Matthew 28 part 2 - The Evidence for the Resurrection

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 15 March 2026

Preacher: Ray Kelly

[0:00] Wow, what a lovely time of worship. So good. So good. So, we're in Matthew 28, yet again.

Although we're going to be looking at quite a lot of other scriptures,! because the purpose of today is not to go over, I mean, we will have to go over some of what we did last time, but it's not just to go over it again.
But the purpose of today, if we can achieve it, is to equip us to give a defense for the hope that is within us when we consider the resurrection. The resurrection, as we said last time, is one of these doctrines where we are ridiculed for believing it.
It's so apparently fantastic that you can't believe in a resurrection. And I gave you examples of debates between Christians and scientists where they'd laughed virtually out loud.
He believes in a resurrection. And yet, we also read from the scriptures, particularly in Romans chapter 10 and verse 9, that in order to be saved, one must believe in the resurrection.
[1:11] So, the most unbelievable part of our faith is the part that it is absolutely mandatory to believe. And so, as you would expect, the Lord has not left us bereft of evidence for it.

And we're going to look at some of the evidence this morning, some of the stuff that tells us why we can happily defend this doctrine to the unsaved.
Now, we have to believe the unbelievable, but in order to get there, what we can't do is go the route of science. Because science doesn't tell us how someone can be raised from the dead.
And science, in fact, tells us that it can't happen. Now, that is probably a simple limitation on the human knowledge of science.
Because God made it happen, so there must be a process by which it can happen, known only to him. But as far as the world is concerned, which has now reached a point where it worships the God science.
[2:21] You know, science apparently tells us that evolution is a thing. When, in fact, it isn't a thing if you believe God's word. And there's a load of evidence there, too, that we could...

I'm not going to get off into that. That's another sermon. But there's a load of evidence that the theory of evolution, particularly Darwinian evolution, is an absolute load of bunk.
And similarly with the resurrection, there's a lot of evidence that we can point to, not scientifically, but historically. So we're turning not to science, but to history.
Was this an event that actually happened? Can we point back, or if faced with someone unsaved, he says, I just can't possibly believe in a resurrection.
Well, let me tell you a few things that might help you to consider that you could possibly be wrong. And phenomenal though it is, what I'm telling you might be right.
[3:22] So, I'm going to start with Matthew 22, not 28. And verses 29 to 32.

And the point that I'm making in the early part of this talk is that so much was hung on the resurrection. So much depended upon it being factual.
So, verses 29 to 32 of Matthew 22 say this, But Jesus answered and said to them, You are mistaking, not understanding the scriptures, nor the power of God.
For in the resurrection, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like the angels in heaven. But regarding the resurrection of the dead, you have not read what was spoken to you by God.
I am the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob. He is not the God of the dead, but of the living. Now, the reason I started there, twofold really.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host - 2026-05-31 03:57:54

[4:24] First of all, Jesus speaks of the resurrection as if it's a real thing. And therefore, if it turns out not to be a real thing, he was, and still would be, a liar.

But once again, he puts us in this corner where he says, You take my words at face value, or you don't take them at all. You can't spiritualize this.
Or maybe he just meant that you become spiritually resurrected. No. He says, This is a real thing. It's going to happen. And then he refers to the experience on the Mount of Transfiguration and says, I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, but not the God of the dead, but the God of the living.
In other words, he's saying, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are still alive. So, Jesus, when he was raised from the dead, was not the first occasion that those who had died came to life.
He was the first one that did it in the manner that he did, and the first one to do it for the sins of all. But as we discussed last time, there were all these people that rose out of the graves and wandered around the city and introduced themselves to their folk, which must have been mind-blowing.
[5:42] Oh, what are you doing here? I buried you last week. But the point here is, life does not end with this life. If it did, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob would not have been there.

