

Resurrection: Hoax or Reality?

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If you have your Bible, turn to Matthew 28. Shall we pray just before we read the Scripture? Our Father, we thank You for this day. What a wonderful day! Yea, Heavenly Father, what a responsible day. As we stand this morning, Father, it is not by might nor by power but only by Your Spirit. We pray, blessed Holy Spirit, would you minister the Word to every heart? No one but You can bring enlightenment, conviction, concern, and interest. We plead the precious blood of the Lamb over the service for protection to preach, for protection to reason, and for protection to think and to respond to the call of Jesus Christ. Our Father, exalt Thy Son this morning. Oh God, I pray that men and women who are dead in sin may come in contact with the living Christ and go away from here this morning new creatures in Christ Jesus. We pray, Lord, for those with problems too heavy to bear and too hard to solve that the Living Christ may be the Answer this morning. We need Thee. We ask for You to fill us. The service is Thine. Now, Lord, we look to Thee for blessing because of Your Son the Lord Jesus and in Whose name we pray, Amen.

Matthew 28:1-20: *In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre. And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow: And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men. And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and, behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him: lo, I have told you. And they departed quickly from the sepulchre with fear and great joy; and did run to bring his disciples word. And as they went to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came and held him by the feet, and worshipped him. Then said Jesus unto them, Be not afraid: go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me. Now when they were going, behold, some of the watch came into the city, and shewed unto the chief priests all the things that were done. And when they were assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel, they gave large money unto the soldiers, Saying, Say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole him away while we slept. And if this come to the governor's ears, we will persuade him, and secure you. So they took the money, and did as they were taught: and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day. Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them. And when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted. And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.*

We come this morning to the subject, "Resurrection: Hoax or Reality." Now, what do we mean by way of introduction this morning about resurrection? When we think about resurrection, we are not talking about a person's spirit still being with us. When we are speaking of resurrection as the Bible teaches, we are talking about physical resurrection. Jesus rose again bodily from the grave. I say that because in Lakeland or any other city this size, there are many preachers who will stand and preach about a resurrection that they do not believe in. They will talk about Jesus' Spirit still lives with us. What they mean is they think that Jesus is still dead and His presence is still with us. That is not a resurrection. That is not what the Bible is saying. A person who believes that is not a Christian, which I will show you in a little while. Jesus rose again from the dead. He died in a body and was buried. He rose again in a body that could walk, talk, see, and eat and that they could converse with. They could recognize that Jesus rose again. Now about this matter of the resurrection — when you open the Scripture, there is more, not that one is less important, but there is more in the Bible about the resurrection than the crucifixion itself. For you see, the crucifixion without the resurrection means that Jesus was a Martyr. He is still dead, like the religions of the world. He is still dead. His body still lives smoldering somewhere in the Judean Hills. The resurrection and the crucifixion are vitally important. They are Siamese twins. They are inseparable. They stand and fall together. The Lord prophesied. Simeon prophesied at the

