

# What A Weekend!

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[0:00] Matthew chapter 27. We're going to begin reading in verse 57 and read through 28 and verse 15.

! Matthew 27 verse 57. As evening approached, there came a rich man from Arimathea named Joseph, who had himself become a disciple of Jesus.

Going to Pilate, he asked for Jesus' body, and Pilate ordered that it be given to him. Joseph took the body, wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and placed it in his own new tomb that he had cut out of the rock.

He rolled a big stone in front of the entrance to the tomb and went away. Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were sitting there opposite the tomb. The next day, the one after preparation day, the chief priests and the Pharisees went to Pilate.

Sir, they said, we remember that while he was still alive, that deceiver said, After three days I will rise again. So give the order for the tomb to be made secure until the third day.

[1:16] Otherwise, his disciples may come and steal the body and tell the people that he has been raised from the dead. This last deception will be worse than the first.

Take a guard, Pilate answered. Go, make the tomb as secure as you know how. So they went and made the tomb secure by putting a seal on the stone and posting the guard.

After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb.

There was a violent earthquake for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning and his clothes were white as snow.

The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men. The angel said to the women, do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified.

[2:24] He is not here. He has risen just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples. He is risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee.

There you will see him. Now I have told you. So the women hurried away from the tomb, afraid, yet filled with joy and ran to tell his disciples.

Suddenly Jesus met them. Greetings, he said. They came to him, clasped his feet and worshiped him. Then Jesus said to them, do not be afraid.

Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee. There they will see me. While the women were on their way, some of the guards went into the city and reported to the chief priest everything that had happened.

When the chief priest had met with the elders and devised a plan, they gave the soldiers a large sum of money, telling them, you are to say his disciples came during the night and stole away, stole him away while we were asleep.

[3:32] If this report gets to the governor, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble. So the soldiers took the money and did as they were instructed.

And this story has been widely circulated among the Jews to this very day. It all happened in one weekend.

The death, burial and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. And those events have forever changed the eternal destinies of millions.

Of sinners. There are events that had been foretold for thousands of years. There were hundreds of promises in the Old Testament scriptures that were fulfilled in those three days.

It was a long time coming, but when it came, it was all done in a weekend. What a weekend. Killed and buried on a Friday and raised from the dead on a Sunday.

[4:42] I want us to look today at three events of that weekend. We've already looked Friday night at Christ's death. And so we're going to see this morning the burial of Jesus, the tomb guarded and the tomb empty.

First of all, the burial of Jesus. And we can't help notice some parallels with Jesus birth.

He was born not in a palace, but in a borrowed cattle stall. And he's buried in a borrowed tomb. He was wrapped in strips of linen at his birth and also at his death.

He was honored only by a few shepherds at his birth and only by a handful at his death. And this, I think, is one of the most striking things about his burial.

How few were in attendance. When Charles Spurgeon died in 1892, memorial and funeral services stretched from Sunday to Thursday.

[5:48] And it was estimated that 100,000 people attended. And on Thursday, the burial, the funeral procession in London made its way from the tabernacle to the cemetery.

And never had such crowds assembled along that five-mile route. When Ronald Reagan died, ceremonies continued an entire week and captured all the major media.

More recently, when Whitney Houston died, the family and important guests were crammed into a church. And millions more watched on television.

But when the Son of God died, you could count the people at his burial on one hand. Joseph, Nicodemus, and a couple Marys and possibly another.

I find that striking. When have you been in a funeral with so few in attendance? I can't remember ever being to such a burial.

[7:00] Half a dozen people for the burial of God in the flesh. But oh, how the thousands came when the bread was multiplied. And oh, how the hosannas rang when the king triumphant rites.

And as long as the miracles flowed like wine, they called him wonderful. They came to dine. But nobody wanted him. Nobody cared. Not when he's hanging as a bloodied corpse upon a tree.

