

Easter

The Decision of a Lifetime

Matthew 28:1-17

Grace Fellowship Church / April 9, 2023 / Pastor Brad Bigney

I. Those Women at the Tomb Rejoiced in the Resurrection and Worshiped Him

For the first time ever, those women heard the greatest announcement that's ever been made: "He is not here; for He is risen, just as He said!"

Matthew 28:8-9 "So they departed quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to bring His disciples word.⁹ And as they went to tell His disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, 'Rejoice!' And they came and held Him by the feet and worshiped Him."

II. The Roman Soldiers and Religious Leaders Rejected the Resurrection and Even Tried to Cover It Up

This is not a case of people with doubts who need more information. It's a case of people who are troubled by the information they do have and wish it wasn't true, because they understand the gravity and implications of what the resurrection means.

Every person who chooses not to believe in Jesus and the resurrection doesn't do it for lack of evidence. Often, the refusal is in spite of evidence and is driven by the realization deep down inside that if this is true, it changes everything.

If Jesus conquered death, then He is Lord. If He's Lord, then we're accountable to Him, and we don't want life to be that way.

This is where a lot of people are today and it's how the religious leaders in Matthew 28 felt. They rejected the resurrection and denied it—not for lack of evidence, but for lack of desire to let go of being in control.

III. Some Had Doubts about It

A. Start by Doubting Your Doubts

Be skeptical of your own skepticism, especially if you've never taken time to carefully examine the claims of Jesus and evidence for His resurrection.

Take time to read the four Gospels for yourself—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John—and dig into other historical sources that confirm the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

Matthew 28:17 "When they saw Him, they worshiped Him; but some doubted."

Keep in mind that all the evidence in the world will never bring a person to absolute, 100% certainty.

B. Make a Decision about Jesus the Same Way You Make Other Important Decisions

The way you make decisions now is that through careful investigation, you make a decision to move forward based on the information you have, which is never all the information you wish you had.

Every decision you make is intellectual, emotional, and personal. That's why reason or intellect can only take you so far. It can bring you to a place of probability, but only a personal commitment can bring you to a place of certainty.

You will never be sure until you make a commitment to Jesus with your whole life. He calls us to give Him our lives, not just our intellectual assent. This is what holds most people back—not lack of evidence, but fear of letting go and losing control.

How Can I Learn More on My Own?

Great question.

It's been said that ours is "a faith in the sufficiency of the evidence." **If you would like to learn more about the Resurrection of Jesus**, consider visiting these websites to learn more about what Christians know and believe:



answersingenesis.org/jesus-christ/resurrection/introduction/ — A series of articles addressing the importance of and objections to the Resurrection (also available as a book, *In Defense of Easter*).



gotquestions.org/empty-tomb.html — A short article describing the importance of the empty tomb of Jesus with links to more answers.

If you would like to learn more about what it means to know Jesus as your Lord and Savior, consider visiting one of these websites:



NeedGod.com — A short test to see if you are good enough to get to Heaven.



twowaystolive.com — A simple exploration of which king you are serving.