FBS “Jesus Christ—Crucified…Yet Risen” 4-16-17

Joel Breidenbaugh (Matthew 27:57-28:20)

**Intro.** Over the years I have told my kids stories & I normally adapt things from my childhood. Since we adopted our youngest, I have added a new character to the story—my second wife when I’m in my eighties & I outlive my first wife. Her name is Margaret Edna & she doesn’t have any teeth but she’s a tremendous cook & makes the best banana pudding you ever tasted. She also likes to tell stories & is particularly fond of bunny rabbits. She tells of a bunny rabbit hopping through the woods & a fox comes along and eats it, but then it comes back alive. It then makes its way to a meadow & a pack of wolves tear it apart… but it comes back alive. Recently, my family was talking about something dying & our youngest said, “But then it came back alive.” Some people think I’m crazy for telling such stories, but what’s crazy is Christians who don’t make a big deal of the resurrection—Jesus really walked this earth & performed miracles & taught with great authority & was arrested because of His popularity & tried & crucified & placed in a tomb… but then He came back alive! Today we look at “Jesus Christ—Crucified… Yet Risen” from Matthew 27-28.

Theme: Jesus’ resurrection

Background: Matthew wrote primarily to a Jewish audience in the mid-1st century (AD 60s) to prove that Jesus of Nazareth was & is the long-awaited Messiah.

* Matthew declared the crucified Jesus was raised from the dead & seen by others, proving He was the Lord & Messiah
* You must believe Jesus died for your sins & rose from the dead & surrender to Him as your Lord
* **Let me share with you 3 crucial elements of the gospel of “Jesus Christ—Crucified… Yet Risen”:**

**1. Jesus of Nazareth really died for you (27:50, 57-61)**

**a. Crucifixion ended in death (27:26, 31, 35, 44)**

* There’s absolutely no way Jesus “almost” died on the cross—no one survived crucifixions & sometimes leg bones were broken to speed up the process (cf. John 19:31-36)
* Jesus died in your place & was forsaken momentarily by the Father so you wouldn’t have to be forsaken

**b. Friends of Jesus buried Him after He died (27:57-61)**

* While a few mistakes have been made over time, burial is strong proof of death, especially after a crucifixion
* That Jesus died is a historical fact mentioned in all 4 Gospels & throughout the Letters of the New Testament, as well as writings outside the Bible

Illus: “Christus, from whom the name had its origin, suffered the extreme penalty during the reign of Tiberius at the hands of one of our procurators, Pontius Pilatus” (Cornelius Tacitus [55-120 AD], “the greatest historian” of ancient Rome)

Illus: Lucian, a second century Greek satirist: “The Christians, you know, worship a man to this day—the distinguished personage who introduced their novel rites, and was crucified on that account…. from the moment that they are converted, and deny the gods of Greece, and worship the crucified sage”

Illus: Justin Martyr (AD 110-165) wrote of “the bloody passion of Christ on the cross” (*Ante-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 1, 301)

* That Jesus died for you & your sins is a theological truth central to the gospel—it was your sins which put Jesus on the cross & a holy God demands sin be punished

**2. Jesus of Nazareth really rose from the dead for you, proving He is Christ the Lord (28:1-17)**

**a. Women witnessed the empty tomb (28:1, 6)**

* Women weren’t trusted in the 1st century as reliable witnesses, but the fact that they were the first to witness the risen Lord is strong proof to its veracity—if you were making up the story, you would never begin with women witnesses

**b. Angels announced Jesus’ resurrection (28:2-7)**

* Angels are, first & foremost, messengers of God & angels shared the message of Jesus’ resurrection—they also only showed up for special occasions

**c. The risen Jesus appeared to others & they worshiped Him (28:9, 17)**

Illus: Dr. Seamands tells of a Muslim who became a Christian in Africa. “Some of his friends asked him, ‘Why have you become a Christian?’ He answered, ‘Well, it’s like this. Suppose you were going down the road and suddenly the road forked in two directions, and you didn’t know which way to go, and there at the fork in the road were two men, one dead and one alive—which one would you ask which way to go?’” (Warren Webster, 1980, 13)

* That Jesus rose from the dead is a historical fact mentioned in all 4 Gospels & throughout the Letters of the NT, as well as writings outside the Bible