And Jesus wouldn't have been telling us about this resurrection in which he demands that we believe. Now, the church itself over years has had great difficulty in believing in the resurrection at face value and quite often sidesteps all the issues and treats it as a myth or spiritualizes it.
There was a guy who wrote quite profusely on the matter called Harry Emerson Fosdick. He was a liberal Baptist pastor in Manhattan.
And he rejected the bodily resurrection of Jesus. Instead viewed it as resurrection was a persistence in Christ's personality. So, in other words, by giving us his personality, that was somehow the resurrection as described in Scripture.
Now, the real sad part of this isn't just that he believed this trash, but that he was teaching others that this was so. God, please don't ever let me teach nonsense to your people.
[6:59] in the mid-19th century, there was the theological modernism movement. And this was, I suppose you could say it might have been the beginning of Seeker Friendly Church because they, in order to make Christian doctrine more acceptable to modern science and to atheists, they revised a lot of Christian doctrine and dispensed with many cherished Christian doctrines, such as the resurrection and the virgin birth.

Oh, you don't have to believe in these things, you could be a Christian anyway. No, that's not what the Bible says. The Bible says he was born of a virgin and you do need to believe the resurrection to be saved.
And it just seems that given time and awkward questions, the church is vulnerable to ditching the supernatural side of the faith and pursuing what can be explained away naturally.
May we never fall into that trap, but it does leave us with a job to do and that is we would then have to tell the world that there was a resurrection, it is true, and then defend that.
And before I go on, it's often that you will attempt to defend that and find that people will just blank you because they don't want it to be true, because they don't want their sinful life to be challenged, and they don't want to submit to the rule of a righteous Lord and Savior.
[8:26] Now, Daniel 12, we'll turn there this morning, I've mentioned it many times, but turn to Daniel chapter 12. And what you read in Daniel chapter 12, the first three verses, which is a prophecy about end times, but particularly as it relates to Israel, although that doesn't leave the rest of us out, but it says, now at that time, Michael, the great prince who stands guard over the sons of your people will arise, and there will be a time of distress such as never occurred since there was a nation, until that time, at that time your people, everyone who is found written in the book will be rescued, praise God.

Many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake, these to everlasting life, but others to disgrace and everlasting contempt.
Those who have insight will shine brightly like the brightness of the expanse of heaven, and those who lead many to righteousness like the stars forever and ever.
So God put it in the heart of this prophet to speak of a resurrection, not just of the saved, but of both the saved and the unsaved, and the destiny of each of those. And so if we then turn to 1 Corinthians, you must be saying, when are you going to get to Matthew 28, Ray?

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host - 2026-05-31 03:57:54

1 Corinthians 15, and we looked at a bit of this last time, but we're going to look at the bit that particularly applies to us as a result of his resurrection.
[10:09] So verses 50 to 58. 1 Corinthians 15, verse 15. Now I say this, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.

So this means that because of the resurrection of Jesus, we have something to look forward to when we become imperishable, and something other than the current expression of flesh and blood, because they cannot inherit the kingdom of God, but there is an inheritance for us where we will take on different flesh and become imperishable.
Without the resurrection, without his resurrection, the rest of us cannot achieve that, because as we discussed last week, he's our first fruit. Verse 55. Behold, I tell you a mystery.
We will not all sleep, but we all be changed. We will all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet, for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.
So that's the continuation of the same promise. There will be this time when we'll be changed, and it will be the word used in verse 52, in the moment, in the twinkling of an eye, the word used is atomos.
[11:36] So it's the word from which we get the word atom. In an atom of time, that change will be bang, done. There won't be any process to go through. There won't be any course to sit.

There won't be any exam paper to pass. It'll simply be sinful people like me, dare I say it, and like you, will be changed.
Why will we be changed? Because he rose from the grave. And as Paul says earlier in this same chapter, if that change didn't take place for Jesus, it won't take place for us.
reading on. For this perishable will have put on imperishable. This mortal will have put on immortality. Then will come about the saying that is written, death is swallowed up in victory.
O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting? The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.
[12:39] Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord. So we've kind of just centered everything, I hope, on the fact that the resurrection is essential for our freedom, essential for our eternal life, and therefore is a doctrine in which we need to believe, and yet how do you defend it?

What's the, to someone who is modern day, science based, how do we defend it? So, let's get into the nitty gritty. You may or may not know this, but there are four facts that scholars are almost universally agreed upon about the death and resurrection of Jesus.
These are uncontested, now by scholars I mean people who properly do their homework. I don't mean people who just consider themselves to be scholars but are not peer-reviewed or anything else.
But historians of real import agree that Jesus was crucified by Pontius Pilate. There's no disagreement about that, or very, very little.
There's always someone who will disagree and say, oh, we don't even know that Jesus was born. We do. And there is almost universally agreement amongst the atheist historians on this matter.
[14:11] The other thing they all agree on is that Jesus was buried in a tomb by Joseph of Arimathea. It's a historical fact that nobody contests. The third thing, which is where it gets interesting, that the tomb was found empty by Jesus' women on the Sunday following the crucifixion.

