

Burying the Body of Jesus

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[0 : 00] So, this text made me think of awkward times like funerals and burials.

Let's be honest, when we go to a funeral, it's a bit awkward. It's a bit awkward. We don't always know what to say or how to act.

And as a pastor, I've done many, many funerals for people both that I know and for those that I do not know. And I can tell you, people are very uncomfortable.

Especially for those who I don't know. They can't wait until I am done talking and they can get out. They kind of bear it.

We have funerals. They are important. We bury our loved ones. We take that time to remember them. To say goodbye.

[1 : 02] That's important. It's part of life. Jesus was buried. And I've been at funerals where that is a beautiful thing.

That is a wonderful, hopeful event. And I've been at funerals where it's not. It's not. It's not. The whole subject of death is an uncomfortable subject for many people.

Woody Allen has said, it's not that I'm afraid to die. It's just that I don't want to be there when it happens. It is that scary subject for many because, I believe, because it makes us wonder what happens next.

And for most, we don't know what is next. Is there an afterlife? Do we just stop existing? Is there really a heaven and hell?

Do I go into the presence of God? At the funerals I've been at, many talk about, hey, they're in a better place. Well, how do we know? I hope so. And so, many people, because they don't know, they're uncertain, avoid it.

[2 : 20] They don't want to talk about it. And funerals force them to deal with it for a few minutes. But the Bible, the Bible tells us that we do not need to fear death because of Jesus who died.

I found this story this week as I was preparing. A boy and his father were traveling in a car when a bee flew through the open window.

The boy was highly allergic to bee stings that both he and his father knew that his life was in danger. And as the boy frantically jumped around and tried to avoid the agitated bee, the father calmly reached out and grabbed the bee.

And when he opened his hand, the bee began to fly again, terrorizing the boy once again. The father then said, Son, look.

Holding up a hand with an implanted stinger. His stinger is gone. He can't hurt you any longer. As a bee loses its stinger when it stings, so death loses its sting when Jesus was stung.

[3 : 50] See, death is a reminder of the consequences of sin. At the very beginning of the Bible, God said, In the day that you do not listen to my word, you will die.

And we saw the first couple begin to be separated from God, begin to die.

The consequences of sin. The Bible calls death an enemy. It's not a natural thing. It is an enemy. It's an imposed thing.

And the sting, it's interesting with that story because Paul uses that phrase of the sting of death. What gives death its sting is sin.

And the power of sin is the law. So the law gives the power to sin, which is the sting which causes death. But from a biblical point of view, when we look at Jesus who has died and buried, we have victory through Christ who has removed the stinger.

[5 : 08] He's removed the sting of death. Now in Mark 15, we have been looking at his passion, his suffering, the cross, his death.

And now we come to his burial. And again, I ask the question, what hope do we have from looking at a burial? What can we gain from considering this?

Well, first of all, I want you to notice what Mark is doing. First of all, he is telling us the fact that there were witnesses to his death that Jesus did in fact die.

They saw Jesus at his death. There were five eyewitnesses that Mark reports. The Roman centurion, who is a professional, who is an outsider, who is not on Jesus' side, though he has confessed Jesus is the Son of God by watching him die, is there before Pilate, the governor, to confirm that yes, in fact, Jesus died.

There are three women there. In verse 40, we see Mary, Mary, and Salome. And then in verse 43, we see there's this man, this new arrival, this person we haven't heard of before, this man named Joseph of Arimathea.

[6 : 22] He too was a witness and was the one to take Jesus' body and put it in a new tomb. Now I bring this to your attention because these are unexpected witnesses.

This isn't the way we would set it up. We would want the witnesses to confirm that Jesus died, and later the witnesses to confirm that Jesus rose from the dead. We'd want them to be, you know, disciples.

We'd want them to be, you know, prominent people. And who do we have? We have a Gentile Roman soldier. We have three women, which in the first century, women could not be witnesses under their way of life.

Though God has chosen them to be witnesses. That says something. And then we have this guy that's from the council, apparently an enemy.

The very council that had condemned Jesus to death. This is very odd. The other thing I want you to be aware of is there's a time factor. There's a rush to bury Jesus.

[7 : 28] They don't have all the time in the world. They have to bury him before sunset, before the Sabbath. As Mark says in verse 42, since it was the day of preparation, the day before the Sabbath.

In other words, Jesus has to be in the ground before the sun has set, before the first star in the sky. Because you're not allowed to do work on the Sabbath, and burial is a work.