And then taken down and laid in a grave. Even then, he was despised and rejected by men. His burial was a part of that shame that he bore for us.

He who was the eternal king of glory. Did not consider being equal with God something to be grasped. But rather was made in the likeness of men.

Being found in fashion as a man. Became obedient unto death. Even the death of the cross. It was a shameful death.

[8:13] And it was a humble burial that followed. But one thing the burial of Jesus did. It proved the death of Jesus. And you may say, well, isn't that assumed? No, it's not assumed.

Many would say he swooned and just recovered. This is no swooning Jesus who three days later recovered under the care of loved ones.

There's at least four things that testify to the reality of his death. First of all, the soldiers, when to hasten the death of these crucified men, came to break their legs so that they could not push up on the nails and be able to get more breath.

They came and started breaking the legs of these three. And when they came to Jesus, they saw that he was already dead. And so they did not break his legs.

But rather, one of the soldiers took his spear and jabbed it into his side. And when he pulled it out, John saw the sudden flow of blood and water and testified to it.

[9:20] He was really dead. The soldiers knew it. And then there was that centurion who was in charge of this crucifixion and no doubt had witnessed the scene of crucifixion down to the last breath many, many times.

And after only hanging on the cross for. Six hours. Joseph of Arimathea goes in and asked.

Pilate for the body of Jesus and Pilate is shocked that he was already dead. Men could hang for days on the cross. Dead already. And he sends to the centurion.

Can it be. That he's dead. Now, the centurion's job was to ensure that very thing. Jesus was under the Roman death sentence.

That means his body cannot be released for burial until he has paid the penalty and died. And the centurion signs the death certificate.

[10:24] He was really dead. Thirdly, even the enemies of Jesus testified of his death. We see this in verse 63. When they come to Pilate, they say, while he was still alive, he said such and such.

In other words, they knew that he was no longer alive. They saw him die. Even his enemies testify to his death and say so on the record. And then lastly, there is Joseph and Nicodemus who came

believers, friends of Jesus and took his corpse down from the cross and wrapped him up body, face and all.

And shut him up in the tomb. Friends don't bury friends alive. And so the burial of Jesus did prove the reality of his death.

And this is important because in the courtroom of heaven, the word has gone out that the wages of sin is death.

The soul that sins, it must die. And if Jesus Christ did not really die, but swooned, then there's still hell to pay for every single one of us for our sins.

[11:53] That second death under God's wrath forever still awaits us. If, in fact, he did not die that death in our place. And so Paul says, what I received, I passed on to you as a first importance.

That Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures and that he was buried. Very important that we establish that he was really dead.

Because without a real death, you don't have forgiveness of sins and you don't have the pain of the penalty. And you don't have real resurrection.

So the burial of Jesus. Secondly, the guarded tomb. Some of you have seen the pyramids. I have too on books and television.

But you know that they were large tombs, weren't they? Tombs of great pharaohs. And those tombs were guarded as well, weren't they? Guarded with an elaborate system of booby traps to kill any thieves that might try to get in and steal the treasures that were buried with those pharaohs.

[13:06] But there are no treasures to be robbed in Jesus' tomb. He dies with nothing. Absolutely nothing. Even his clothes were stripped from him and divided among the soldiers and gambled for that seamless robe.

And yet. His enemies are intent on posting a guard at his tomb. Well, verse 62 tells us it happened the next day.

That would be Saturday. The Jewish Sabbath. And isn't it interesting how the Pharisees, who condemned so many for supposedly breaking the Sabbath, nevertheless find a loophole for doing some unfinished work of their own on this day.

And so worship is put on hold. And off to Pilate they go. They'd been able to eliminate Jesus so quickly.

But after a night of congratulating one another, their celebration stopped when somebody reminded them of something that caused them grave concern.

[14:24] And now they bring that concern to Pilate. But, sir, we remember that while he was still alive, that deceiver said, after three days, I will rise again. Now, they're not concerned in the least that Jesus would actually rise from the dead.

