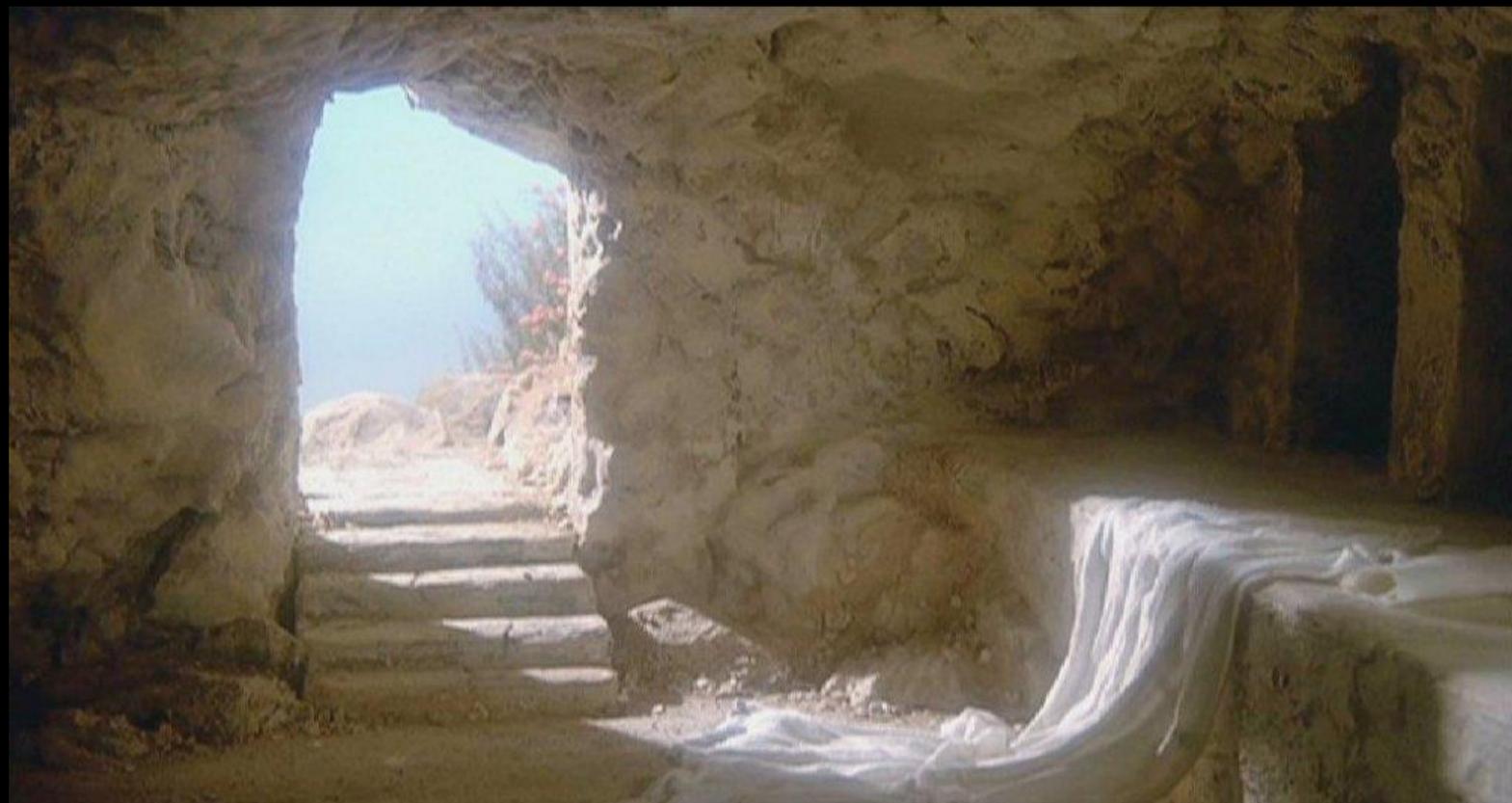


**WITNESSES
OF THE
EMPTY TOMB**



1 Corinthians 15:12-18

12 Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?

13 But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen:

14 And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain.

15 Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not.

1 Corinthians 15:12-18 - continued

16 For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised:

17 And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins.

18 Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished.

I. Those Who Did Not Want To Be There

A. Why Were They There?

Matthew 27:62-66

62 Now the next day, that followed the day of the preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate,

63 Saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again.

64 Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead: so the last error shall be worse than the first.

I. Those Who Did Not Want To Be There

A. Why Were They There?

Matthew 27:62-66 - continued

65 Pilate said unto them, Ye have a watch: go your way, make it as sure as ye can.

66 So they went, and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch.

I. Those Forced To Be There

B. What Happened To Them That Morning?

Matthew 28:2-4

2 And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it.

3 His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow:

4 And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men.

I. Those Forced To Be There

C. No Change Happened

Matthew 28:11-15

11 Now when they were going, behold, some of the watch came into the city, and shewed unto the chief priests all the things that were done.

12 And when they were assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel, they gave large money unto the soldiers,

13 Saying, Say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole him away while we slept.

I. Those Who Did Not Want To Be There

C. No Change Happened

Matthew 28:11-15 - continued

14 And if this come to the governor's ears, we will persuade him, and secure you.

15 So they took the money, and did as they were taught: and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day.

II. Those Not Expecting What Happened

A. Doing What They Thought Needed To Be Done

Luke 24:1-3

1 Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain others with them.

2 And they found the stone rolled away from the sepulchre.

3 And they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus.

II. Those Not Expecting What Happened

B. On The Verge of Missing The Message

Luke 24:4-5

4 And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold, two men stood by them in shining garments:

5 And as they were afraid, and bowed down their faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead?

II. Those Not Expecting What Happened

C. Needed to Be Reminded Of The Message

Luke 24:6-8

6 He is not here, but is risen: remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee,

7 Saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.

8 And they remembered his words

II. Those Not Expecting What Happened

D. Changed To Be Obedient To The Message

Matthew 28:7-8

7 And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and, behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him: lo, I have told you.

8 And they departed quickly from the sepulchre with fear and great joy; and did run to bring his disciples word.

II. Those Not Expecting What Happened

E. They Met Jesus

Matthew 28:9

And as they went to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came and held him by the feet, and worshipped him.

III. Reluctant Witnesses

**The Disciples
Are Missing**

III. Reluctant Witnesses

A. They Were Not Looking

Matthew 16:21-23

21 From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day.

III. Reluctant Witnesses

A. They Were Not Looking

Matthew 16:21-23 - continued

22 Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee.

23 But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.

III. Reluctant Witnesses

B. They Were Not Listening

Luke 24:11

And their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not.

III. Reluctant Witnesses

C. They Were Not Convinced

Luke 24:12

Then arose Peter, and ran unto the sepulchre; and stooping down, he beheld the linen clothes laid by themselves, and departed, wondering in himself at that which was come to pass.

Faith