Now, they have different explanations as to how it became empty, but they all do not contest that the tomb was empty, which I find remarkable. When you think that when the early church took off and everybody wanted to stop it from taking off, all they needed to do was produce a corpse, and they couldn't.
And number four, that Jesus' post-crucifixion appearances to his disciples and other believers actually occurred.
Now, that is agreed even by atheists, that they saw or thought they saw Jesus after he was raised. So it makes you realize that it's not us that is skating on thin ice with this.
It's actually those who don't believe it. And those who don't believe it usually have not done their homework. Because of the reality of this, and some aspects of this are absolutely fascinating, they

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host - 2026-05-31 03:57:54

had to do all sorts of things to explain away the fact that this tomb was empty when there was a Roman guard set around it, when the tomb was sealed with the Roman emperor's seal.
[15:45] The stone across the front of the tomb probably weighed a ton or so. And it had to be pushed uphill to get whatever was inside out.

And the penalty for the guards falling asleep would have been death. And the penalty for anybody breaking that seal would have been death. And you have all these things, but they've got to somehow explain it away, how this dead body that was buried was no longer there.
So in the notes, which I recommend you get them online, just because they contain all sorts of useful snippets that you can use. But one of the slides is what some of these explanations were. So I'm just going to truck through these, I'm not going to explain any of them, but the claim is the real story was suppressed. Couldn't possibly have done that at Passover in Israel.
If there'd been lies, they would have been found out straight away. So the real story couldn't be suppressed, but that's one of the claims. The story became embellished over time.
[16:52] As you know, many, many historical stories, they become apocryphal myths. They get embellished over time. There wasn't the time for this.

The first writings, albeit not in the Bible, but the first local writings took place almost immediately after the event. And the first biblical writings, which I think was 1 Corinthians, was within 20 to 30 years of the event.
But these things had already been written down and Paul was extracting from them. They'd already been written down within five or six years at worst and probably sooner than that.
There's the claim the body was stolen. Okay? Who by and how? They don't venture that. They just say, oh, well, it was probably stolen. without thinking somebody pushed a ton of rock uphill, broke a seal, made the guards lie down and be quiet.
It doesn't add up. People say he didn't actually die on the cross. We dealt with that last week. I won't revisit it. But when blood and water flow out together, that is not a survivable injury.
[18:02] The women went to the wrong tomb. They watched Joseph of Arimathea bury him, we read in the scripture. So they knew where the tomb was. This is called the lettuce theory.

Lettuce as in, you know, that green leafy stuff. The gardener removed the body. Farcical. Jesus had a twin brother. Jesus didn't even have a flesh and blood brother.
I mean, he had half brothers. Mary had other children. The disciples had hallucinations about seeing the risen Jesus. hallucinations do not normally occur in many, many different locations at the same time and to hundreds of people at the same time.
Not a credible theory. Jesus did appear, but only in a vision. Yeah, and Thomas stuck his hand in the wounds and he had stuff with them. He only appeared to believers.
Didn't appear to anybody else. So perhaps he only appeared to those expecting a resurrection. In other words, it was a something they produced in their own mind. Yeah, no, it doesn't stand up.
[19:20] And the other report, or the other tack taken is reports about his resurrection are hopelessly contradictory. They're not.

people perceive them as contradictory because they take them as individual snippets. When you conflate all the snippets, you get a complete picture. And it would take me an hour to do that, and I'm not going to do it now, but you look for yourselves.
If you conflate all the accounts, they produce a complete picture. And it's hard to get a complete picture from a single account. So let's quickly look at Jesus' own forecast of his own resurrection. There is a lot of scriptures in the notes for you to look up. We'll just pick a few this morning. Turn to Matthew 12. Matthew 12 and verse 40.
Start with verse 39. They'd asked him for a sign, if you remember, having already healed a man of being possessed with a dumb spirit, they wanted to see a sign from him.
[20:28] And in verse 39, he said, An evil and adulterous generation craves for a sign, and yet no sign will be given to it but the sign of Jonah the prophet. For just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the sea monster, so will the son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