That's not even on their radar. He was dead, dead. They saw him. What they were concerned about was that his disciples might come and steal the body and then spread the news to the people that Jesus had risen from the dead.

Even as he said. And that this last deception would be worse than the first. It was bad enough having a man running around claiming to be God. What will this be like when we have a man claimed to have risen from the dead?

A story that's circulating saying this same Jesus is now alive. It will confirm his claim to be God. And the Jesus as Messiah and Jesus as God crowd will increase and our crowd will decrease.

And we can't think of that. So, Pilate, please secure the tomb. And we say to these praise-seeking Pharisees and chief priests, your fears are all so unnecessary.

[15:44] Nothing to fear here. You see, you don't need to worry about Jesus' disciples pulling off a prank resurrection. They're not even thinking at all about a resurrection.

Would to God they were, but they're not. It's the furthest thing from their minds. They didn't remember these words of Jesus, even though he spoke them often to them.

And especially the closer he came to Calvary. These things, his resurrection was so far from their minds that even when it happened and when they were told he was risen, they still wouldn't believe it.

And when the women, as was read earlier, saw the empty tomb and the two angels told them, don't you remember how he said to you when he was with you that he must be crucified and on the third day rise again?

Don't you remember? Then they remembered. And they ran back to the other 11 and the others with them. And they told them all that the angel had told them. And they still did not remember, would not believe it.

[16:53] There was no resurrection in their mind at all. That was nowhere in their thought. You women must be mentally touched or something's wrong with you.

No, it can't be that. And they did not believe them. And even after Jesus appeared to the 11 themselves, when they were all together in the upper room or in that room at one time, they would sooner believe that they were what they were seeing was a ghost than to believe that it was actually Jesus risen from the dead.

Thomas wasn't there and he says, no, no, I don't. I don't care what all all all of you have to say. I will not believe until I put my fingers into the nail prints and thrust my hand into the side.

I will not believe it. And all of this. This is on record for us in all the gospels. Why? Just to show us that these men were not expecting the resurrection.

So. So Pharisees. No worry. They're not thinking about any resurrection. Prank are real. You don't need to worry about it. But can you see how even their skepticism, the disciples own unbelief was overruled for the good of the church because it completely undercuts the rumor that was later spread about them that they came during the night.

[18:22] They were so intent on a resurrection that they came and they stole the body and told everybody he's raised. No, no, no. Wasn't anywhere near their thought.

And so the resurrection of Jesus is well established, not by gullible disciples that were expecting a resurrection and so supposedly saw it, but rather by men who demanded proof upon proof upon proof upon proof.

They are the ones who testified to us in our Bibles that he is indeed alive. And so the enemies of Jesus, funny enough, remembered his promise when even his own disciples had forgotten all about it.

And so they press pilot to give the order to make the tomb secure until the third day. Isn't that something they even remember the day? The third day. And pilot grants them their wish.

Take a guard. Go make the tomb as secure as you know how. So maximum security is the aim here, fellas. And they made the tomb doubly secure.

[19:31] First with a guard. And you're not to think of a single man. A guard was a band, a troop of armed Roman soldiers that were provided by pilot.

And then a seal, a cord that was attached to the stone in the tomb with either clay or wax that had the royal insignia impressed upon it.

And that would tell if anybody was messing with the tomb. If anybody rolled the stone, the wax would crack and they would know there was foul play. So there.

Now they can sleep at night again. They've made the tomb secure. Can you think how foolish this whole scene must have looked to the angels looking on in heaven?

We've got him sealed in now. Yeah, right. And they're just licking their chops. No wonder the one seated in the heavens laughs.

[20:39] Laughs. At men who fight against the Lord and his anointed one. But even this foolish action of Jesus enemies is overruled by God and has made another proof for the real resurrection of Jesus.

Because it undercuts the whole cover up story that they're later sending around. That his disciples came and stole the body away during the night. That's the whole reason they made the tomb secure.

