

RESPONSES TO THE RESURRECTION MATTHEW 28:1-20

Text:

Introduction:

The resurrection is the ultimate life-changing truth. The way we respond to life-changing truth impacts the way God works in our life.

Some consider it just a holiday, while others consider it a historic day.

To some it's a day for candy, colored eggs, and large meals with family; to others it's a day that we celebrate God's love for mankind, our risen Saviour, and the provision of salvation.

Notice how some in that day responded to the resurrection.

1. THE WOMEN'S DELIGHT (VV. 1-10)

A. Some came to look (Matt. 28:1)

Matthew 28:1

¹ 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.

Maybe they were coming to pray or to meditate near the place where His body had been buried. Maybe they were coming to make sure that everything was in order at the tomb. Whatever the reason, we are told that they "came to see the sepulchre".

B. Some came to labor (Mark 16:1, Luke 24:1)

Mark 16:1

¹ And when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, had bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint him.

Luke 24:1

¹ Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain others with them.

Some of the women came to perform one last labor of love for the Lord Jesus. They came to finished anointing His body for burial. They wanted to serve Him one last time.

C. Some came to linger (John 20:11-18)

John 20:11-18

¹¹ But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping: and as she wept, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre, ¹² And seeth two angels in white sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. ¹³ And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him. ¹⁴ And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus. ¹⁵ Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away. ¹⁶ Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master. ¹⁷ Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God. ¹⁸ Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that he had spoken these things unto her.

Mary Magdalene lingered at the tomb after the others had already gone away. Here was a woman that owed much to Jesus. There had been a time in her life when she had been possessed by seven demons, Mark 16:9.

Mark 16:9

⁹ Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils.

Her life had been radically changed by the Lord and she loved Him more than life itself. If you will remember, she was one of the last at the cross, Matt. 27:61, and she was the first to see Him after He had risen from the dead, Mark 16:9.

Matthew 27:61

⁶¹ And there was Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary, sitting over against the sepulchre.

Mark 16:9

⁹ Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils.

She loved Him so much for what He had done for her. Surely her heart was broken that morning, but still she came to love Him and worship Him!

2. THE SOLDIERS' DENIAL (VV. 11-15)

A. The Problem (vs. 11)

Matthew 28:11

¹¹ 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.

If Jesus was really alive from the dead, then the Jews had a real problem! It meant that He was right and they were wrong! It meant that their system of worship was dead and that Jesus, alone, was the path to salvation! They had to find a way to silence the disciples and to counteract what had happened at the garden tomb early that morning. They were terrified!

All religious systems in the world are bothered by the empty tomb! You can travel to China, find the tomb of Buddha, and it's "Occupied". You can travel to the middle east and find the tomb of Mohammed, and it's "Occupied". Travel to Russia and look at the body of Lenin in his glass coffin his body is still there. But, travel to Palestine to an old tomb that's been hewn out of a rock, the tomb where they tell us the body of Jesus once lay but He's not there He is risen. There's one risen Savior and His name is Jesus! There is one Way to Heaven and His name is Jesus. There is only One who descended into the depths of death and came to life

again the eternal Victor over death for all who believe in Him, and His name is Jesus!

B. The Plan (vs. 12-13)

Matthew 28:12-13

¹² And when they were assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel, they gave large money unto the soldiers, ¹³ Saying, Say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole him away while we slept.

His resurrection is a problem for all who do not believe, so they try to find a way to discount it. They made up a lie to cover the truth. They devised a scheme to avoid having to face the facts. They willingly chose darkness over the light!

C. The Perjury (vs. 14-15)

Matthew 28:14-15

¹⁴ And if this come to the governor's ears, we will persuade him, and secure you. ¹⁵ So they took the money, and did as they were taught: and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day.

They agreed with the soldiers that if Pilate heard about this thing, they would lie for them and get them off the hook. After all, for a Roman soldier to sleep at his post carried a sentence of death. But, notice what they told

them to say: "His disciples came by night and stole Him away."

However, those eleven men were off somewhere cowering in fear, John 20:19.

John 20:19

¹⁹ Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.

They were so scared that when He was arrested, they fled in fear. They were so afraid that only one of them was brave enough to go to the crucifixion. They were so afraid that they allowed the women to go to the tomb to finish preparing the body. These men would never have stolen that body. They were just too afraid!

3. THE DISCIPLES' DOUBT (VV. 16–20)

Matthew 28:16-20

¹⁶ Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them. ¹⁷ And when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted. ¹⁸ And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. ¹⁹ Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the

Holy Ghost: ²⁰ Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

It's amazing that the soldiers didn't doubt, they just denied, but those who should have known doubted.

So often it's those who should be the most settled and stable in their faith who struggle the quickest.

Illustration:

Thomas – Except I can see

Peter – I'll never deny you – I'm going fishing

Close:

We all must respond to the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

We can deny it and shut it out, doubt it for investigation, or accept it in childlike faith.

God desires to work in and through our lives, but we must believe that He is who He says He is (Heb. 11:6).

Hebrews 11:6

⁶ But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is,

and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

Respond to the Lord today and let God's truth work in your life.