So I'm going to be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. If we then go to Matthew 16 and verse 21. From that time, Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and the chief priests and the scribes and be killed and be raised on the third day.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host - 2026-05-31 03:57:54

Chapter 17, verse 23. Need to start with verse 22 because otherwise we're in the middle of a sentence. While they were gathering together in Galilee, Jesus said to them, The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men and they will kill him and he will be raised on the third day.
Now you can chase this through all of the Gospels. I'm not going to do it now simply for the sake of time. But Jesus clearly prophesied his own death and his own resurrection on the third day.
And if you turn to Isaiah 53, now for those of us who are believers, if Jesus said it, that's enough, isn't it? You know, we simply think to ourselves, well, we believe it because Jesus said it.
[21:54] But when you're sharing this with the unsaved, they would say, well, he would say that, wouldn't he? It's not as simple as that, but they don't already have an established trust in him.

Isaiah 53 and verse 10. But the Lord was pleased to crush him, putting him to grief. If he would render himself as a guilt offering, he will see his offspring and will prolong his days and the good pleasure of the Lord will prosper in his hand.
So if he rendered himself as a guilt offering, the guilt offering was consumed. It was an offering by fire and it was consumed. So rendering himself as a guilt offering would mean he had to die.
But he, God, will see his offspring and he will prolong his days. So his days will be prolonged after he's died as a guilt offering. You follow the logic of that, presumably.
You've got Job. Turn to the book of Job. And chapter, is it chapter 19? Yeah. Job 19 verses 25 to 27.
[23:07] Job says, As for me, I know that my Redeemer lives and at the last he will take his stand upon the earth. Even after my skin is destroyed, yet from my flesh I will see God, whom I myself shall behold and whom my eyes will see and not another.

my heart faints within me. So he's saying here, not only will Jesus stand on the earth in the last days, but that he is going to see it in his flesh.
So Job died with the expectation that his flesh would be restored and he would see Jesus in his own flesh, which speaks not only of the resurrection of Jesus, but the resurrection of man.
Thrilling, isn't it? And lastly, Psalm 16 verses 8 to 10. I have set the Lord continually before me because he is at my right hand.
I will not be shaken. Therefore, my heart is glad and my glory rejoices. My flesh also will dwell securely, for you will not abandon my soul to Sheol, nor will you allow your Holy One to undergo decay.
[24:21] This is a messianic psalm prophesied by David that Messiah will not undergo decay. It can't refer to David because David did undergo decay.

He's in a tomb. His bones are still there. His flesh is presumably no longer on the bones and he died a death the same as the rest of us will die. So he was referring to God's son, the Messiah, and you will not allow your Holy One to undergo decay.
So all of the Old Testament and the New Testament speaks of a resurrection. So once again, we're in a right pickle if it didn't happen because it means that he didn't fulfill the Old Testament or the New.
And if we go back to 1 Corinthians and chapter 15 and particularly verses 12 to 19. Now if Christ is preached that he has not been raised from the dead, how does some among you say there is no resurrection?
Now that was particularly addressed to Sadducees who didn't. They were sad, you see, because they didn't believe in. Sorry. It's an old one. The old ones are the old ones.
[25:36] Verse 13. But if there is no resurrection of the dead, not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith also is vain.

Moreover, we are found to be false witnesses of God because we testified against God that he raised Christ whom he did not raised. In fact, if in fact the dead are not raised, for if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised.
And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless and you are still in your sins. Then those of you who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If we hope in Christ in this life only, we are of all men most to be pitied.
And I know we read that last week, but it bears reinforcing. So he's made this point forcefully that the resurrection is essential and without it, our faith is worthless.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host - 2026-05-31 03:57:54

And the balance of that chapter, we've looked at part of it. A point that is made here, which is not proof of the resurrection, but it's an essential thing that went past me for years, is the church needed the resurrection just for confirmation of their faith.
[26:57] For instance, Thomas needed somewhere to stick his finger. Now that might sound a bit macabre, but he said, I can't believe this unless I put my hand in his wounds and I put my finger in the wounds in his palm.