Just to make sure that such a thing couldn't happen. And so they undo their own cover up. And they also supply the first eyewitnesses to the resurrection of Jesus.

The very first ones to see that the tomb was empty was none other than the Roman guard. So the burial of Jesus, the tomb guarded, and lastly, the tomb empty.

Now, the first thing I want to say here is that no one was an eyewitness to the actual act of Jesus' resurrection. This is what I mean.

[21:53] No one was there in the tomb when the dead body of Jesus was infused with new life and came alive.

No human eye saw him exit the tomb. Now, there were many who saw the empty tomb.

And many who saw the resurrected Christ after his death. But we read of no human eye that was there to see it actually happen.

Now, it could be that Jesus was already alive and gone when the earthquake happened. And the angel came and rolled the stone away. He certainly didn't need the stone to be rolled away to come out of the tomb.

Because later this same day and then a week later, on two occasions, he appeared to his disciples and they were behind locked doors. And suddenly Jesus was there in their midst in his resurrected glorified body.

[23:01] So we shouldn't think that, well, Jesus really needs to have some angel come down and roll that stone away so he can get out. No, rather, I think the reason the angel rolled the stone away is that so people could get in and see that he isn't in there.

That was the message of the angels inside, wasn't it, to the ladies? Come on in and see and then go and tell. It's interesting that when Jesus died, the earthquake.

And when he rose, the earthquake again. He's not here.

He is risen just as he said. So the two Marys are going to the tomb at dawn. And they're not going to steal the body, as was thought. But they're going to finish anointing Jesus with spices.

But they've got a problem. They're wondering, how are we going to roll that heavy stone away? But before they get there, it was all taken care of. For there was a violent earthquake.

[24:18] An angel of the Lord came down from heaven and going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning and his clothes were white as snow. The earthquake, no doubt, broke the seal, the little wax thing.

And if in some way it survived, when the angel rolled the stone away, it definitely broke. But that one angel was all it took to take care of the whole troop of Roman soldiers securing the guard. None of them stopped him as he went to the tomb and rolled back the stone and sat on it. And it wasn't because they were sleeping. That's not the reason.

The Bible tells us why. It was because they were so afraid of this angel that they shook. It's hard to know which shook more, the earth or the troops.

They shook and became like dead men, the Bible says. They were rendered powerless and then unconscious and passed out.

[25:25] So much for their making the tomb secure. And when they came to some of the guards ran off into the city and reported to the chief priests everything that had happened.

Isn't that good? They gave him the whole scoop. They didn't leave out anything. Excuse me. They they said we were there and suddenly the earth was shaking violently and this angel came down out of heaven.

And he went right to the tomb and rolled back the stone. We couldn't stop him. We couldn't lift a finger. We couldn't do anything. We were frozen with fear. And then it just went dark on us. When we came to. He was gone. There wasn't anyone in there. Just the clothing. That's what happened.

And so these guards sent to secure the tomb become in the plan of God, the first witnesses to the resurrection of Christ.

[26:28] He makes even the wrath of man to praise him. Even the enemies are employed to become testaments to the resurrected Christ.

And that to the high priests themselves. Well, that took the high priests and the Pharisees completely by surprise.

They'd not figured on real, real resurrection. They'd only prepared for the potential of a few disciples coming to to steal the body away. So the chief priests and elders quickly convened a meeting to deal with this unexpected turn of events, because if we don't act now, it'll be too late.

Everybody will be saying he's risen. We've got to have a story ready to meet it. And let's not rush over the fact that all the evidence pointed to the truth of the resurrection.

This was a moment of truth for these men. As it's a moment of truth, any time the truth meets up with people.

[27:38] We do not judge the truth. The truth judges us. What do we do with the truth when it comes to us?

What will these men do when they're confronted with the truth? Well, their answer was to suppress the truth, to shove it down and to devise a cover up.