And so this has to be done quickly. There's no time to prepare. There's no time to do... There's lots of things to do with the body to bury it. You have to cleanse the body. Then you have to put the spices in, and you have to do all that.

And then you bring him to burial. Well, they didn't have time for all of that. But I want you to remember way back in Mark 14, way back. That was a long time ago, a whole chapter and a half ago. The beginning of Mark 14, we had this woman, remember, that came to Jesus and broke the costly vial of perfume and poured it over his feet and over his head.

And remember, the disciples went nuts. That's expensive. We could have sold that, could have gone to the poor. And they're complaining about this woman. Why is she doing it? And remember that Jesus stood up for her and said, leave her alone.

[8 : 44] She has done a beautiful thing to me. She has anointed my body for burial.

Remember that? He's already been prepared for burial. God had already done that through this little servant woman, this Mary who used to sit at his feet.

This Mary would come and extravagantly pour her greatest value on his feet to anoint him.

So he's already been prepared in that way. But, okay, now let's look at this text. Why is the burial of Jesus significant? What does Mark want us to know?

Well, Mark shows us in this process four unexpected people that serve Jesus at his burial.

[9 : 40] Two kinds of unexpected servants that show devotion in his burial. He introduces people he's not introduced before. We're at the end of the story and all of a sudden he introduces new characters.

He introduces these women, these three women, and then he introduces this guy named Joseph. We've never heard of him. In fact, he has to tell us who he is.

Why is he introducing new characters at the end? And we don't expect it to be women who are highlighted. We haven't had that before in the Gospels. Not that God is against highlighting women because when Jesus came, the whole view and perspective and manner of women has totally changed.

Jesus meets women. Jesus ministers to women. Jesus honors women. And we're going to find out in the next chapter that the women will be the first apostles.

The women will be the first one sent to proclaim the resurrection of Christ. It will be a woman who is the first one to see the risen Jesus. So it's not about dishonoring women.

[10:50] But understand in this culture, this is radical. Not to us today, but it's radical. Then radical. Radical. Women. So who are these women?

In verse 40 and 41. And then again in verse 47, Mark mentions these women. They are there in verses 40 and 41 at his death.

In verse 47, they're there to see where he is laid. And then in chapter 16, they're going to show up again three days later because they paid attention to where he was laid.

They watched and they marked what tomb he was in so they didn't go to the wrong tomb. In chapter 16, these women will return and come to probably, they were trying to finish the preparation for burial.

Get the spices in there and do all of that and wash his body and do all that they had wanted to do before and couldn't. So here's these women. And how Mark portrays them is these are the women who are always following and always serving Jesus.

[11:55] They've always been there, even though he's introducing them at the end here. His comment in verse 41 is, they were there from the beginning. They've always been following and always been serving him.

Oh, did I forget to mention that? We've been reading all these stories and Mark is now saying, oh, by the way, there were a whole bunch of women there from the get-go.

And they've always been there. And then in verse 43, he's going to introduce us to this one man that has never been there and now is there. So we've got the women who are always there.

He wants us to see that. And then there's this other guy that's Johnny come lately. But don't dismiss him for that because he takes a bold stand. He's been a secret disciple. Now, for whatever reason, he decides, now I'm taking my stand.

So he gives us these two views of these people who serve Jesus, those who've been his servants in the background all of this time that, oh, I didn't even know they were there. These blessed servant women who have been supporting him and loving him and caring for him all along.

[13:00] And then here's this man, this prominent man who now he comes out. The death of Jesus moved him to finally take a bold stand for Jesus.

So let's look at these women. I just want to ask three questions. Who are they? What do they do? And why does it matter? So who are they? Well, he tells us in verse 40, there are three of them. One is Mary Magdalene.

That's not her last name. Magdalene is simply the area where she's from, which is on the west shore of the Sea of Galilee, just above Tiberias, a little town there.

And we find out from the gospel of Luke chapter 8 that she was a woman who had been saved from seven demons, that Jesus had cast out seven demons in this woman.

She was oppressed. She was afflicted. She was tormented. We know, Mark showed us several demon exorcisms and often they were just one.

[14:03] We had one who had had a legion of them, but here's a woman who had seven. So you can understand that she is grateful and wants to be near Jesus ever since he has set her free.

She's at his death. She's at his burial. She's going to be at his resurrection. And then second, he mentions another Mary. There's Mary, the mother of James, the younger, and Joseph.

