

The Church Proclamation of the Reality of the Resurrection

(Matthew 27:62-66; 28:5-7)

Sunday, April 7, 2019

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the badge of Authority for the Christian faith. He died on the Cross of Calvary to suffer for the sins of humanity. Yet, there were three crosses on that good Friday. What particular event gave validity to the life and words of the man on the Central Cross? It was the fact of the resurrection. When He rose from the grave, the world had to acknowledge that all of His former words and deeds were total truths.

This great event in the life of our Lord did not happen without resistance from the enemies of righteousness. The hatred was so great in the lives of these evil ones that they were quickened by the prophecy concerning the fact that Jesus was going to rise from the dead. They remembered the words of our Lord about the resurrection before it occurred (Matt. 27:63). It is sad to note that the disciples remembered the words prophesying the resurrection after it occurred (Luke 24:8). With the dread of a potential resurrection of Jesus Christ in their minds, these enemies proceeded to try to prevent any incident that might lead people to believe that it actually happened.

I. Attempts to prevent the Resurrection.

In Matthew's account, we see mean men struggling against eternal truth. They imagined the Lord to be a deceiver. They thought the disciples to be cunning men with a scheme to make the resurrection appear to be real. They took it upon themselves to try to prevent an event which would make the people think that Christ was raised from the dead.

- A) These men in ignorance and malice came to Pilate. They sought to destroy this Jesus (Matt. 12:14). Now that He was destroyed, they were going to see that His deathly defeat remained a reality. They approached the weakling politician, Pilate because they knew he was capable of being manipulated.
- B) Pilate in uncaring complacency. Pilate had seen and heard enough about Jesus Christ. He certainly did not want a false rumor circulating about His Resurrection. He gave then a detachment of soldiers, concurred in their efforts to secure the tomb site, and issued the weakest statement of encouragement the world has ever known. He

said, “make it as sure as you can.” Mere men seeking to secure a tomb that God Himself had declared would be opened (Matt. 16:21-22; 17:22-23; 20:18-19). The soldiers carried out the command of Pilate and made sure the rock was sufficiently placed before the door of the tomb. They then sealed the rock, thus making it a trespass against the law of the Roman Government for the tomb to be opened. The soldiers then stood guard by the tomb.

Sunday, April 14, 2019

II. Attempts to obscure the Resurrection

They tried as hard as they could, but God moved. His Son became eternally victorious over death. The Christ was raised from the tomb. The sure message of prophecy that He would arise from the grave had occurred. The facts were undeniable and irresistible. The soldiers appointed to prevent just such an incident became the heralds to present this great truth (Matt. 28:11).

- A) Conniving religionists. The attempts to prevent the resurrection had failed. A second scheme was launched to try to deny the truth of what these Christians claimed was a fact. These conniving people called for the god of money to help. They worked out a plot where the soldiers were made the “fall guys.” The scheme was to claim that the disciples came and stole the body of Jesus while the soldiers slept.
- B) Bribed soldiers. Money persuaded the soldiers to go along with the sinful ploy. It was just another day’s work with a little extra pay for them. Pilate was a puppet politician in the “back pocket” of the people, and they knew it (Matt. 28:14).

Sunday, April 21, 2019

III. Attempts to obscure the Resurrection

We are shocked when we read this story of these who tried to prevent and deny the fact of the Resurrection. We rejoice in the victory wrought through Jesus Christ over the forces of evil and darkness. Yet, an ever greater attempt is being made against the Resurrection today. It is impossible to deny the fact of the living Lord. It is insanity to pretend it did not happen. But the world is not compatible with the risen Christ. Therefore, the present world force of unrighteousness has unleashed another attack. This attack is an attempt to obscure the reality and meaning of the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

- A) Terms Used. The terms that bombard the minds of our generation are “Easter eggs, rabbits, new clothes, etc.). No, it is not a denial – but rather a diversion of emphasis. The excitement that the average child experiences is not founded in the fact of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. Rather, he/she is expecting a basket and new clothes.
- B) Commercial Promotion. The commercial world gained millions and millions of dollars on the activities of Easter. It is one of the most lucrative seasons of the year. The Resurrection is obscured in the “market place.”
- C) “Holiday” instead of “Holyday!” Easter in the life of Christians is a HOLY day where we celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. Easter has now become an extra-long weekend with Friday and Monday out of school. The holy day has become a holiday.

Sunday, April 28, 2019

IV. The Real Purpose of the Resurrection

- A) Authority of Christ. The major purpose of the Resurrection was to reveal the Authority of Jesus Christ. Though subjected to death, He was victorious over it. He conquered death by His release from its clutches. His resurrection validated all of His teachings while on earth. Prior to His crucifixion, He spoke with power of heart and mind. The Resurrection revealed that He also spoke with power of body and eternal realism.
- B) Dignity of Man. The effect of the Resurrection is that it gives dignity and worth to man. Man, as a temporal being, is faced with extreme limitations. When he is given the experience of eternal life through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, these limitations of time and space are removed. He is made a victor over death through Jesus Christ.
- C) Determined Destiny. The Resurrection of Jesus Christ actually determines the destiny of mankind. Paul states in **1 Corinthians 15:22**, ***“For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ Jesus shall all be made alive.”*** As an individual associate himself with the living resurrected Christ, he is given new life. Old things are passed away. All things are become new.
- D) Proclaiming the Resurrection (Matt. 28:5-7). The Church must keep proclaiming the reality of the Resurrection. This is an excellent time to reconsider your true opinion about the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. Is it a simple fact characterized by the worldly trimmings of eggs, rabbits, and new clothes? Or is it a moving force that has caused you to know beyond a shadow of a doubt that you, too, have conquered death through Him?