birth of the Son of God when He was taken to the temple. Simeon took Him up in his arms and prophesied that the matter, the sign, would be spoken against. I read about it in the book of Luke when He came into the temple there. The word says in Luke 2:34: *And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against;* The sign that is spoken against is the resurrection. Now, Satan hates the resurrection for it announces his doom and his downfall. It would seem that everybody would embrace the doctrine of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. It seems that everybody would embrace that there is life beyond the grave. It is a hated doctrine by some, and how tragic that is. We come to the Bible, and we have to believe in the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. Religion hates the resurrection. Let me say that Christianity is one thing, and religion is another. Religion hates the resurrection. Acts 4:1-2 says: *And as they spake unto the people, the priests, and the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees, came upon them, Being grieved that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead.* Now, they hate the resurrection. Do you know why? Because if there is a resurrection, then they have to bow before the Son of God and claim Him as Lord and Savior and obey Him. They do not want to do that. Resurrection is hated by religion and the cults. You ask the cults what they think about or believe about the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. They skirt around the matter of the resurrection. Not only that, but philosophers laughed at it in Acts 17 when Paul came to Athens, the philosophers' hill. They said, "He speaketh some strange thing. He speaks of Jesus and the resurrection from the dead." He preached about the resurrection. The Word says in Acts 17:32: *And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked:* Philosophers mock about the resurrection of the dead. Religion hates the resurrection of the dead. Christians believe in the resurrection of the dead, not only because of the fact that it is a doctrine but because they have come into living contact with the Son of God Who has changed their life. 1 Corinthians 5:17: *Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.* 1 John 5:12: *He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.* As Christians, we believe in the resurrection of Christ from the dead because we have discovered it in the Word of God and because we have met Him. We know what He has done for our hearts and our lives. We discovered that we began to live when we met Jesus Christ. Our life really began. "He walks with me. He talks with me. He tells me I am His own." He stands with me in the hours of trials. He stands with me in the hours of darkness. He manifests Himself to me in hours of pleasure. He is a living Savior, and He lives today. I come to the message today wondering, "What should I preach this morning?" I am going to preach that which everything depends upon, and that is the Gospel.

Turn to 1 Corinthians 15. This is the Gospel, all the Gospel. Sometimes a person will say, "That is the Gospel truth." If it is not the death, burial, and resurrection, it is not Gospel truth. It is the Gospel that is the power of God unto salvation. Here is the Gospel. That is all of it. There is no more. There is no less. I read in 1 Corinthians 15. This is all important. This is the reason we are here today because of the resurrection. I read in 1 Corinthians 15 concerning this matter. Some people think that the Christian's faith is believing what is not. I repeat, some folks think that a Christianity is just wishful thinking. He is believing what is not true. But that is not so. A Christian is a person who has put his hope and faith upon facts. Today, I want to deal with three historic facts. They are facts that nobody can deny. They are facts that you cannot refuse. They are facts that you cannot answer. We come to those facts today. I read in 1 Corinthians 15:1-2: *Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain.* Now, he said, "I am declaring the Gospel that saves." He talks about what it means to believe in vain in that same chapter. Verse 17: *And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins.* Verse 12: *Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?* Hear me now. He said, "If Christ be not raised from the dead, your faith is vain." You cannot be a Christian unless you believe in the physical, bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. You are not a Christian unless you believe that Jesus rose again bodily. If you believe in a Christ that did not rise again, then your faith is vain. You have believed in vain. It is all over. There is no hope. There is no use. You cannot be saved. Romans 10:8-9: *But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe*

