

**An Up-close & Personal Focus on
The Foundation Of Our Faith**

Easter Season 2023

The Reality of An Empty Grave

—Matthew 28:1–15; Mark 16:1–14; Luke 24:1–49; John 20:1–29

—“The message of Easter is not that Jesus is alive; it is so much more. The message of Easter is that Jesus has risen!” —**Colin Smith**

—“The truth of the resurrection gives life to every other area of gospel truth. The resurrection is the pivot on which all of Christianity turns and without which none of the other truths would much matter. Without the resurrection, Christianity would be so much wishful thinking, taking its place alongside all other human philosophy and religious speculation.”

—**John MacArthur**

—**Matthew 28:5–8** The angel said to the women, “Do not be afraid; for I know that you are looking for Jesus who has been crucified. “He is not here, for He has risen, just as He said. Come, see the place where He was lying. Go quickly and tell His disciples that He has risen from the dead; and behold, He is going ahead of you into Galilee, there you will see Him; behold, I have told you.” And they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy and ran to report it to His disciples.

The EMPHASIS of Today’s Study

The _____ of Christ is the most _____
event throughout all _____ history!

The _____ of Christ’s RESURRECTION _____ that
the Lord Jesus Christ is the _____ sent by God
to _____ us from the _____ we all
deserve for our _____ against God’s authority!

—Understanding the **Background** leading into to Our Study:

Notice the emotional reactions & responses expressed in these verses.

- 1} Peter’s denial {26:69–75}
- 2} Judas’ change of mind {27:1–10}
- 3} Pilate’s conscience
The crowd’s rejection {27:13–26}
- 4} The soldiers’ mockery {27:27–32}
- 5} The centurion’s moment of truth {27:33–56}
- 6} Jesus’ burial {27:57–61}
- 7} The Jewish leaders’ worries {27:27–32}

—Understanding the **Basics** about Our Study:

—1— Evaluating the **evidence** at **FACE VALUE**

—The **quest** of several ladies

—The **quandary** from a huge boulder

—The **quake** that opened the grave

—The **quote** that changed history

“He is not here, for He has risen, just as He said. Come, see the place where He was lying.”

—The **quick trip** to find His disciples . . .

—The **quieting** instructions from Jesus Himself.

—2— Examining the **evidence** that’s **FALSE**

—The guards took the **facts** to the wrong authorities

—The **foolish** bribe that made no sense

—The **fictional** story that spread and kept on spreading

—3— The **evidence** that **escaped** His **FRIENDS & FOLLOWERS**

—**Mark 16:8** They went out and fled from the tomb, **because they were gripped with fear and astonishment**; and they said nothing to anyone, for **they were afraid**.

—**Mark 16:10–11** She (Mary Magdalene) went and reported to those who had been with Him, while they were mourning and weeping. But when they heard that He was alive and had been seen by her, **they refused to believe it**.

—4— The **evidence** that **expanded** their **FAITH**

—**John 20:19–20** So when it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and when the doors were shut where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, “Peace be with you.” And when He had said this, He showed them both His hands and His side. The disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord.

—**John 20:24–25** But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples were saying to him, “We have seen the Lord!” But he said to them, “Unless I see in His hands the imprint of the nails, and put my finger into the place of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe.”

—**John 20:26–29** After eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors having been shut, and stood in their midst and said, “Peace be with you.” Then He said to Thomas, “Reach here with your finger, and see My hands; and reach here your hand and put it into My side; and do not be unbelieving, but believing.” Thomas answered and said to Him, “My Lord and my God!” Jesus said to him, “Because you have seen Me, have you believed? Blessed are those who will not see, and yet will believe.”

—Understanding how our Beliefs **EMPOWER** Our Behavior:

—The **ESSENTIAL EVIDENCE** proving the Resurrection of Christ:

{1} The **EMPTY** tomb

{2} The **EMPTY** grave clothes left behind

{3} The **EARTHQUAKE**

{4} The **EYE–WITNESS** appearances

{5} The **EFFECT** this had on Jesus’ faithful followers

—What does this **EVIDENCE ESTABLISH** for us?

—1) It proves that Jesus **EXISTED** & He is the Son of God!

—2) It verifies the reliability of the Bible & **EXPOSES** the **EXACTNESS** of God’s revelation to us!

—3) It affirms that Jesus is God’s **EXCLUSIVE** provision to save us from His judgment toward our sin!

—4) It **EMPHASIZES** the fact that God and God alone **ENABLES** us to live righteous & holy that can please Him.

—5) It **ELIMINATES** all doubt & disbelief God has sovereign control!

FINALLY we all must face the **REALITY** that without **FAITH** in the Lord, we cannot ever be assured of a **FUTURE** in Heaven!