And Jesus turned up and said, go for it. Go on, put your hand in there. Go on, put your hand in there. We need a resurrection to reflect upon and we need a certainty that it happened in order to be encouraged in our own faith, particularly through hard times.
Okay, so I'm going to go through, and I know I haven't been in Matthew 28 yet, and we will in a moment, not much of it, but we will. But we need to go through, and I'm going to go through 12 points, and I'm going to go through them fairly quickly, because otherwise I'm going to run way out of time.
Number one, Jesus was seen walking about in the community, and this was witnessed by so many eyewitnesses. Both Peter and Paul were able to use this fact in preaching.
Now, if you remember, there is a list of he saw 500 people at once, he appeared to Peter, he appeared to, I mean, it was Paul that said it. He appeared to Peter, he appeared to James, he appeared to 500 people.
[28:07] And in the end, he also appeared to me, which is when I believe Paul was taken to the third heaven. Now, if you turn to Acts 2, Acts chapter 2.

Now, a lot of these creeds in Acts and 1 Corinthians and Galatians, people were delivering them verbally in the time immediately after the resurrection.
They were committed to writing in various places within five years. And so when Paul brings them up in 1 Corinthians 15, for example, they'd already been around.
He was saying stuff that they already knew. Plus, he's also talking to people who were still alive, who were there when the events happened. And so he can't hide. And far from hiding, he does this.
So Acts 2, verse 32. Have I got that right? Yes. Acts 2, 32. And he's saying, he's talking to this crowd.
[29:13] And he says, This Jesus, God raised up again, to which we are all witnesses. So he wasn't telling them a fairy tale.

He was reminding them of what they had witnessed. Jesus was raised. And you know I'm telling you the truth because you were here and you saw it. Chapter 3, verse 15.
He preaches a second sermon. Start with verse 14. But you disowned the holy and righteous one and asked for a murderer to be granted to you, but put to death the prince of life, the one whom God raised from the dead, a fact to which we are all witnesses.
He was able to call upon the events to the people and say, You know this is true. I'm not pulling any wool over your eyes when I say this. You know it's true. You were here.
26. Acts 26. This is one of my favorites, actually. Because Paul is before Festus and King Agrippa.
[30:23] And they're having this conversation. And in verse 26, well, if you go to verse 25, Festus has accused Paul of being out of his mind.

And he said, I am not out of my mind, most excellent Festus, but I utter words of sober truth. For the king knows about these matters. And I speak to him also with confidence, since I am persuaded that none of these things escape his notice.
For this has not been done in a corner. King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know that you do. So he's saying to the king, You know this is true.
You know I'm not lying. You know I'm speaking words of truth. You accuse me of being mad, but you know that I'm not mad. And he's able to refer these men to the events that happened during their time when they either witnessed some of the events or they witnessed the aftermath and heard, Did you know that this guy Jesus has been raised?
And he's not in the tomb anymore. And they're making up stories as to how the tomb finished up empty and all of this. And Paul says to him, This wasn't done in a corner.
[31:41] You're the king. You know this happened. So that's the first thing. He was in the community, appearing to everybody, and the disciples used that to preach to them and to try to get them to repent.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host - 2026-05-31 03:57:54

Number two, First witnesses were women. We covered this last week. I'm not going to cover it in depth. Matthew 28. There you go. We went into Matthew 28. Matthew 28 verse 1.
If people want you to believe something, the last thing they would do is use an account that would discredit them. Women were second class citizens in this society. Their account would be worthless.
And therefore, if you were trying to invent an account, you'd pick a local dignitary or someone that would impress the crowds. The fact that the very men who later on went to the tomb and saw the missing, saw where the body was before, the very fact that they, when they wrote their accounts, attributed these accounts to women, attests to the fact that it was almost certainly true.
And then allied to that, in Matthew 28 verses 10 to 15, Then Jesus said to them, Do not be afraid. Go and take word to my brethren to leave for Galilee, and there they will see me.
[33:01] Now while they were on their way, some of the guard came into the city and reported to the chief priest that all that had happened. And when they assembled with the elders and consulted together, they gave a large sum of money to the soldiers and said, You were to say the disciples came by night and stole him away while we were asleep.