in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. To be a Christian, a person has to believe in a Savior that came out of the grave. Oftentimes, folks will say, "Well, Preacher, I don't know. I could spend years (and you could spend years in doing so) in going to libraries. I don't know what religion to follow. I don't know which way." I said there is a very simple test that you could take. It will not take much time or effort on your part. There is a little test that you can find out which way is right. Go to the tomb. If it says, "Here lies so and so," keep walking; you are at the wrong place. You just keep walking until you come to the place that says, "He is not here. He has risen." Stop, because that is the Person Who has dealt with my greatest enemy. That enemy is death. Before Paul begins to declare the Gospel, he says to believe in any other Gospel than the resurrected Christ is to believe in vain. Now, what is the Gospel? Look in 1 Corinthians 15:3-4: *For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:* This is evidence. These are facts stating that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures. The second fact is that He was buried. The third fact is that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, just exactly like the Scriptures stated. These are the three facts that I want to present to you this morning. It is very simple. You may have heard them before, but our destiny hangs upon the reality of these three facts that **Jesus Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.** I am tired of hearing about somebody, a kid or a teenager, out on the lot, and somebody is witnessing to him. He blabs out, "I'm an atheist!" I want to say to them, "No, you are not an atheist. You are a parrot." Do you know what a parrot is? He repeats something that he heard somebody else say. He has never sifted the evidence. Somebody comes along and says, "I'm an atheist," because of the fact that he thinks he is so smart that he has not examined it. He has not studied it. He has not found out whether the man that made the statement was reliable or not. He simply accepts it. Listen. God forbid that you would be a parrot. If you are sincere and if you weigh the evidence, there is no way under Heaven that you can come out with the evidence without believing that the Son of God died and rose again the third day according to the Scriptures. There is no way out. God has placed in the Word infallible proofs, not just one but many infallible proofs. He raised Him from the dead. Acts 1:3. The fact of the resurrection is just as much an established fact as the fact that George Washington lived and died. Before I get into my message, open over to the book of 1 John. I read chapter 5. Do not believe everything you see on television or everything you hear on the radio or everything you read in the newspaper, because it is not so. You know, "The soap that does so and so, the toothpaste that does so and so, but this does it a whole lot better." That is an advertisement. In the book of 1 John 5:9 the Word of God declares: *If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater:* I have never known anybody who picked up a history book and set out to try to disprove the fact that George Washington lived, was the President of the United States of America, and died. I have never found any high school student that tried to overthrow that. Many high school students, many college students, and many college professors have tried their best to disprove the facts of the death, the burial, and the resurrection of Jesus Christ. God said, "If you receive the witness of men." You pick up a historian's account of the life of George Washington. You do not question that fact. God has a greater witness. If you can believe men, brother, you ought to be able to believe what God lays before us. I was not there when Jesus was crucified. God has left evidence in the Word, a Word that is unchangeable and unshakable. God has given witness of 500 at a time that stand up and say, "We have seen Him. We talked to Him. We walked with Him. We ate with Him. We felt with Him. We heard Him. He commanded us." There is evidence to convert any mind that is open for truth. Now, I said that to get to my message.

Here are the three facts in the book of 1 Corinthians — I have already read it. **FACT NUMBER ONE — THE FACT OF HIS DEATH.** 1 Corinthians 15:4: *And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:* I am not going to go into detail about the purpose of His death. He died because you sinned and because I sinned. That is the reason He died. He bore our sins in His own body on the tree. Christ died for our sins. He had no sins of His own, but He came into the world to die for our sins. Let us look at the fact of His death. Folks come along and say that He did not die, He swooned. When He got in the grave, the cool tomb revived Him, but He did not really die. God puts in this blessed Book to prove to you and me that He was actually dead. He gave up the ghost. His corpse, his body, was a lifeless corpse. There

was no life in Him. I summon witnesses to the platform to prove the fact that Jesus literally and actually died. I will call first of all a confirmed executioner. I will call to the platform the centurion who was used to seeing people die. It was his task to see people put to death. He was in charge of that gruesome event on that day at Calvary's cross. I turn to the book of Mark. You can turn there if you like. Mark 15. I call this centurion to the task. I call him to the platform. I ask what he has to say. Mark 15:39. This is the centurion. You could not fool him. He knows what death is. He has seen people die, not one, not two, but he has seen people die again and again. Some people will know. I have had calls from the hospital when people say, "Come quickly; somebody is dying." I would go, but there was not anybody dying. I have watched people dying. I have watched people die. I know you can die without any signs. I have seen folks say, "So-and-so is dying," but they have never seen anybody die. They think they are dying. I will walk in the room. This person is not dying. Somebody got excited. They had never seen anybody die. I have watched somebody die. This centurion was used to death. He knew what death was. I read in Mark 15:39: *And when the centurion, which stood over against him, saw that he so cried out, and gave up the ghost, he said, Truly this man was the Son of God.* He said that he saw Him give up the ghost. They went in, and they requested the legs be broken. Joseph went in after the body. Look at verses 43-45: *Joseph of Arimathaea, an honourable counsellor, which also waited for the kingdom of God, came, and went in boldly unto Pilate, and craved the body of Jesus. And Pilate marvelled if he were already dead: and calling unto him the centurion, he asked him whether he had been any while dead. And when he knew it of the centurion, he gave the body to Joseph.* I have a witness who said that He literally died.