Now, who is this Mary? By the way, when you look up Mary in the New Testament, there's a whole bunch of them. That's a very, very common name. Lots of Mary.

Mary Magdalene, Mary, the mother of Jesus. There's Mary and Martha. There's another Mary of Chuzza.

So there's all kinds of them. This one, I believe, is Mother Mary because she's the mother of two sons that just happen to be the same two sons that are Jesus' brothers.

[15:09] Listed back in Mark chapter 6. Mark tells us that Jesus had four brothers. The first two names were James and Joseph.

And here is the mother of James and Joseph. Salome, who is Salome? Well, if we look at Matthew and we look at Luke, we can put together that Salome is the sister of Mother Mary.

She's also the mother of James and John, the sons of thunder. She's Mrs. Zebedee. Salome. And by the way, that also lets us know that James and John were cousins of Jesus.

Just like John the Baptist was also a relative of Jesus. Kind of a close-knit thing. That's who they are. That's who's there. Mary Magdalene, his mother, his aunt Salome are there.

What did they do? Well, in Mark, as I mentioned, this is the first mention of women followers or disciples. The gospel has shown us women that Jesus has ministered to.

[16:28] We know that Jesus has healed different women. We know that Jesus was anointed by Martha and Mary. That implies she was a follower, but we're not told specifically that she's a follower and a disciple.

And here in verse 41, we're told, when he was in Galilee, they, these two Marys and Salome, they had followed him. That's in the imperfect tense, which means they were always following him and they were always ministering to him.

And there were also many other women who came up with him to Jerusalem. Remember, when Jesus entered Jerusalem, there was a big crowd. Well, they're from Galilee, including many, many women.

So, what they did, we find out in verse 41, is these are people who are followers of Jesus. They're also disciples of Jesus. And Mark is now telling us that, by the way, they've been there all along. Way back when he was in Galilee, they were ministering to him and following him. They're in the background. They've been with Jesus all along.

[17:35] And they're not just following, they're serving. And the word for servant there is our word that translates into deacon. It means to wait on. It's a focus on physical aiding and physical serving, practical, physical needs.

And then Mark just kind of tossed in, also there's many other women. Many other women. Wow. That kind of fills in some, we kind of have a black and white picture of Jesus and all of a sudden Mark's adding a bunch of color.

It's like, oh, oh, there's more than I thought there was. It's not just this little group of 12. It's, well, there was a lot more going on.

Why does it matter? Why does Mark put this here? Why do we need to know this? Is it just a casual remark?

Is he just simply saying there's witnesses? Well, maybe. Or is he saying, I want you to know, by the way, there were people who deeply loved Jesus.

[18:48] And there was this group of people who were behind the scenes that even as he dies and is buried, they're still there. Unlike the men who have scattered, who have, are hiding, whatever, there are these women who are still there.

Wherever Jesus is, that's where they want to be. They will serve him to the end. They may not understand, but they're going to be devoted to the bitter end.

They will take care of all the messy work. The men are gone. They'll take care of the messy work. They'll do the, take the body. They'll cleanse the body. They'll bury the body. They'll do it because they need to do it.

Because they love him. They want to be with him. They want to be where he is. They want to be near him to the end.

They've hoped in him for four years. Now they are not just going to walk away. Is that the difference between men and women? I don't know. I'm not going to get it. But it sure shows up here, doesn't it?

[19:57] Sure shows up here. That's why in the next chapter they're going to be the ones to first see him. Because why? Because they're there. They've got to coax the men to come and check.

Mary Magdalene, why was she there? He set her free from seven demons. I can only imagine her life before.

She owes everything to him. Mother Mary, well, why is she there? She's mom. She's still mom. She didn't always understand what he did.

She knew a whole lot. Remember, she was told and she treasured up. All these things were said about him. She tried to manipulate him later in his ministry to try to control him and protect him.

She was fearful that he was going to get in trouble and look what happened now, he's in trouble. But she's still going to be there. That's still mom. And then there's Aunt Salome.

[20:57] Why is she there? She's family. You do it, you're family. But also because she's seen the impact on her two sons, James and John. And apparently, as Mark said, she's been following all along.

They want to be with him. Many women were serving Jesus behind the scenes. And so Mark just gives us kind of this little rare glimpse into the practical goings-on behind the scenes.

