**Matthew 28:1-15**

***“What Will It Take?”***

What will it take for you to believe? They see…but not all believe. Christ is alive! Three reactions:

What will it take for you to believe? They see!

**I. THEY SAW AND DELIGHTED 28:1,2; 5-10**

 ***A. The Intimidation 1,2***

**1.** *In the end of the Sabbath…*the phrase could be rendered: “well after the Sabbath”

 a considerable amount of time elapsed since the end of the Sabbath. *Sabbath* was

 from sundown Friday to sundown Saturday. *Began to dawn* maybe ten hours

 had passed. The sun was coming up.

 **2.** *The first day of the week* is literally, “day one in reference to the Sabbath.” The

 Jews had no Monday, Tues, etc. They numbered in relation to the Sabbath.

 \**Sabbath* means seven. Why did worship change for Saturday to Sunday?

 \*A new day began to dawn. It is why Christians meet on Sunday. **Something**

 **happened! It's always a new day when we see that Jesus is alive!**

 **3.** *To see the sepulcher…*Matthew focuses on the two Marys…Mary Magdalene and

 the *other Mary*. She is the mother of James the less. Salome, the sister of Mary

 the mother of Jesus, and the mother of James and John was also there.

 \*They had not come to see a risen Jesus. They expected to find a body! They

 were filled with death, doubt and depression as they plodded toward the sealed

 tomb.

 \***If you don’t have a living Savior, all you can do is bow at a shrine!** You

 will be miserable. Millions of Americans bow before all manner of shrines…

 (Popularity, Education, Materialism, Money, Pleasure, Work, Sex, Drugs, etc.)

 **4.** Read v. 2 This is a Gospel to the Jews. These details mean something to the Jew.

 \**Earthquake*…there was an earthquake at the cross, and here. **God is near!** **God**

 **is active!**

\**The angel…***God has something to say! He has a message from God!** He

 moved the stone from the sealed tomb. This was not to let Jesus out, He is already

 gone! It is so the women, disciples and the rest of the world can see in. **He’s alive!**

 *\*He sat on it…***To sit down means he is in control! An act or event is finished.**

 ***B. The Interest 5,6a***

**1.** Heaven says nothing to the Roman guards. He speaks to the women. The guards

 are not ready to believe. **To the stubborn unbeliever, heaven is silent!**

 **2.** *Fear not…*all darkness, all doubt and fear are gone! The sin question has been

 settled. The cross is the down payment. The empty tomb is the receipt…**paid**

 **in full.** God (the offended party) accepted this sacrifice as the payment for sin.

 (Romans 8:31-34) **Jesus Paid It All!**

 **3.** *He is not here. He is risen.* The empty tomb was not questioned for 1,000 years!

 ***C. The Invitation 6b,7*** *Come and see* After you have seen, *Go and tell.*

1. So, I invite you, Come and see: **Jesus is Alive!** Alive to answer the longing of your heart. Alive to put that marriage back together. Alive to give you purpose. Alive to make sense out of living. Alive to change your life.
2. Then **go and tell** (Matt. 28:19-20) **The world is aching to hear Good News!** For the first centuries the church flourished. **Show us a body!**

 ***D. The Investigation 8a*** *From the sepulcher…*

1. They obeyed his invitation. *Fear and joy* is the way we will go also.
2. I’m afraid, but I go because of the tremendous joy.

 ***E. The Inclination 8b***

**1.** *They departed quickly…they ran.*

**2.** When something life changing takes place, you can’t keep quiet. When that first

 baby is born you want to tell everyone. When you are cancer free, and the report

 is encouraging.

1. We should be the same way with Jesus. *“May I share with you the greatest thing that ever happened to me?”*

 ***F. The Inspiration 9,10***

**1.** All they could do was adore and worship Him!

 **2.** If you ever meet the risen Christ…you will never be the same. **That’s what**

 **happened to me!**

What will it take for you to believe? They see!

**II. THEY SAW AND DENIED 28:2-4; 11,12,15**

 ***A. They Are Contacted 2-4***

**1.** Only God knows the future (Jn. 16:21; 17:23; 20:19; 27:63, 65-66)

 **2.** These soldiers (placed there by Pilate) came close to the power of God. They

 experienced the same thing as the women. They had no life changing encounter.

 They were fearful and fell unconscious.