I will call another witness. If you would, turn to John 19:32-34: *Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him. But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs: But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water.* Dr. M. R. Dehaun is now in the presence of the Lord. He was a great preacher of the Gospel and a medical doctor before his conversion to Jesus Christ. Dr. Dehaun stated — this is a medical doctor's statement — "When the blood and the water separate in the circulatory system, it is an evidence that death has taken place." This is medical proof, not only from the fact of a centurion that he died, but proof that Jesus bled blood and water out. He died. Doctors say he died.

Then, let us look at the religionist. Turn to Matthew 27:63. Those who hated Him said He died. They stood around that cross. They mocked Him. They said that He died. I read about it in Matt 27:62-64: *Now the next day, that followed the day of the preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate, Saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again. Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead: so the last error shall be worse than the first.* Rest assured, they were going to make sure this Man really died. His enemies said He died. Medical doctors said He died. The centurion that was in charge of it said He died. The friends said He died, for they took the body. They wrapped it in grave clothes, prepared it, and buried it. They said He died. That is an established fact that Jesus Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures. That is fact number one. The rest means nothing if He did not die. If He did not lay down His life, you and I are still in our sins, brother, for we have put our faith in Him and are of all men most miserable, because we believed in a Savior Who is still dead and Who is not our Savior.

FACT NUMBER TWO — THE FACT OF HIS BURIAL. If the Holy Spirit is so emphatic and spends verse after verse to prove this, it must be vitally important. The fact about His burial is written meticulously and carefully in all of the records -- Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. It is written there because it is vitally important. He must be buried. Why? It was to prove the fact that He was dead. When He rose again, He rose again a supernatural resurrection.

Now, let us analyze the evidence of that. Matthew 12:40: *For as Jonas 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.* He was crucified Wednesday afternoon. He was in the grave Wednesday night, Thursday night, Friday night, and Saturday night. He rose again after sundown Saturday, the first day of the week. He was literally buried three days and three nights. Prophecy says it is so. Then again in the Word of God, His enemies knew where He was buried. They sealed that particular sepulcher. They did not seal any other sepulcher. They went unto

Pilate. He said to make it as sure as you can. In Matthew 27, they went unto the sepulcher. They put the seal of the Roman Empire outside that tomb. Then they put the Roman Legionnaires outside that tomb to guard that tomb lest that seal be tampered with, the rock moved, and a lie perpetrated. Listen, these enemies knew He was buried. These soldiers knew where He was buried. They stood guard. They stood vigil three days and three nights outside that tomb. The friends knew where He was to be buried. Joseph of Arimathaea, Nicodemus, Mary Magdalene, another Mary, and women from Galilee watched the procession. They watched the processes for preparing the body for burial. The Word of God proved beyond a shadow of doubt that Jesus Christ not only died, but that He was buried. He was buried in a man's tomb. It was sealed. It was closed by the owner. It was sealed by the government, and it was guarded by the military, the Roman Legionnaires. Jesus died for our sins according to the Scriptures. He was buried.

FACT NUMBER THREE – HE ROSE AGAIN THE THIRD DAY ACCORDING TO SCRIPTURES. He rose again. Let us analyze the fact of His resurrection. Turn to Matthew 28. First, let us look at the moving of the stone. Who moved the stone? If Jesus had moved that stone, He could have moved it very simply by the word of His mouth. If He would have moved it physically out of the way, they would have said He did not die. They say He was sick and hurt, but He got up. He really did not die. God has made it so that we have to believe that He died. He laid down His life. Listen, the angel of the Lord came that morning to move the stone, not to let Jesus out for Jesus was already gone. He moved that stone in order to let the ladies and the disciples in to see that He was not there. This is interesting as you read Matthew 28:2. Soldiers watched the angels move that stone. Women watched the angels move that stone. They knew that stone was not removed by Jesus. They knew that somebody else had not moved that stone. They knew the disciples had not moved that stone. There are witnesses from the camp of the enemy and from the camp of the saints of the Lord as to who moved that stone. I will begin reading in verse 2: *And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow: And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men. And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay.* Come in! That stone was moved to let the women in, not to let Jesus out. Jesus rose again in a glorified body that could go through closed doors. He could go through stony tombs. He could vanish and appear, but it was a physical body that ate. You could feel it. It walked and talked among them. Who moved the stone? The angel of the Lord moved the stone, and God had made sure that the stone was not moved until there were witnesses concerning the moving of that stone, that there may not be a lie said that somebody stole His body.