And I ask why? Why not rather just tell the truth? Just own the truth. You know, go to the people and say, you know, we thought that this Jesus of Nazareth was a deceiver.

And this is why we thought that. But now that he's risen from the dead, we see that he is, in fact, who he said he was. He is God. God in the flesh come from the father to save his people from their sins.

He is our Messiah. We had it all wrong. We were so wrong. He was innocent and we murdered him. He was the king of glory and we killed him. Why not just tell the truth?

[28:51] Well, you know why. It's the same reason you cover up the truth. It's the same reason I try to hide what I really am and put a face on in front of you that looks better than what I really am.

Because if we told the truth and we came forward with the truth, we'd have to own our sin. These men would have to own their murder, their deceit, their lies and their self-righteousness would not allow that.

These men would have to own that this Jesus of Nazareth is God and is worthy of our lives and worthy of obeying and serving and believing.

And they wanted to be their own masters. They were slaves of sin, and so they shoved the truth down.

They pushed it away from them. The very truth that would have set them free. Isn't that something? Just just embrace it and live. No, they shoved down the truth that would have set them free.

[30:04] And by their further lives, they cheat themselves and they cheat others from dealing with the truth. And so they thrust salvation from them, showing that they counted themselves unworthy of eternal life.

They didn't want other people to hear what the soldiers had told them. The whole truth. Instead, they gave the orders a large sum, the soldiers a large sum of money, telling them you are to say his disciples came during the night and stole him away while we were asleep.

It would take money and a lot of it. To get a Roman soldier to say that. We were on guard and we were sleeping.

That could be punished by death. Could be. Pilate wasn't one to go easy with his punishments. So the Jewish leaders had to cough up a large sum of money to persuade them and also gave them this assurance.

If this report gets to the governor, Pilate will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble. We got more money where this has come from. How would you like your offerings being used in this way?

[31:21] What the money their money could buy a betrayer, Judas. Plenty of false witnesses in their kangaroo courts.

A cover up story right to the top to the very governor himself. But their money could not buy the forgiveness of one of their sins. They had murdered the prince of glory.

And now they were paying hush money. To keep the truth from coming out. These same religious leaders earlier had referred to Jesus as that deceiver.

And they had referred to what would happen if the disciples came and stole his body away and told everyone he was risen. That would be a greater deception.

And now here they are. Spinning their own web of deceit. Who is the deceiver after all? Of course, we've never done that.

[32:30] Judging in another what we do ourselves. Romans 2.1 says that's why we're all without excuse. Because we do that.

We judge others for things that we do ourselves. Folks, if we don't see our nature in these rulers, we've missed a big point of the story.

If we're the goody two-shoes reading about these sinful Pharisees and scribes, we've missed much of the gospel here for us. We are them.

We are the suppressors of truth. We are the liars. We are the deceivers. Those who judge others but don't judge ourselves. And that's why Jesus has come.

That's why he's risen to save sinners. So the soldiers took the money and told the lie that was put in their mouth. Anybody with a brain in their head could see that their cover-up story was full of holes.

[33:29] So how do you know the disciples stole the body? If you were sleeping, after all. How do you know that?

Well, it was hard to kill Jesus, but it was harder to keep him in the tomb. Nevertheless, 35 years later, when Matthew got around to writing down this gospel record, he could say, This story, this

story has been widely circulated among the Jews to this very day.

35 years later, it was still being told. Wherever the gospel ran, wherever the gospel went about Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection, Right alongside it was that little Jew there to just say, But you know what?

His disciples really came and stole him away at night. That's how it happened. The guard was asleep. 100 years after Jesus' resurrection, the Christian apologist Justin Martyr addressed the Jews in his dialogue with Trifo.

Quote, You have sent chosen and ordained men throughout the whole world. We would call them missionaries. You Jews, you have sent these missionaries throughout the whole world to proclaim that, quote, A godless and lawless heresy had sprung from one Jesus, a Galilean deceiver, Whose disciples stole him by night from the tomb.