Luke does the same thing. In Luke chapter 8, he mentions the women serving Jesus. Here's what Luke says in Luke 8. He says, Soon afterwards, Jesus went on through the cities and villages proclaiming and bringing the good news of the kingdom.

He's doing his ministry. And the 12 men, the 12 disciples, were with him. And then he says, And also, some women. Some women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities.

Some of the people Jesus had healed. Some women specifically were with him. one named Mary called Magdalene from whom seven demons had gone out.

[22 : 10] We mentioned that. Here's another one. Joanna, wife of Chuzza, Herod's household manager. He'd healed her too. And Susanna and many others whom he had healed.

And then Luke adds, who provided for them out of their means. Who deaconed them, who waited on them, who served them, excuse me, out of their means.

Remember, Jesus was a carpenter when he started ministry. That was his full-time work. He calls men to follow him. Come and be with me.

He's spending, now sometimes they're fishing. But remember, he had called James and John out of the boat to come with him. He calls Matthew out of the tax boot to come with him. How are they sustaining and supporting themselves?

Jesus is in full-time ministry. He doesn't have, he doesn't charge. They apparently had a offering of some kind for the poor, but it doesn't say it went to them.

[23 : 23] Judas used to hold the money bag to give out to the poor. So how did they live day to day? How did they get support? These women. All these women took care of their basic needs.

Apparently cooking and I don't know, whatever was needed, they were there to provide and help them. So Mark tells us there are these three women.

And if we only had Mark, we would have the impression that that was it. That was the only, those were the only ones at the cross. But John tells us there were others at the cross. In John 19, John says, standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother and his mother's sister.

That confirms that it was both Mary and Salome, his sister there. And then he adds another Mary, the wife of Clopas and Mary Magdalene. So he names four women.

And when Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby. Wait a minute. When Jesus saw his mother and who? The disciple whom he loved.

[24 : 34] There was a man there. There was one disciple there. Who's the disciple whom Jesus loved? Well, that's the gospel of John's way of identifying himself.

Because he was so overwhelmed that Jesus would love him. And apparently this was the closest, closest human relationship Jesus had was with this John.

Who early at the supper had been leaning on Jesus' chest. Who had Jesus' ear. John. John was there. He's there with Jesus' mother.

And remember, Jesus had the presence of mind hanging on the cross to say this to his mother. He said to his mother, Woman. Apparently he didn't call her mom.

Woman. Behold your son. Speaking of John. And then he said to the disciple, Behold your mother.

[25 : 34] And from that hour the disciple took her home, took her to his home. Caring for his mother even on the cross. What Mark reveals for us is that there's more to the story.

What he's kind of bringing in, he's bringing in new characters but he's bringing in these characters to show us there was a bigger picture. There was more going on in the story than we knew. It wasn't just the 12 disciples who were faithful followers.

There were other faithful followers. And many of them were women who were always following and always serving. They'd been there from the beginning behind the scenes.

And perhaps he's implying at this point that as devoted as Peter was, these women might be a little more devoted.

They're there at this point. Well, he brings us these unexpected servants, these women, but there's another unexpected servant that Mark introduces to us now in verses 42 and 43, this Joseph.

[26 : 44] Joseph of Arimathea, respected member of the council. Joseph. And this one he reveals to us as a new servant, a recent servant.

He hasn't always been serving Jesus. He's been hiding in secret. Now he's a newly acting boldly to honor Jesus kind of servant.

In fact, he's kind of the framework of whereas Mary in Mark 14 had come to anoint him for burial, Joseph's kind of like the other side of that picture.

He's kind of filling it in. He's the one that actually buries Jesus. So you've got Mary and Joseph kind of working independently, but together, doing the same kind of thing. He's like another Mary, but he's the male version.

And by the way, this Joseph, whoever he was, is mentioned in all four gospels. He's important enough to mention in all four gospels.

[27 : 50] So Mark in verse 42 tells us the timing when this happened was, it was evening had come and it was the day of preparation, that is the day before the Sabbath, so we needed to rush it.

Jesus, remember, died on the ninth hour, which was around 3 p.m. And by 6 p.m. the sun would set at this time of year.

So he had two to three hours to get Jesus down from the cross and get him into a tomb, but first he had to go get permission because you can't do that with a crucified criminal. Crucified criminals have no right, they have no right to a burial.

And especially a criminal with the charge above him that said king of the Jews, in other words, the charge of treason, there wasn't an exception for a criminal with treason as their charge.

