

The First Baptist Church of Columbus

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Sermon Notes Outline for video posted April 3, 2022

T I T L E: The Testimony of the Grave Clothes

T E X T: John 20:1-10

I mentioned to you last week the various objections to the resurrection of Christ. The critics provided such objections as: The women went to the wrong tomb... they were extremely emotional...battling with grief and thus simply went to the wrong tomb.

Then, there is the critic who says the disciples stole the body of Christ so that they could preach His resurrection. Thirdly, there is the critic that says Christ did not die He simply lost consciousness and once He was subjected to the coolness of the tomb He revived and unwrapped the grave clothes and exited the tomb. Fourthly, thieves stole the body for their own purposes. Fifth, the Roman and/or Jewish authorities confiscated the body for what reason basically no one knows. Sixth, years ago there was a French critic of the Gospels named Ernest Renan, who argued that the Christian faith in the Resurrection was the result of rumors spread by Mary Magdalene who has suffered an hallucination, thinking that she had seen Jesus.

I. UNBELIEF, ESPECIALLY IN LIGHT OF SOUND AND AMPLE EVIDENCE REGARDING THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST IS INDICATIVE OF THE MAGNITUDE OF THE DEPRAVITY OF MAN.

Mankind has an extremely serious problem. He is depraved.

A. How does the Bible describe unbelief? — Nathan Millican / July 28, 2017 – The Bible uses many strong terms to describe unbelief, including hardening, twisting, blindness, deafness, unnaturalness, lies, deception, folly, rebellion and madness, but none repays reflection more than Paul's phrase in Romans.

At the heart of sin and disobedience, Paul says, is a flagrantly deliberate and continuing act of violence to truth. Sin and disobedience lay hold of truth, grasp it roughly, and will not let it be what it naturally is or say what it naturally says. In this way, the deliberate dynamic of unbelief is to suppress the truth, stifle truth and hold truth hostage. What may be known about God, Paul says, is quite evident still, but it is adamantly denied by the determined act of will that is sin and unbelief.

Os Guinness — A Fools Talk Rediscovering the Art of Christian Persuasion Furthermore, unbelief abuses truth in these ways:

Unbelief seizes truth, grasps it roughly, silences its voice and twists it away from God's intended purpose.

Unbelief not only suppresses the real truth and twists it away from God's true ends, but wrests it toward its own ends and its own agenda.

Unbelief goes further still and abuses through a deliberate act of inversion. Unbelief not only suppresses truth and exploits it for its own ends, but seizes it and turns it completely upside down, inside out and the wrong way around, and then holds it there for its own purposes.

Unbelief seizes God's truth, twists it away from God's purposes and toward its own, and is therefore forced to deny the full reality of the truth it knows.

Proverbs 18:17 ---- He that is first in his own cause seemeth just; But his neighbor cometh and searcheth him.

II. THE PRESENCE OF THE GRAVECLOTHES IN CHRIST'S TOMB IS AN INEXPLICABLE REFUTATION OF THE MANY CRITICS ARGUMENTS AGAINST HIS RESURRECTION.

A. The shape of the graveclothes — shaped like a body that had been wrapped for burial...

The Risen Master, published in 1901, Henry Latham calls attention to a unique feature of eastern burials Latham noticed that the bodies were wrapped in linen cloths in such a manner as to leave the face, neck and

upper part of the shoulders bare. The upper part of the head was covered by a cloth that had been twirled about it like a turban. Latham concluded that since burial styles change slowly, particularly in the east, this mode of burial may well have been practiced in Jesus' time. He argued that this is all the more probable since the practice in 1900 meshes nicely with what is told of the graveclothes in John's Gospel.

John 11:44 supports the above likelihood of Jesus' burial. Village of Nain... funeral procession leaving the city. Young man sat up... then began to speak. Hence, the grave clothes did not hinder his sitting up nor his speaking.

1. If his body was stolen then why leave the graveclothes?
2. If Jesus revived in the tomb and escaped after having unwound the linen bands then why weren't the wrappings displaced? Even if He was able to replace the wrappings in a similar order then why were not the spices not strewn everywhere.

B. The method of His resurrection, in light of the shape of the graveclothes denies a resuscitation.

Imagine for a few moments that you were in the tomb when Christ arose from the grave. What would you have seen?

John Stott says that the body was "vaporized," Latham says that the body would have been "exhaled" passing "into a phase of being like that of Moses and Elias on the Mount."

C. The sight, theory, and analytical conclusion of the early disciples supports the reality of His resurrection.

Boice — The two disciples immediately started for the tomb, running and leaving Mary far behind. John was the younger of the two. Consequently, he arrived at the tomb first, stooped to look through the narrow opening, and saw the graveclothes. Then Peter arrived, out of breath and in a hurry as usual; he brushed John aside and plunged into the tomb. When John saw the graveclothes, he saw them only in a cursory manner and

from outside the tomb. The Greek uses the most common word for seeing (**blepo**); it suggests nothing more than sight. But when Peter arrived he scrutinized the graveclothes carefully. The Scripture uses a special word (**theoreo**) for what Peter did (from it we get our words **theory** and **theorize**). Moreover, it tells what Peter saw. The Bible says that Peter “went into the sepulcher, and seeth the linen clothes (**lying** emphatic position in sentence) there, and the cloth, that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself (John 20:6, 7). At this point John entered, saw what Peter had seen (this time the word is **oraō**, meaning “to see with understanding”), and believed in Jesus’ resurrection (v. 8).

Conclusion: Science says if there is any such thing as infallible proof, it is the repetition of the same experiment.

Jesus rose from the dead, and Mary Magdalene encountered him—experiment one.

The women encountered him—experiment two.

The disciples encountered him—experiment three.

The apostles encountered him—experiment four.

Five hundred people saw him after the Resurrection—experiment five.

Each one of these is the repetition of the same experiment. They all encountered the same phenomenon. What was it? He was alive! That's what changed the history of the world.