[34 : 57] So what the Bible called a lie, purchased with hush money, they call the truth. What the Bible calls the truth of the resurrection, they call a lie.

And so they exchange the truth for a lie. And we do that probably every day of our lives.

Something of truth for the moment on the shelf. For some lie. That lures us into sin. And we must not forget that Satan is the father of lies.

And he no doubt fathered this lie about the disciples stealing away the body of the Lord. Because he's out to rob you of the only hope you have of eternal life.

That is found in a savior who has actually risen from the dead. Triumphant over sin and death and hell. That's your only hope. And he would rob you of that.

[35 : 58] He didn't really rise. It's just a story. Can you see the heart of Satan wanting to rob you of life eternal?

He's out to rob you of the certainty that God the Father was satisfied with this death of his son. That his son really did atone for sin when he died.

And the Father showed it by raising him from the dead. And Satan would rob you of that hope and that comfort and that certainty by saying he didn't really rise.

Oh, but God did raise him from the dead. Freeing him from the agony of death because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him. So his enemies might have succeeded in persuading many that Jesus did not rise.

But false witnesses did not keep Jesus from rising from the dead. That's just the fact of the matter. They only cover up the truth that Jesus is alive. And only for a while.

[37 : 00] Because truth has a way of coming out and up, doesn't it? As every cover-up attempt eventually finds out.

Truth comes out. And especially when it is the truth, he comes out. All lies are only temporary. They only hide the truth for a while.

Because a great unveiling is coming. When everything that has been hidden will be brought out into the light. And all who deny the resurrection will find that their lying rumors did not keep Jesus out of the grave.

Nor will they keep him out of sight. For when he comes, every eye will see him. Even those who pierced him.

Even those who lied about him. Yes, even those who ignored him. He's coming.

[38 : 04] The truth will come out. And the one they say is still dead. Is very much alive. And they will stand before him in judgment. For God has now commanded all people everywhere to repent.

For he has appointed a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. And he has given proof of this to all men.

By raising him from the dead. There's your proof. Doubters. Will everything happen like the Bible says it will?

That Jesus Christ will come back and judge all men. And separate them into two camps. And one will be sent away into everlasting destruction. Everlasting torment.

And the other into everlasting life. Is this really going to happen? Will Jesus really judge all men?

God has given proof of it to every one of you.

[39 : 08] Everyone has the proof. What is it? He raised the judge from the dead. The judge is alive and well. The day is still on the calendar. The judge will be there.

You will be there. So repent. Repent and believe. So you've got the proof of God.

A resurrected Jesus. And you've got the flimsy lie of men. What are you building your eternity on? What are you doing?

What are you building on this morning? Your eternity. You're building on the God of truth who cannot lie. The resurrected Christ. Or the lies that have come from the pit of hell.

The words of unfaithful men. You see, my unconverted friend, this is a moment of truth for every one of you.

[40:06] Just as it was for those chief priests and Pharisees. When the truth was brought to them. It's a moment of decision. What am I going to do with the truth?

And you've just been presented again with the truth of the gospel of Jesus, death, burial and resurrection. Now, what will you do with the truth?

His resurrection proves that he really is who he claimed to be. He's God. In the flesh. He's your creator. Your creator. Your creator. The one that made you.

He's the only mediator between God and men. He's the only savior of sinners. That's what he claimed to be. And the resurrection proves that he's the only one good enough to get into heaven. No one else. If you get in, it's got to be on his goodness. He's who he says he is. He's the judge of all men. And as such, he has a claim on your life.

[41:11] On your love. On your allegiance. Your trust. Your obedience. He expects you to surrender your will, your life, everything to him.

He expects you to repent and believe on him right now on the spot. Because he is God. And you are his creature. And you've sinned against him.

You know, there's a lot of people this morning. They're found in churches just like this. And they would say, John, I believe in the resurrection.

