20:10***

According to Scripture, the Gospel has three important components: the death, the burial, and the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

*1 Corinthians 15:1-4<sup>1</sup> Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; <sup>2</sup> By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. <sup>3</sup> For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; <sup>4</sup> And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures.*

All important creeds or statements of basic beliefs of the early church mentioned the death, burial, and resurrection as fundamental truths of the Christian faith.

We find the historical record in Matthew 27, Mark 15, Luke 23 and here in John.

### **1. The preparation and burial of Jesus' body**

- The preparers of His body

The Bible mentions two men who took the initiative to give Jesus' body a proper burial. They were Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus. When you look at all four gospels, you learn that Joseph was a rich man, a prominent member of the Jewish Sanhedrin, a godly man who was praying for the Messiah to come and a disciple of Jesus (19:38). The Bible also tells us that he was a secret disciple for fear of the Jews. A boy had his dog with him, just a common mixed breed, a cute little dog. This man asked him: "Son, what kind of dog do you have?" The boy told him it was a police dog. The man had his doubts so he said, "He sure doesn't look like a police dog." The boy said, "He's in the secret service." Joseph had been in the secret service, but now he's coming out and taking a stand for the Lord. Nicodemus, you will remember from John 3, came to Jesus by night. He's mentioned a few more times (Jn. 7 and here in Jn. 19), and each time he is identified as the man who came to Jesus by night. But now he's coming out into the light. Jesus told Nicodemus, "You must be born again," and somewhere along the way he was born again and this is a proof of it.

It took courage for Joseph to go to Pilate and ask for the body so he could bury it. Pilate was angry at the Jews for pushing him to the limit and his conscience was still bothering him. It took courage for these men to break with the Jewish leaders who called for Jesus to be crucified because they thought he was guilty of blasphemy. It also took love for these men to do what they did. This world needs men who will stand up for Jesus with love and boldness.

- The preparation of His body

Joseph took Jesus' body and Nicodemus brought the spices and these men wrapped the body in strips of linen cloth. Since they touched Jesus' dead body they were considered defiled and could not participate in the Passover celebration. But that didn't matter. They took care of the real Passover, the Lamb of God. How did Joseph and Nicodemus know that Jesus was the Messiah and Savior? Look at John 7:45-53. They told Nicodemus to search and look, and that's exactly what he did. As Nicodemus and Joseph searched the Scriptures they realized

that Jesus fulfilled many of the prophecies about their Messiah. He was the Lamb of God. He told Nicodemus (Jn. 3) that He must be lifted up (crucified).

- The placement of His body

These men read and studied that spoke of Messiah's death and burial, **Isaiah 53:9** *And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth.* Joseph was a rich man and he had a new tomb near the place where Jesus was crucified, according to God's perfect plan.

If these men had not taken Jesus' body and given Him a decent burial, it is likely that His body would have been thrown in a ditch or on a garbage heap. That's what they did with people when they were crucified. Jesus was poor and like so many other things He borrowed a burial place. He didn't need it but just three days.

## **2. The empty tomb and evidence of Jesus' resurrection**

If the Gospel of John was just the biography of an ordinary man, there would not be a 20<sup>th</sup> chapter. All human biographies end with the death and burial, all of them except one. Jesus rose again as He said. The resurrection proved He was the Son of God and the payment for sin was enough. Jesus was asked to give the Jews a sure sign to prove He was the Messiah. He said the only sign will be the sign of the prophet Jonah.

***Matthew 12:39-40*** <sup>39</sup> *But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonah:* <sup>40</sup> *For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.*

- Mary's observation and conclusion

She saw the stone rolled away and concluded that someone had taken His body away.

- Peter and John's observation and conclusion

Peter and John saw inside the empty tomb and concluded that Jesus was alive from the dead. They saw the grave clothes lying in place and the head cloth folded in a place by itself. It was obvious that His body was not stolen, but it had passed through the wrapping. When Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, he came out of the tomb bound hand and foot with grave clothes, and Jesus had to say, "Loose him and let him go." With Jesus it was much different. As John described this account he used three different words for seeing:

Verse 5 – to glance, to look in

Verse 6 – to look carefully, to observe

Verse 8 – to perceive and comprehend

They saw and believed. Their lives would never be the same. Do you believe that Jesus died, was buried, and rose from the dead? Has your faith changed your life?