But remember when Pilate was interrogating Jesus? Remember, he didn't buy it. Remember, he would say, what evil has he done?

[28 : 56] He's not a real revolutionary. He doesn't even really say he's a king. Not to Pilate. So it's a fast burial.

In John 19, we get the extra information that it wasn't just Joseph alone that came and took the body down. That'd be tough to do as one person. I suppose he could do it, but that'd be tough to get the nails out of the cross and take his body down.

Well, John tells us in John 19 that there was another council member that was with him, Nicodemus. We remember Nicodemus from Nick at night.

In John chapter 3, when he came to Jesus at night, remember, he was the rabbi and he talked to Jesus about being born again and work of the Spirit and all these things and he had respect for Jesus and apparently on the council of the Sanhedrin were two men who were secret disciples of Jesus.

Who is Joe? Verse 43, we're told, well, he was from Arimathea, which is about 20 miles northwest of Jerusalem, a little mountain town. He was a respected member of the council.

[30 : 14] He's on the council, the very same council that condemned Jesus to death in the end of chapter 14 of Mark. Luke tells us when he mentions Joseph of Arimathea when that decision to condemn Jesus was made that Joseph had not consented.

So he did not vote guilty. And I would apparently assume Nicodemus did not vote to condemn him either. It tells us that he was a respected member.

He had a good reputation. He was well liked, he was well respected, he was honorable, and then he was looking for the kingdom of heaven.

That's Mark's way of saying, by the way, what Mark considers the kingdom of heaven, the Jesus version of the kingdom of heaven. He was looking for that kingdom and they were believing that Jesus may in fact be that Messiah, the king.

One other fact we know about Joseph is what the gospel of John adds and that is that he was a secret disciple. He was a hidden disciple. He hid his following of Jesus from the other members of the council because he was afraid.

[31 : 32] There would be fallout, there would be consequences. If he came out and said, I trust, I believe this Jesus, I think it's the real thing, he would be cast out of the synagogue. So he hid it.

And now we have a striking thing. What did he do? Verse 40, the end of verse 43, he took courage and went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus.

He took courage. Now it takes courage for a couple of reasons. One, to go ask Pilate who under the circumstance of treason would not let the body go.

So it's kind of a, I don't know, do I even dare approach Pilate? And Pilate historically was known to be not a nice guy. And a bit of a wild card.

He was a politician, but he was a wild card. But the other reason, the main reason that he had to take courage was because now his life was going to change forever.

[32 : 32] Now that he's going to take a stand, he's now going to associate himself with this Jesus, the very thing that Peter would not do in the garden, remember, in this courtyard. No, I don't know that man.

Joseph is going to come out and say, okay, now I'm associated with him to the extent that I want to honor his body. I'm not just going to throw him in the ground, I'm not just going to take him down. I'm going to buy a shroud. I want to give him my own tomb. God, I'm not going to be forever associated with this Jesus.

He takes courage. He risks the exposure and the fallout. And by the way, for a Jew to touch a dead body before the Passover, he's now unclean for seven days.

He will not be able to participate in the Passover celebration. celebration. I would imagine that's the least of his concern.

[33 : 32] Because it's not going to be a seven day effect. It's going to be a lifetime effect. He will now probably be dismissed from the council and kicked out of the synagogue. synagogue. He's a secret disciple before, but now he will defy the danger.

He will boldly and willingly go to honor Jesus. He too is willing to do the dirty work, the messy work. Imagine, what he's doing is he's taking a bloody body of Jesus down. It's messy. It's awkward. I don't think that's what he thought. We want to know, we're curious, we want to know what changed. Why now will he come out?

What changed? He's been in hiding. He's been secret. Why now? Mark doesn't tell us. Was it his shame of previous fear?

[34 : 40] Was it his outrage at the injustice done to Jesus? Is it his regret of being a secret follower?

We're not told. Maybe it's all of that. Maybe it's something else. But now he decides to step forward. He may be the only one that has the means to do what he does.

The disciples of Jesus are Galileans. They're not from the area. They're not guys and they don't have money to bury Jesus. This is a rich man. This is a popular man.

And I want you to notice his personal care. Maybe it suggests to us why he did it. He decides now to take a stand and think through this process of what he does.

Mark shows us kind of these several steps that he does. It's very personal. In verse 46, Joseph bought a linen shroud first.

[35 : 49] That's expensive. A linen shroud is a very fine piece of cloth. It's not necessarily linen, but the word for linen there means quality.