I believe Jesus really died and really came out alive. My friend, that's not enough. Hell is full of people who believe in the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

The demons also believe and tremble. The question is, have you bowed to that Christ? People can say, I believe he rose again and have no time for the living Christ.

[42:14] Yes, I believe he rose from the dead. But they've never given him that place in their heart that he deserves as God and Savior and Lord. Christianity is an all or nothing religion.

It's all or nothing. The whole thing either stands together or falls together. It's an either absolutely worthless thing or it lays claim to all that you are and have.

And God is willing to stake the whole of his religion upon the resurrection of Jesus Christ. So Paul writes to the Corinthians. And he says, if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is useless and so is your faith.

Your Christian faith, your religion, it's useless. And we are liars at the end of the day because we said Jesus did rise from the dead.

So here's the thing. If Christ is not risen, then find another religion. Don't play this Christianity game.

[43:33] Life is too short to waste on a pack of lies. Let's eat, drink, and be merry.

For tomorrow we die and that's it. It's what he says in 1 Corinthians 15. If Christ is not risen, find another religion.

Oh, but if he has risen, as he said, and as dozens of witnesses who saw him said, Then find your place beside Thomas at his feet, crying, my Lord and my God.

Find your place with the women at his feet, worshipping him as their Savior and Lord. Yielding your life up to him in that sweet surrender of repentance and faith.

Receiving him as your only hope for heaven. Receiving him as your Savior, as your God, as your Lord to obey and follow.

[44:48] Your God to worship, your Savior to believe on. Giving all that you are to all that he is. Receive him as the prophet that he is. To teach you the will of God.

To teach you how to live, how to think. Receive him as the priest to die for your sins and to plead with God for you. Receive him as your king to rule over you and to defend you with his power and grace.

What a weekend this was 2,000 years ago. Jesus Christ dead and buried on a Friday. Risen to life on a Sunday. And what a weekend this could be for you, my friend.

You've never come to Christ. That on this Sunday, if you would bow at his feet and acknowledge him as Lord. And say, Jesus have mercy on me, a sinner.

You would partake in new life. You would live forever. That's why the things of this momentous weekend are written down in scripture.

[46:00] It's why about a third of every gospel account is taken up with those that last week. So that you might believe that Jesus is the Son of God.

And that by believing, you might have life. Eternal life through his name. He died to provide a free and full salvation.

But how will you escape if you neglect so great a salvation, so great a Savior? Believers, I want to encourage you with the resurrection as we close.

He's alive and he's alive for you, as we heard in the Sunday school hour. He's alive to help you in your weakness. He's alive to forgive you in your sin. He's alive to be your king and your prophet. To teach you, to lead you, to defend you. To intercede for you. What a hope we have in the face of death in a risen Savior.

[47:06] Could this be the year that you lay to rest some believing loved one in Christ? It will not be without the certainty that because he rose, they too will rise.

Could it be that this would be the year that some of us who know the Savior will go to meet him?

We don't face those uncertainties without this certainty that Jesus rose from the dead.

And all who believe in him will also rise. So let us lose our fears in our living Savior. Let us serve him and make use of him, running to him every day of our lives, leaning and looking to the Lord who lives.

Let's pray. Lord, when we read your book, we find ourselves written in to each story, each chapter. We find ourselves as the sinners that we meet there. And what a blessing it is for us who've been bitten with a poison bite of sin and of the wrath of God forever.

[48:26] To find that a substitute Savior has come to die for sinners and make an offering for sin. To take the full penalty of death under the wrath of God.

That whoever would believe on him should not perish but have everlasting life. Thank you, Lord Jesus, that you always live. And because you live, you're able to save completely all who come unto God through you.

Draw us all to you today, whether for the first time or the thousandth time. Receive the praise, the worship that you deserve from each heart that you've made.

We ask it for your eternal praise with thanksgiving. Amen. Amen.