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Longer quotations do not appear in the Study Sheet, but can be read in the accompanying transcript.

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## The Lord's Resurrection

The Christian faith \_\_\_\_\_ on the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Did Jesus \_\_\_\_\_ rise from the dead? Let's look at the evidence! We love the Lord and are determined to show that love by examining the Scriptures to see what God \_\_\_\_\_ of us. God regards searching the Scriptures to find the \_\_\_\_\_ as noble. Whether Jesus arose matters. If Jesus arose, there is life \_\_\_\_\_ death. If Jesus arose, He has fulfilled the ancient prophecies and \_\_\_\_\_ Himself to be the Son of God. If Jesus arose, then His \_\_\_\_\_ are true. If Jesus arose and is the Son of God, He is Lord of all and has authority over our \_\_\_\_\_. If the Lord Jesus arose, then He will one day come again and \_\_\_\_\_ you and me by His Word.

Since what we're studying today affects each of us and has eternal consequences for our souls, we need to pay \_\_\_\_\_ attention. If Jesus arose from the dead, we can't \_\_\_\_\_ Him or what He requires of us. We can't hide our heads in the sand. **Read what the Bible says in Hebrews 4:12-13.** One day you and I will give an \_\_\_\_\_ of ourselves to Jesus Christ.

**Our reading today comes from the Gospel According to Matthew 28:2-7.**

The Lord Jesus \_\_\_\_\_ His death and resurrection. Jesus said, "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem; and the Son of Man will be delivered to the chief priests and scribes, and they will \_\_\_\_\_ Him to death, and will hand Him over to the Gentiles to mock and scourge and crucify Him, and on the third day He will be raised up" (Matthew 20:18-19). This is an amazing and specific prediction! Jesus not only predicted He would be scourged and crucified at the hands of the chief priests and the Gentiles but also that He would \_\_\_\_\_ from the dead the third day. Only the Son of God could make such a \_\_\_\_\_ prediction about His death and resurrection and see its fulfillment just as He predicted.

Before we speak of a resurrection, we must first examine the evidence that Jesus actually \_\_\_\_\_ upon the cross. All four gospel accounts \_\_\_\_\_ of the beatings and His scourging. A Roman scourging led many men to \_\_\_\_\_. The whip they used lacerated the skin with sharp objects and caused the loss of much \_\_\_\_\_. Scourging left a person so \_\_\_\_\_ that they couldn't fight being crucified. The Romans, unlike the Jews, did not \_\_\_\_\_ their stripes to 39. The cross killed a person \_\_\_\_\_ and very painfully. While the nails through the hands and the feet were not of themselves fatal, the physical position of a crucified person, on a cross, created tremendous \_\_\_\_\_ on the heart and lungs. A person had to pull himself up to breathe in and out. The cross gradually wore a person down so that he couldn't breathe. In the case of Jesus, fluid surrounded his heart until it failed.

The reason soldiers would break the legs of a crucified person was to \_\_\_\_\_ their death. A person with broken legs couldn't \_\_\_\_\_ himself up to breathe and would die more quickly. They broke the legs of the two thieves; but these experienced soldiers found Jesus was already dead, so

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PO Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 1-800-321-8633

This study sheet is prepared by Jerry Campbell – [www.searchtv.org](http://www.searchtv.org); [jerry@searchtv.org](mailto:jerry@searchtv.org)

they didn't break His bones in fulfillment of Psalm 34:20 that "not a \_\_\_\_\_ of Him shall be broken." Instead, a soldier pierced His side with a \_\_\_\_\_, "and immediately there came out blood and water" (John 19:34). This flowing of water and blood is a sure \_\_\_\_\_ that Jesus was indeed dead. If Jesus had not died from the crucifixion, He could not have survived this spear.

Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus asked Pilate for the body of Jesus, but Pilate wouldn't release the body until he had \_\_\_\_\_ that Jesus was already dead. Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus \_\_\_\_\_ his body for burial in a new tomb a short distance from where he was crucified. John reveals that they \_\_\_\_\_ the body in linen wrappings with myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pound weight, that's at 12 ounces to the pound. This burial process would have \_\_\_\_\_ Jesus in a mummy-like wrapping with the spices sealing the cloth together. Bound up like this, Jesus—even if He by some remote chance survived—could not have breathed and lived. Jesus was \_\_\_\_\_ in the tomb.