Second, look at the lie of the soldiers. In Matthew 28, the soldiers went into town. Man, you talk about awake on guard duty! Those guys were awakened. They were not asleep. Those guys were paralyzed with fear, and when they got over themselves, they sent somebody over into the Sanhedrin. Oh what a day, when those soldiers stand before the very One's resurrection they lied about! What they could have given to the world if they would have told the truth, but they sold it for a handful of money. What a price they paid for a handful of money. Look at it beginning in verse 12: *And when they were assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel, they gave large money unto the soldiers, Saying, Say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole him away while we slept. And if this come to the governor's ears, we will persuade him, and secure you.* The lie of the soldiers. The first question that comes — “Say somebody stole Him away while we slept.” — if they were asleep, how did they know what happened? That is real logical. If they were asleep, how did they know what transpired? Second, no soldier would confess to the fact of sleeping at his post in that day, for to do so, he would lose his life. Those soldiers knew what Roman vengeance was. They would not have confessed to anybody that they slept at their post of duty. Again, here comes a question to them: why were all of them sleeping at the same time? That would not be possible and logical. Then another question: if at the death of Jesus Christ those who followed Him were cowards at His death, do you mean to tell me they would come out there when they had forsaken Him and steal His body? They would be the ones to lose everything. They had forsaken houses, mothers, and lands. They had left everything they had ever owned and held dear to them to follow the Son of God. They would be the ones to cast dispersions at the name of the Son of God. If they did

steal the body, do you think Peter would stand up on the day of Pentecost with power and conviction and preach about a Christ that was still dead if he did not believe it? A dead person did not put courage into their hearts and lives. They did not expect Him to rise from the dead. It was the reality that He was alive that brought comfort. They were no longer afraid of death. Simon Peter is facing death in Acts 12. They were going to execute him the next day, yet he was sound asleep. Could you sleep the night before your execution? Simon Peter could. Why could he? He was sound asleep because he knew that Jesus Christ rose from the dead. If He rose from the dead, He had the keys of death. Death held no fear for Simon Peter, because he knew that He was alive.

I must move quickly through the fact of His resurrection, the infallible proofs of His resurrection. Let me read in the book of Acts some infallible proofs. Acts 1:3: *To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God:* I suppose the main reason for this message today is not for adults; it is for young people here, some smartalecky person. Listen, young person, do not be a parrot. When I went to school, nobody called themselves an atheist. You did not find that in high school. Junior boys talk about being an atheist. They are not atheists. They are parrots. I am taking the Word this morning that Jesus actually died and was buried. Jesus Christ the Son of God rose from the dead, and nobody can refute it. Nobody can overthrow it. Nobody can doubt it at all, unless they do not want it to be so. In Acts 1:3: *To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God:* Not just one time, but forty days of evidence He gave to them.

Let us go back to the tomb. I want to show you something. I want to drag from the tomb as a lawyer does. I want to sift around the tomb. I want to bring you some infallible evidence from the tomb that the Son of God rose from the dead. Then, we will leave the tomb and go somewhere else. Take a glance at the tomb. First of all, who moved that stone? Some supernatural person moved that stone. Luke 24:2-3: *And they found the stone rolled away from the sepulchre. And they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus.* That body was sealed in that tomb. That body was placed there by the owner of that tomb. That body was sealed in that tomb by the government. That body was watched by the Roman Legionnaires. When that stone was rolled away there was no way in the world for the Son of God to get out of that tomb except a supernatural resurrection from the dead.