So it's a, what do you have when you buy sheets and you got a 30 thread and 100 thread or whatever. This is really fine stuff that someone would buy, which is appropriate to honor somebody in death.

So first a shroud, which is a long piece of material. It's not, he's not wrapping him like a mummy. It's a long piece of material that would be laid out.

You lay the body on there and then you fold it over. Exactly by the way, the same look that the shroud of Turin appeared.

This isn't a place to talk about the shroud of Turin, but it shows us what it was like. It was exactly like that. It says that he, verse 45, he bought the linen shroud and he took Jesus down.

[36 : 55] Now just imagine that. He takes him down. That's not easy. He's driven hanging by spikes. He's high up. We know he's high up because they had to use reeds to feed him with.

So don't know how that is. It's a bit awkward. It's a bit, you know, those moments of, sorry dear. Taking him down.

Just as I imagine that, I'm thinking that's really personal. It's really personal. Putting him over his shoulder perhaps. He and Nicodemus awkwardly kind of shuffling around.

This is not, these are men of renown. They're not normal, you know, labor kind of guys and so this may be a little awkward for these guys. Very personal. And he wraps him.

Literally the word is folds him. So that's the picture of laying the shroud down and then folding it over him and throwing the spices in there. John tells us that Nicodemus brought 75 pounds of spices.

[38 : 04] Apparently they just kind of dumped them in there. Didn't have time to really ply them. They just dumped them in there and the ladies were going to come back and do that later. I picture something very tender, very personal.

And then he lays them in a tomb we're told. We're told by the other gospels that this was a tomb that he himself had cut out of the limestone there in the hillside.

That would be an extremely long process. You didn't have jack hammers and modern tools that's just chipping away. And it's not like when I went to Israel and we were shown the garden tomb, it was just kind of a, there's a little, it was like that, a little entryway.

It's carved in, you go in and then there's where the body would lay. This is Joseph of Arimathea. It would have had a substantial family tomb. It would have had an antechamber where you went in first.

And then you would go through another way and you go in and there would be several shelves there. As they have found, archaeologically, they've found lots of tombs like this where you'd have places for various members.

[39 : 15] One of the gospels tells us that this was brand new. It hasn't been used. And so Joseph is offering his own family tomb to Jesus.

We don't know if he thinks, oh, he's only going to use it for a day. We're not told this. He's likely like the other men are like, I don't get it, right? Until he raises from the dead and they're shocked and okay, now I get it.

why did he do it? He just wants to honor Jesus at the very least.

He wants to honor him. I haven't done it before, I gotta do it. I don't care what it costs. And that makes us reflect on ourselves, have I done that? Not to kind of measure myself up or shame myself if I have, just have I done that?

Or would I ever be willing to do that? Am I a secret disciple or would I be willing to make a bold act for Jesus?

[40 : 19] Not just to do that, but if it was necessary if I felt called of God to actually speak up to my friend, actually tell my story to my neighbor.

I'm not saying forcing that, I'm just saying there may be times in our lives where we're told by the Lord, by the Spirit to say how about now? How about now?

Will you do it? And if the only thing that we're resisting to do that is I'm afraid of what will happen, then we need to re-examine. And go to the Lord.

What should I do, Lord? Give me the strength to do this. I've never done it before. So, what is all of this about? What difference does all of this make?

Okay, nice story. Jesus is buried. I love the picture of the God.

[41 : 39] You said there would be hope, pastor. What difference? Why is the burial of Jesus important? Why isn't it just, why didn't Mark just write, he died, he was buried, and then let's get to chapter 16, he rose, there's the big part.

Why is it significant that we know the details, that here's the people that were there, here's the confirmation that he died, here are the people that took care of his body, and so he's giving us this visual picture of he was buried, there's a stone, apparently big, not a one person job stone, rolled in front of the tomb to keep animals out, to seal it off.

You go to Jerusalem, you will see a garden tomb that is exactly like that with a huge disc shaped stone and that's just not made up by the movies, they found tombs like that and imagine the work it would take to do that, to make that.

So what does that mean? What difference? Why is this important to us? Listen to what Paul says in Romans 6. He specifically mentions the burial of Jesus as being significant to us.

Paul says in Romans 6, what shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin, the grace might abound? He's talking about, hey, Jesus forgives everything, doesn't matter if we sin, right? I can keep on sinning because God will forgive me.