The Pharisees and priests requested Pilate to put a \_\_\_\_\_ at the tomb. Matthew 27:62-64 records what they said. "Sir, we remember that when He was still alive that deceiver said, 'After three days I am to rise again.' Therefore, give orders for the grave to be made secure until the third day, otherwise His disciples may come and \_\_\_\_\_ Him away and say to the people, 'He has risen from the dead,' and the last deception will be worse than the first." Pilate said to them, "You have a guard; go, make it as secure as you know how." They went and made the grave secure, and they set a \_\_\_\_\_ on the stone. They were determined to not let anything happen to that tomb. They didn't merely post a couple of guards at the tomb. Some scholars suggest that there were as many as 28 guards there, and they would have been particularly watchful on the third day, when the \_\_\_\_\_ was greatest. The governor's seal meant that it would be \_\_\_\_\_ to mess with the tomb.

The Scriptures tell us that women came very early on the first day of the week to the tomb to \_\_\_\_\_ the body of Jesus. This was their first opportunity since the Sabbath had passed. They wondered, "Who will \_\_\_\_\_ away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?" They realized that the stone was "extremely large" according to Mark 16:4. Scholars suggest that this stone weighed between one and a half and two tons. They knew moving this stone was far \_\_\_\_\_ their ability and that it would require several strong men to move it.

Coming to the tomb, they saw an \_\_\_\_\_ had rolled the stone away. The stone sat in an inclined track. To open the tomb they had to roll this stone up the \_\_\_\_\_. Apparently it was picked up and moved out of its track \_\_\_\_\_ from the sepulcher. How could a group of \_\_\_\_\_ tiptoe among some sleeping soldiers, pick up an extremely large stone, maybe as much as 2 tons, and then move it away from the tomb? How could they break this official seal, move the stone, and remove the body of Jesus undetected by the soldiers?

When the women reported to the apostles that the tomb was \_\_\_\_\_, many of the apostles laughed and doubted their word; but two apostles wanted to find out for themselves. Peter and John ran to the tomb. John 20:5-7 says that they \_\_\_\_\_ in the tomb and saw the linen wrappings lying there. They saw "the face-cloth which had been on His head, not lying with the linen wrappings, but \_\_\_\_\_ up in a place by itself." This is curious. Why would the disciples, if they

stole the body, unwrap him and fold the face cloth, and leave the wrappings in the tomb, knowing that the guards were just \_\_\_\_\_?

Whatever understanding you have of this event, you must \_\_\_\_\_ who moved the stone, how the tomb became empty, who took the linen wrappings from the body of Jesus, and folded the facecloth and left them there. The eyewitnesses who examined these events \_\_\_\_\_ without hesitation that Jesus arose from the dead. According to Matthew 28:11-15, the soldiers reported all these events to the chief priests, who paid the soldiers a large sum of money to \_\_\_\_\_ and promised to keep them out of trouble with the governor. But down deep these soldiers and the chief priests \_\_\_\_\_ the truth.

Knowing this is the testimony of Scripture, let's ask whether the testimony about the empty tomb is \_\_\_\_\_. Can we test the credibility of the report of the resurrection? Is it believable? First, let's remember that Jesus believed and taught His people to be \_\_\_\_\_. The Lord \_\_\_\_\_ hypocrisy and deceit. Jesus praised Nathanael for being a person in whom was no \_\_\_\_\_ (John 1:47). Jesus spoke of the devil as a \_\_\_\_\_ and condemned it in John 8:44. How could His disciples abandon everything that they had been \_\_\_\_\_ and spread a lie throughout Jerusalem. By the way, all the Jews had to do to \_\_\_\_\_ that Jesus had not resurrected was merely to produce the body of Jesus. If the Jews produced the body of Jesus they could \_\_\_\_\_ Christianity. They never tried because they knew they couldn't. All they could do was \_\_\_\_\_ the soldiers to lie and try to punish the disciples.

Let's look at the \_\_\_\_\_ in the disciples. Before the disciples knew for sure that Jesus had been raised on the third day they \_\_\_\_\_ in the upper room with the door locked for fear of the Jews. They \_\_\_\_\_ and laughed at the women's testimony. Their doubting hearts kept them from believing until Jesus \_\_\_\_\_ Himself to them. One apostle, Thomas, persisted in his disbelief even when the others insisted they had \_\_\_\_\_ the Lord. Thomas said, "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 \_\_\_\_\_" (John 20:25).