And if this should come to the governor's ears, we will win him over and keep you out of trouble. And they took the money and did as they'd been instructed. And this story was widely spread among the Jews and is to this day.
And Orthodox Jews to this day still believe in the stolen body story. So oddly, the stories that they made up to explain what had happened to the body admit that the tomb is empty.
So we have an empty tomb, and even Jesus' enemies admit to the fact that it was empty. They used it to try to explain something away, and in doing so, they confirmed that there was no body. Love it, don't you? So allied to point three, the Roman guard set to watch the tomb. This is point four. They had to invent a story to account for the lack of a body, claiming it had been stolen.
[34:22] So all these actions admit to the empty tomb. Number five is the absence of a denial. No religious or political leaders were able to deny that the resurrection took place.

There were no writings at the time that poo-pooed the resurrection or the empty tomb. All they needed to do was produce a corpse, and they couldn't. I'm just going to read something out to you that I found.
And it says this. And I didn't put the reference on there. Oh, there is a reference on there. The earliest Jewish arguments against Christianity admit to the empty tomb.
It's kind of what we covered earlier. All right? So they're enemies of Christianity, but they still admit there's an empty tomb. In Matthew 28, verses 11 to 15, there is a reference made to the Jews' attempt to refute Christianity by saying that the disciples stole the body.
And it's significant because it shows that the Jews did not deny the empty tomb. Instead, their stolen body theory admitted to the significant truth that the tomb was, in fact, empty.
[35:30] The Toledot Yesu, I don't know if I've pronounced that right, is a compilation of early Jewish writings and is another source acknowledging this. So this is not the Bible.

This is a secular source of people who wanted to deny the truth of the resurrection, but actually couldn't, really, because the tomb was empty. So it acknowledges that the tomb was empty and attempts to explain it away.
Further, we have a record of a second century debate between a Christian and a Jew. Now this is, if you ever wanted to look this up, it's between Justin Martyr and Trifo.
There are pages of it, but it refers to the resurrection. So Justin is justifying the resurrection to Trifo, who is an unbeliever, whom he is trying to lead to the Lord.
So you've got these extra-biblical confirmations of the resurrection. It's not entirely dependent upon the Bible. The reason I labor on that is because often when you try to debate this, they say, oh, you can't use the Bible, that's cheating.
[36:39] And that's, I mean, I used to work in the courts, and that's like me being told in court, oh, you can't bring that piece of evidence forward, because it's true.

You have to find a piece of evidence from the people who are against you in order to prove your point. The thing is, the resurrection is only likely to have been recorded in the Bible, because everybody else, everybody else who was recording stuff, didn't want to make large of Jesus' life.
So the Bible, for much of it, is the only source of truth. And it's why it's so important that the Bible is a historically accurate document, which, of course, we know it is.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host - 2026-05-31 03:57:54

So when they come down off their prejudices, it's actually, there is only one explanation. The truth has been told. Point six, the meteoric rise of the church.
Now, in Acts 2 and 3, we see 8,000 people added very quickly to the church. And that was the beginning, all based on the fact that the resurrected Christ had sent his Holy Spirit.
[37:50] And on Pentecost, the disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit and with immense amounts of courage. And they went and started preaching. And in probably a single day, could have been two days, but in Peter's first two sermons, you had 8,000 people added.

Over the next 20 years, you had hundreds of thousands of people added to the church, mostly Jews in that first 20-year period. So for Jews to convert from Judaism, they must have been convinced.
And these disciples, right before Pentecost, were hiding. They were scared. The resurrection was the thing that made them see that life didn't end now with this life, that there was a better life to look forward to.
And they were filled with courage. So the meteoric rise of the church speaks of the fact that the resurrection must have been believed by the early believers. Number seven, the very short time span between the events and the eyewitness reports.
There's a distinguished New Testament scholar called James D.G. Dunn. And he states this. The tradition of Jesus' resurrection and appearances can be... We can be...
[39:09] Sorry. This tradition of Jesus' resurrection and appearances, we can be entirely confident, was formulated as a tradition within months of Jesus' death and thought to be committed to writing after one to eight years.