[43 : 11] Yes, true, he will forgive you. Are we to continue in sin, the grace might abound? Should I just keep sinning so it shows God's glory? Paul says, by no means.

And then he asks a question, how can we who died to sin still live in it? do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?

Do you know that? Watch this. We were buried with him. We were buried with him by baptism into death.

Why? In order that as Jesus raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. It's life changing truth. There's power in this.

For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, might be made ineffective so that we no longer are enslaved to sin. [44 : 29] For one who has died has been set free from sin. Now if we have died with Christ, we believe we shall also live with him. We know that Christ being raised from the dead, shall never die again. Death has no longer dominion over him for the death he died, he died to sin once for all.

But the life he lives, he lives to God. So you. So what is the difference? Paul says now, let me turn to you. What does all this mean for you? So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

Therefore, do not let sin reign in your mortal body to obey its passions. In other words, you have now as a believer the power to say no, the power to resist.

Let me sum it up this way. How do we view the burial of Jesus? The burial of Jesus, according to Paul, is our burial.

It's our burial of sin. With Jesus on the cross died our sin. And when he was buried, our sins were taken with him in his body to the grave.

[45 : 51] Our sins are buried. the stinger has been removed. It's our own death to sin. His burial means our freedom, Paul says.

If we're no longer enslaved, then we are free. We're enabled to walk a whole new way. In other words, this is what it means. We do not have to keep making bad choices.

We do not have to live in an endless cycle of despair and misery. if you're a believer in Jesus Christ, you don't have to say, I can't stop the habit.

No, you can't, but in Christ you can. See, this is, there is power. There is hope. The power of sin has been broken for the believer.

It doesn't mean that those bad thoughts go away. No, they don't. Because you still have to make a choice. I urge you, do not let sin reign. Don't let it.

[46 : 57] You can let it. If we're a default Christianity, if we have an inactive faith, we just kind of, I put my faith over here, I believe this, now I just kind of cruise. If you cruise, guess what happens?

You let sin reign. All your old choices, all your old habits, they're just going to go. That's what's natural, that's what's normal. The only way you break that cycle is by saying, okay, Christ, I trust in you.

Father, help me right now. Help me say no. Help me resist. See, it's an active faith that empowers this.

This is hope for the believer in Jesus. The burial of Jesus, the fact that our sins have been carried away to his tomb, brings freedom and power to walk anew.

So, let me end with this. Do you see your sin buried with Christ? Just picture that. Picture this tomb. Picture this rock. Take Paul's word seriously where he applies our whole sin nature, our whole natural desires to do our own things has been now transferred to him who paid for them and now has buried them.

[48 : 20] Picture them there. Consider yourself dead to sin in terms of its power. Do you know that your sin no longer has power?

Unless you let it. unless you are neutral and hands off. See, this is my hobby horse about faith.

Your faith must be active. It's not simply that I believe these things and now I'm safe. No, faith is an active, it's an action. I'm constantly depending on the Lord to work through me.

I am looking to him, asking him, drawing from him. I am dependent and relying. That's active.

Prayer all the time.

It's like, oh Lord, help me now. And we depend on the power of Christ and we walk by the power of the Holy Spirit by active faith.

[49 : 35] faith. So, Christian, you were buried with Christ. Your sin has been buried with Christ.

You are free and alive to God. Do you believe it? Do you believe it? You have power in Christ to walk in newness of life, to break the cycle, to break the patterns.

It's not magic. faith and sometimes it's messy. It doesn't always look good. It looks pretty, in fact, you don't look good in the process. Just take that as you look pretty messy and desperate.

We have power in Christ to walk in newness of life. So, beloved, live in this hope by an active faith in Christ. Let us pray. Father, we thank you for your word.

We thank you that even in this, what at first outside appears to be just a physical act of burying the body of Jesus. Father, in that, Mark has given us a picture.

[50 : 48] He's given us a picture of our own sin being carried away and put away. Help us to believe it. And I pray for those, Father, today that don't know what that is, don't know what that's like.

I pray that you would stir in them to reach out to you, to look to you, to ask you what that means, to ask you to come and change their own lives. We pray this in Christ's name.

Amen. Amen. Thank you, Pastor. I love hearing about the power of God, the resurrection power of God. It is the same power that we do have in our lives when we are born-again Christians.

Well, stand please and sing, 10,000 reasons. Bless the Lord, O my soul. Amen.