### **Read the story of Thomas in John 20:26-29.**

Jesus appeared to the disciples and proved Himself to them in a variety of ways. **Read what Luke 24:36-39 says.**

Acts 1:3 tells how Jesus "presented Himself \_\_\_\_\_ after His suffering, by many convincing proofs, appearing to them over a period of forty days and speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of God." So strong did He convince them that we see a very \_\_\_\_\_ group of men at Pentecost than we do on the day that Jesus arose. At first they disbelieved, hiding themselves as cowards, and doubting the prophecy of Jesus; but Jesus showed Himself alive with many convincing \_\_\_\_\_.

At Pentecost, they were bold and unrelenting in their \_\_\_\_\_ of the gospel. They told everyone that they were eyewitnesses of the resurrection. They called the people to \_\_\_\_\_ of their sins, because they crucified Jesus whom God had made both Lord and Christ (Acts 2:36). The

early disciples \_\_\_\_\_ beatings and imprisonment, but they wouldn't stop preaching Jesus as the Christ resurrected from the dead (Acts chapters 3 through 8).

When the Sanhedrin, the Jewish Council, commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the \_\_\_\_\_ of Jesus, Peter and John answered, "Whether it is right in the sight of God to give heed to you rather than to God, you be the judge; for we cannot \_\_\_\_\_ speaking about what we have seen and heard" (Acts 4:19-20). They were convinced that they must \_\_\_\_\_ God and continue preaching the gospel.

In Acts 5, the Council arrested the apostles, flogged them, commanded them to \_\_\_\_\_ preaching in the name of Jesus, and then released them. But the apostles rejoiced "that they had been considered \_\_\_\_\_ to suffer shame for His name. And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they kept right on teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ" (Acts 5:41-42). They later suffered imprisonment, beatings and even death for their faith, but \_\_\_\_\_ kept them from continuing to preach Jesus as the Christ, risen from the dead.

The disciples didn't become \_\_\_\_\_ or find life easy from their preaching. They \_\_\_\_\_ much to tell the story of Jesus. They stoned Stephen in Acts 7 and beheaded James the son of Zebedee in Acts 12. Not one of the disciples ever \_\_\_\_\_ the resurrection. They \_\_\_\_\_ for preaching it. According to tradition, they were all martyred for their faith except John. Let me ask you, would you die for preaching something that you knew was a lie?

The disciples gained no \_\_\_\_\_ advantage by preaching Jesus Christ. The only reason they spoke out so boldly about their faith was they believed Jesus \_\_\_\_\_ was the Christ, the risen Son of God. Their bold faith assures us that we too can place our faith in Jesus as Lord.

Saul of Tarsus was originally devoted to Judaism and a persecutor of the church, but He \_\_\_\_\_ Christ on the road to Damascus. His conversion is especially important in view of his earlier \_\_\_\_\_ against Christianity. He gave up everything to become a Christian. What he wrote about in the resurrection in 1 Corinthians 15 is the earliest documentary evidence that we have. No one can satisfactorily explain the conversion and later life of the apostle Paul except in the way that he himself explained it. He had \_\_\_\_\_ the risen Christ.

Some say Jesus fainted on the cross and revived in the \_\_\_\_\_ of the tomb; but this doesn't explain how Jesus survived the linen wrappings, how He moved the stone, or how He frightened the guards to get away. Others say the apostles only \_\_\_\_\_ that they saw Jesus after His resurrection, but this doesn't explain why there were linen wrappings in the empty tomb, or how the stone was moved before the women arrived, or how the guards were frightened. Nor does it explain how they were able to touch Jesus.

Though we have barely discussed the evidence surrounding the resurrection, we've seen enough to say confidently that Peter and the apostles showed how God had raised Him from the dead whenever they spoke about Him and that He is the Son of God and the Lord of all. According to John 12:48 and Acts 17:31, He will one day judge you and me according to His Word. To become a Christian, believe with all your heart that Jesus is the Christ, turn from your sins in repentance,

confess Jesus as the Christ the Son of God, and be baptized for the forgiveness of your sins as the Bible teaches in Acts 2:38.