

BIBLE LIFE MESSAGES

How Do You Lift Up the Risen Lord?

Matthew 27:62-28:8

1 Lord Jesus said, 2 Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life. ¹

3 The scripture for today is from the Gospel of Matthew, chapter 27, verses 62 through chapter 28, verse 8, 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.’ ²

4 So give the order for the tomb to be made secure until the third day. 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

¹ John 3:14-15.

² 27:62-63.

on the stone and posting the guard.³

⁵ 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.⁴

⁶ The angel said to the women, “Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay.”⁵

⁷ Then go quickly and tell his disciples: ‘He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him.’ Now I have told you.” So the

³ 27:64-66.

⁴ 28:1-4.

⁵ 28:5-6.

women hurried away from the tomb, afraid yet filled with joy, and ran to tell his disciples. ⁶

Lord Jesus will be lifted up. He chooses you and me to do the lifting!

There's been a struggle throughout human history. Some have chosen to hold Him down and others have chosen to hold Him up. ⁸ What have you chosen to do? ⁹

I. Men Could Not Hold Him Down! - 27:62-66

Men could not hold Him down! ¹⁰ They certainly tried by rejecting His authority. ¹¹

Notice how He was rejected in His home town. **All the people in the synagogue were furious when they heard this. They got up, drove him out of the town, and took him to the brow of the hill on which the town**

⁶ 28:7-8.

was built, in order to throw him down the cliff. But he walked right through the crowd and went on his way.⁷

¹² Earlier in this same chapter ⁸ the crowd in Jerusalem rejected Him by asking that Barabbas, a murderer, be released from prison and that Jesus be crucified. But rejecting Him only brought attention to the contrast between their sinful lives and His perfect one!¹³

They tried by crucifying Him.¹⁴ But that only opened wide the door to heaven. Listen to Matthew, chapter 27, verse 51, **At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook and the rocks split. What this indicates is that the Law of Moses and the whole Old Testament system became fulfilled and obsolete!¹⁵**

Verses 62 through 66 record that they tried by

⁷ Luke 4:28-30.

⁸ 27:15-26.

guarding His tomb. Can you imagine the humiliation of a heavily armed squad of Roman soldiers having to guard a corpse? Imagine trying to explain what actually happened! ⁹

They continue to hold Him down ¹⁶ by denying God's existence. Many scientists today use the philosophy of Organic Evolution as a mental filter to automatically ignore the possibility of divine creation. ¹⁷

They hold Him down by ridiculing your faith. Don't let them make you feel stupid believing in the Lord by presenting to you "scientific evidence" which are sophisticated and smart sounding smoke screens. ¹⁸

If they can convince themselves that God doesn't exist then there is no exterior moral standard for human conduct. Morality becomes whatever they want

⁹ 28:2-4 - 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.

it to mean. So they hold Him down by living lives contrary to God's desire for us.

Men could not hold the Lord down no matter how hard they tried. The story of Easter Sunday morning is that

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II. Death Could Not Hold Him Down! - 28:1-6

Death could not hold Him down! Think about this. ²⁰ God is the only One who could die and then have the power to resurrect Himself! ²¹ The resurrection proves that Lord Jesus was God in flesh! Because that is true, then, ²² the resurrection provides the hope you need that you will someday be resurrected too! ²³

But people go to extremes to deny that the resurrection actually happened! Here are three of the most popular explanations of what might have happened. ²⁴

There's the Moral Theory. This explanation says that the resurrection of Jesus was a big fraud. The disciples stole the Lord's body and, then, lied about it.

But, then, they would have had to overpower and subdue a squad of heavily armed Roman soldiers. Would these same people, later, endure torture and death defending what they knew to be a lie? If that actually happened, they would have to go against their own Jewish background and the Lord's own clear teachings to defend a lie! ²⁵

Then, there's the Medical Theory. This explanation is that the Lord merely lapsed into a comma. He didn't actually die. ²⁶ He revived in the tomb, rolled the stone away and walked out. The disciples were not the liars, Jesus was! ²⁷

But, the Lord was beaten, and then scourged, then He carried a heavy cross. Then, He hung on it for six hours and a spear was thrust into His side. ²⁸ The

Centurion, an expert in such matters, proclaimed Him dead. Pilate was convinced that He was dead. ²⁹ Lord Jesus laid in the sealed tomb one and a half days with no food, no water and very little oxygen if any. ³⁰ Then He had the strength to roll back the huge stone single handed and, somehow, sneak past the guards. It seems like you would need more faith to believe that than you would for the resurrection! ³¹

Finally, there's the Psychological Theory. Actually all the disciples saw hallucinations. These visions were the result of excited imaginations! Nobody was deceitful. They actually thought it had happened. ³²

But this psychological condition presupposes expectancy. ³³ Nobody expected the resurrection! ³⁴

When Mary Magdalene reached the tomb Easter Sunday morning she expected to find the Lord's body

and was alarmed that it wasn't there. ¹⁰ 35

On the road to Emmaus the disciples talked to the Lord without recognizing who He was. They discussed the resurrection only as a rumor. ¹¹ 36

The other women who arrived at the tomb had to be told by an angel that the Lord had risen. They were told that Jesus would meet them in Galilee. ¹² 37

Does more than one person have the same hallucination? 38

That first Sunday evening the disciples were huddled in the upper room when Jesus appeared to all of them except Thomas. The following Sunday He appeared to all of them including Thomas. ¹³ 39 Later He showed

¹⁰ John 20:15 - "Woman," he said, "why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?" Thinking he was the gardener, she said, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him."

¹¹ Luke 24:13-33.

¹² Matthew 28:1-6.

¹³ John 20:17-31.

Himself to seven disciples in Galilee. ¹⁴ ₄₀ Then, the Apostle Paul relates that He even appeared to five hundred people at the same time. ¹⁵

So, men could not hold Him down and death could not hold Him down. ₄₁

III. You Must Lift Him Up, But How? - 28:7-8

You must lift Him up. But how? ₄₂ The Lord said, **But I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself.** ¹⁶ ₄₃

The one infallible proof for the resurrection is **Christ in you, the hope of glory.** ¹⁷ When people see the resurrected Lord living His life in and through you, then they will be convinced!

How can you lift Him up? ₄₄ Through your verbal

¹⁴ John 21:12.

¹⁵ I Corinthians 15:6 - After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep.

¹⁶ John 12:32.

¹⁷ Colossians 1:27.

witness! Matthew, chapter 10, verse 32 says, **Whoever acknowledges me before men, I will also acknowledge him before my Father in heaven.**

Another way to lift Him up is through you living His life before others. ⁴⁵ Matthew, chapter 5, verse 15 and 16, **Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.** ⁴⁶

Lord Jesus has risen from the dead! ⁴⁷

He lives His resurrection life today in and through each of you who have yielded your life to Him. ⁴⁸

So - if you have really committed your life to the Lord Jesus - you are lifting Him up!

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