Third, look at the moved stone. Turn to John 20. They went to that tomb. As John and Simon Peter went, Mary Magdalene said, "They have taken away my Lord, and we know not whence they laid Him." Simon Peter and John took off for the tomb. John may have been the younger; he out ran Simon Peter. He came to the tomb. He looked in, but he would not go in. Simon Peter, impulsive as he was, rushed into the tomb. I read now beginning in verse 6: *Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes lie, And the napkin, that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself. Then went in also that other disciple, which came first to the sepulchre, and he saw, and believed.* Now, what was it that convinced him? If somebody had stolen the body, why take time to unwrap the body? If somebody had stolen the body, why take time to fold it carefully and place it by itself? No, no. If they had stolen the body, they would have been in the utmost of haste. They would not have left the bandages in the first place. What does he see? When he came into that tomb, he saw the form of Jesus outlined by bandages and wrapped in the form of a human body. The bandage that wrapped about His head wrapped by itself. In other words, he saw an empty cocoon. The Son of God had risen from the dead through the bandages. The bandages were left undisturbed exactly like they were on His body. John said, "I saw," and he believed. John 20:30-31: *And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.* John saw. John believed by the evidence of the empty form of bandages wrapped around the Son of God.

There are some other evidences at the tomb. Consider not only the evidence of the tomb, but also the evidence of His witness. Turn to 1 Corinthians 15. You can go to any court in the land. Anybody who had a case with this much evidence would win anything that ever came to the court. I read in 1 Corinthians 15:3-6: *For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to*

the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures: And that he was seen of Cephas, He was seen of that man Simon Peter. He was seen at such an expense that Simon Peter stood up and pointed his finger in the face of the crowd that he was scared of a few nights before. He said, "You crucified the Lord of Glory, and God raised Him from the dead." He was seen first of all by the coward, Simon Peter. A little maid caused him to deny his Lord. Simon Peter said, "I saw." Who else saw Him? What about the twelve? They all forsook Him that night. What happened to those twelve disciples that made them fearless? What happened that sent them across the Roman Empire that turned it upside down? After a while, one in ten out of the entire Roman Empire was converted to Jesus Christ. It turned the place upside down. They had seen the risen Christ. They did not believe it when they heard it from the lips of Mary Magdalene. They said, "We saw Him." Turn the page, and you discover that somebody else saw Him. After that, He was seen of above 500 brethren at once. If there was a wreck out here on the corner of Florida and Miami Avenue, you could take four or five people and set them out on the corner to witness it. You could summon them to court. Brother, not one of the five of them will ever agree what happened there. They will never see the same thing. They will never see it exactly as it happened. Five hundred people — He said the greater part remain unto this day. He said they are still alive. They have not passed off of the scene. Paul was converted, and he said, "I could summon 500 brethren who personally saw Him, not individually." Five hundred people do not see the same thing at the same time without it being reality. Five hundred people said they saw Him. The twelve said they saw Him. Peter said he saw Him. He was seen of James. Who was James? James was His half-brother. John 7:5: *For neither did his brethren believe in him.* Here was His half-brother that had walked beside Him through life and watched Him grow up. He did not believe that He was the Messiah. He appeared to him. James, a skeptic, was converted to Jesus Christ. You find Him in the upper room with His brethren praying the day before the day of Pentecost. They were converted because of the fact that they knew He was alive. Jesus rose again. He was seen of them. Paul said, "Last of all, He was seen of me." Paul hated the name of Christ. Paul despised His name. He said, "I did it in unbelief." He did not believe in Christ. On that road to Damascus when the Son of God revealed Himself to him, Paul fell at his feet and said, *Lord, what will Thou have me to do?* The rest of his life was to give his life for the Son of God. He poured his life out again and again. Paul said, "Last of all, I saw Him; I was His greatest enemy." Brother, I can testify that He rose again, and He lives forever and evermore. That is evidence of the tomb. That is evidence to the witness of the book of Acts 10. Let me read one passage in Acts 10. Peter went down to preach at the house of Cornelius. He preached of the resurrection. Acts 10:40-41: *Him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly; Not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead.* They said, "We ate with Him. We sat at the table with Him. We watched Him break bread. We watched Him eat there in the upper room." John said, "We felt Him. Our hands handled the Word of life. We not only saw Him, but we came into contact with Him." There are witnesses. The evidence is from the witnesses.