There was no time for legendary embellishments. Now, if you then pick up a copy of the Gospel of Peter, which is a false gospel, but it talks about when Jesus was raised from the dead, everybody was gathered as a big crowd waiting for him to come out of the tomb.
And this massive cross came out of the tomb and it completely embellished, which is what time does. People embellish stories over time. But the accounts you read in Scripture are not embellished at all.
In fact, the reverse is the case. They are simplified. Point eight. The change in the lives of the disciples. They went from hiding in fear to seamlessly fearless preaching of the Gospel, seemingly overnight, and would prefer death to recanting their statements.
And all bar John died martyrs' deaths rather than recant. I won't go into it now, but there are Roman documents that said if the Christian recants, you don't need to put him to death.
[40:31] But almost in brackets, it said the real Christians won't recant. Then you've got the conversion of the Apostle James. This is number nine. James, the brother of Jesus, the half-brother of Jesus.

We read in John 7, verse 5, that until after the resurrection, he was an unbeliever. So he became so convicted that he faced an appalling martyrdom rather than recant.
Also the Apostle Thomas, who was the doubter, and we talked about him putting his finger in the wound and all the rest of it. Once he confirmed that the resurrection had taken place, he became a Stoic believer who was the founder of the church in India, and eventually died a martyr's death.
Then you've got the conversion, this is number 11, the conversion of Saul of Tarsus, a high-flying Jew, embittered against Christians by his own admission, persecution of the church.
And on his conversion, arguably he lost everything, because he lost his seat as somebody that the Jews revered.
[41:43] He lost status, he lost wealth, he lost popularity, and eventually went to his death by beheading. And you can read about those in Acts 9 and Acts 22, verse 5.

We're nearly there. The emergence, this is number 12, the emergence of Sundays as a traditional day of worship for the Christian church. So they started to meet on Sunday, celebrating the first day of the week rather than the Sabbath, which was on the last day of the week.
And the apostles continued to observe Saturday as the Sabbath for quite a while, but then some of the early church fathers introduced these changes, Ignatius, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria.
They all made this move to shift the Sabbath to Sundays. And it was officially, it was made official by the Emperor Constantine in 321 AD.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host - 2026-05-31 03:57:54

But when you think they started that habit very early on, and, you know, as churches, how long does it take to bring in a change? I mean, you know, you put the chairs out differently and people moan.
[42:51] So to change from centuries of meeting on Saturday, to change from centuries of meeting on Saturday to meeting on Sunday was a massive change, and it attests to the fact that the resurrection must have been true.

And last but not least, these events played out in Jerusalem over Passover. At this time, the population of Jerusalem would have swelled by approximately 2 million.
You couldn't move in Jerusalem. If you were going to lie about all of these things, you would have been found out very quickly. And as we said, Peter and Paul used this.
We read it in Acts 26, 26. They used it when they preached to say, you know this happened. You were here. You saw it happen. You need to go and get kids, do you not?
So, to wind up, Daniel 12, verse 1 to 3 tells us, there will be a resurrection for all. No one will be left out. There are many who teach that there is not a hell, no place of eternal torment, no ultimate sanction against sin.
[43:58] Rejection of Jesus is the only unforgivable sin. And the Bible and Jesus both teach that there is a hell with eternal consequences. Matthew 10, 28 tells us from Jesus' mouth that hell exists.

Matthew 25, 46 makes it clear that this is a place of eternal punishment. Matthew 13, 24 to 30 tells us that this eternal punishment involves fire.
These verses also tell us that the punishment is forever. Hell is said to be more terrible than we can actually imagine. Mark 9, verse 48 compares this eternal existence with being eternally eaten by worms.
Yuck. Our hope is expressed in John 5, verse 22. Truly I say to you, Jesus said, he who hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life.
And I hope that that's given you some ammunition. And the notes will be on the website along with the talk soon. And if any of you want your own copy of those notes or have any difficulty getting hold of it, contact me and I will send them to you.
[45:19] Father, I do thank you that you didn't leave us without evidence. You didn't leave us in a place where we can't defend the common sense of our stance on the resurrection.

Lord, I thank you that you were raised. That you raised yourself under your own power. And you had already exclaimed that everything was finished.
Tetelestai, paid in full. And I thank you, Lord, that we can live in the good of that. Not because we've talked ourselves into some ethereal nonsense, but because history stands the test of proof and gives us a basis from which we can have full confidence, both in your resurrection and in the defense of it to those who we meet who are unsaved.
Lord, we thank you in Jesus' name. Amen.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host - 2026-05-31 03:57:54