Illus: Flavius Josephus (37-97 AD), court historian for Emperor Vespasian: “At this time there was a wise man who was called Jesus. And his conduct was good and he was known to be virtuous. And many people from among the Jews and other nations became his disciples. Pilate condemned him to be crucified and to die. And those who had become his disciples did not abandon his discipleship. They reported that he had appeared to them three days after his crucifixion and that he was alive; accordingly, he was perhaps the messiah concerning whom the prophets have recounted wonders.” (Arabic translation)

Illus: Other numerous references from Gnostic sources on the death & resurrection of Jesus, as well as early Christian leaders (Clement, Ignatius, Justin Martyr)

* As Jesus appeared to others, they worshiped Him—the only right response to the risen Lord is worship

**3. Jesus Christ, crucified-yet-risen, has commanded you to spread His message (28:18-20)**

**a. Because He has all authority (28:18)**

* As the risen Lord, all authority has been given to Him, so He can command us as He sees fit—He doesn’t ask us to spread the message, He commands us

**b. Wherever you go (28:19)**

* The participle could be translated “as you go,” “where you go,” “since you are going,” etc.—as we go places, we are to take the message of the once-crucified-yet-risen Jesus Christ

**c. By baptizing new converts in death-burial-resurrection practices (28:19)**

* Two of the most unique doctrines of Christianity are the resurrection of Jesus & the Trinity (Father, Son & Holy Spirit)—here in this single verse, those are both highlighted as you spread the message of Jesus Christ, crucified-yet-risen

**d. By teaching others to obey the Lord Jesus Christ (28:20)**

* Simply believing without growing in the Lord is not genuine salvation—if you believed a preacher who told you all you had to do was say a prayer & you would be okay, you were lied to—the Christian life starts with you committing your life to Jesus, but a true surrendered life must keep growing

**Conc.** “O Master! My Master!” O Master! My Master! What is it we have done? Your body has worn and torn, Your death, it seems, has won. Your grave is near, death bells I hear, Your people all are mourning. While follow eyes Your steady corpse, Your vessel dead and bleeding. Because of death! Death! Death! O those drops of blood are red. Where in the tomb my Master lies Fallen cold and dead.\* O Master! My Master! Rise up and hear the wails. Rise up—for You the clouds are dark—for You the bugle trails. For You had the palm leaves and purple robe, for You had the crowds’ adorning. For You they called, the Hosanna sound, their faces now are mourning! Here Master! Dear Savior! This heart beneath Your head! It is some nightmare that on the earth, You’ve fallen cold and dead.\* My Master does not answer. His stone is gray and still. My Savior does not hear my heart, has He no pulse nor will? Your body is buried safe and sound, its life closed and done. From dreadful trip the deathbed’s ship sails in with object won. Exult O wicked, and sing O death! But I with hopeful tread, Walk the earth my Master lies, Fallen cold and dead.\* O Master! My Master! Could it be that You were somehow forsaken? All hope seems lost, forever lost, for Your life now has been taken. Your vessel has sunken, deeply sunken, and yet a day goes by. The massive crowds have all scattered, but still in the tomb You lie! Flee from me O devil! And have your joy! For my soul has seemed to take a dive. Wish I my words for my Master were Arisen and much alive. My Master still remains lifeless, another day is done. To roll back the stone and look at Him; but no, for it is a ton. Yet I arise and go to the tomb, all that hope now nearly gone. But still my prayers, addressed to Him, continue to press on! But O wait! Wait! Wait! Shall I pause and count to five? With stone rolled back, could my Master be Arisen and much alive? O Master! My Master! What terrible thief has done this crime? So quickly so much has happened, in the passing of so little time. But could this be the good news from Him that I used to hear? For He has conquered death, O joy! There is so much to cheer! Exult O sheep! And sing everyone! For this is no jest nor jive. My prayers are heard for my Master is now Arisen and much alive! (Joel Breidenbaugh, 1994 \*phrase taken from Walt Whitman, “O Captain! My Captain!”). Jesus Christ was crucified, but He’s forever risen. He is Lord & can be your Savior, if you will surrender to Him through repentance & faith as your Master.