Another evidence is the day of Pentecost when Simon Peter stood up to preach. He shook his finger in the mob that had cried, "Crucify! Crucify!" He said, "You crucified the Lord of Glory, and God raised Him from the dead." The Word says in Acts 2:37: *Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?* Three thousand of them got saved in one day. Brother, that ought to be evidence to the crucifiers of the Son of God that they believed that the Son of God was alive and alive forevermore. They had the evidence. Farther on in the book of Acts is additional evidence. These were His greatest enemies. Acts 6:7: *And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.* The priests were the ones that put Him to death. Here is a priest that plotted His death. Here was a priest that caused the people to rise up. Here was a priest that bought Pilate off. Here was a priest that bought the soldiers from telling the truth. The priests hated Him. He said: *great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.* Those unbelievers, those hard-hearted crucifiers of the Son of God, were converted. Why? There was evidence beyond dispute that Jesus Christ rose from the dead. Years ago, there was a man by the name of Mars, an English writer who set out to take the New Testament and disprove the resurrection of Jesus Christ. He wrote a book entitled, *Who Moved the Stone?* I read that book. It seemed like a lawyer with a magnifying

glass at the tomb shifting the evidence. That man was converted to Jesus Christ before he ever finished the book. Why? As a lawyer, he was brought face to face with facts, not fiction. He was brought face to face with reality, not a hoax. Jesus Christ indeed died, and He rose again. The very fact that He rose again proved Him to be the very Son of God. If He was the Son of God, He must forsake all and follow Him. Anybody who has turned to the Word of God and said, "I want to know for sure," He will show them. Jesus said in John 7:17: *If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.* If anybody wants to know, the evidence is here. You can convert anybody that wants to know.

In closing, Jesus died for our sins. He was buried. He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures. He is alive. He is alive forevermore. Now, what should be your response to Him? I am through after this. What is your response? You can be the philosophers who do not want to believe it. God said in Acts 17:31: *Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.* Friend, listen. Philosophers and skeptics do not want it to be so. If it is really so, they did not have to bow down before Him. If it is really so, there is a judgment after this life. It is really so. Hebrews 9:27: *And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.* What is your response? The response of your heart ought to be the natural response of a man named Thomas. When Thomas was faced with the risen Christ, he fell on his face and said, "My Lord and my God." That ought to be your response this morning. If Jesus Christ died on a cross to save me from my sins, was buried, and rose again to give me life eternal, the natural response ought to be to fall on your face and say, "My Lord and my God." That ought to be your response this morning. Your response ought to be the response of Paul when he said, *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?* Child of God, your response ought to be to love and to live for Him. Paul said in 2 Corinthians 5:14-16: *For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.* If Jesus died for me when I was to die and rose again, then I am alive because of His death. I have no right to live a selfish life but to live for Him. Now, unsaved person, you can be saved this morning. You can come into contact with the living Christ and know that He lives because of the fact of what He does to your heart and life. How can you be saved this morning? Romans 10:9-11: *That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.* That is the Word of faith. Faith is taking God at His Word. Everything I said this morning is based upon fact. God said it. You believe it. That settles it. It takes your own faith about His death, faith about His burial, faith about His resurrection, and now faith about your own salvation. Romans 10:9: *That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.* This morning, come as a sinner believing that Christ died for you, confessing Him as your Lord and your Savior. You believe He died, He was buried, and rose again. Brother, He will save you. God said so. *That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.* Trust Him; be saved; and know it!