1. Are you like the soldiers? You have seen what Jesus can do in homes…families…lives. **God has been dealing with you, but there is no change.**

 ***B. They Are Convinced 11***

**1. There is no doubt the tomb is empty!**

 **2.** Some of the guards went to the high priest. Pilate had given them to the Sanhedrin.

 **3. They were convinced, but lost!** Maybe some of you are like that.

 ***C. They Are Contracted 12***

**1.** The guards sold Jesus out for a large sum of money.

 **2.** The Sanhedrin never investigated. One thing was certain…**there was no body!**

 **3.** They keep quiet. So many are afraid to stand for Jesus. **To those who are** **lost:**

 *“I can’t live the life.” "Some day, but not today.” “What would my friends say?”*

**To those who are believers: *Jesus died for you, but you won’t live for Him.***

 ***D. They Are Counterfeits 15***

**1.** Word spread in the Jewish community: **the disciples stole the body!**

 **2.** They live a lie. So many by pass Jesus Christ and settle for that which is false.

 False joy…false peace...false security…false hope…**they are forced to live a lie!**

What will it take for you to believe? They see!

**III. THEY SAW AND DENOUNCED 28:11-13** These are religious, moral, sincere but lost!

 ***A. They Are Confronted 11***

**1.** The body is gone. Who told the incident in vss. 11-15? Could it have been a soldier

 or a member of the Sanhedrin?

 **2.** These are confronted with the truths of a living Christ. This challenges their empty

 religion, their formalism, their ritualism and ceremony.

 **3.** Are you religious, moral and sincere, but lost? **What will you do with Jesus?**

 ***B. They Counseled 12***

**1.** They bribe the soldiers. They spread lies about the body. They protect the

 soldiers from Pilate. They had to get rid of a BIG problem.

 **2.** Today, Christ confronts empty religion. *“Let’s talk about it.” “Let’s not get all*

 *all excited about sin, heaven or hell, the 2nd coming or God becoming man and dying*

 *for our sins and is supposed to be alive.” “It’s personal, let’s not talk about it.”*

 ***C. They Contrived 13***

**1.** A body is missing. They don’t investigate. They have too much to lose.

 **2.** The resurrection is the only explanation: *All asleep…*How can you sleep and see

 who stole the body? There are many theories even today: *Swoon Theory:* Jesus

 wasn’t really dead, and the cool tomb revived Him. He was beaten. A spear was

 driven into his side, blood and water came out. Who moved the stone? *Mistaken*

 *tomb…Mistaken Identity…Someone misrepresented Jesus* Would you die knowing

 something was a lie as the disciples did? Who moved the stone while the soldiers

 slept (to do so was punishable by death). How could *all sleep* with four watches

 each in 3 hour shifts? *The Disciples* these were Jews. For a Jew to desecrate a

 body was punishable by death. They had a fine burial, a garden tomb…they didn’t

 believe He would rise! How did they manage to keep the grave clothes? To

 unwrap a body beginning to decompose was unthinkable…these were Jews!

**3. Just produce the body!** Peter preached the resurrection on Pentecost and 3000 were saved! Would you get such a response if the tomb was not empty? Josephus was a Jewish historian from 37 a.d. to 95 a.d. He did not claim to be a believer. He seems to record the death and resurrection of Jesus as a fact in Vol II Book XVIII, Chap. III page 3 of *Jewish Antiquities,* he wrote: *Now there was about this time Jesus, a wise man, if it be lawful to call Him a man: for He was a doer of wonderful works, a teacher of such men as receive the truth with pleasure. He drew over to Him both many of the Jews and many of the Gentiles. He was Christ. And when Pilate, at the suggestion of the principal men among us, had condemned Him to the cross, those that loved Him at the first did not forsake Him; for He appeared to them alive again the third day: as the divine prophets had foretold these and ten thousand wonderful things concerning Him. And the tribe of Christian so name from Him, are not extinct at this day.*

1. What do people contrive today for rejecting Jesus? They hang on to empty religion. **Does it make sense to spend an eternity in hell if you are wrong? Does it make sense to live a life with little purpose? Does it make sense to be miserable inside and out?**

What will it take for you to believe?

*If I could see a miracle (a proven, genuine miracle), then I would believe.*

*If only I knew for sure there was a risen Christ…*

*If I knew a little more…Then…****Not really!***

**IT TAKES JESUS CHRIST TO HOLD LIFE TOGETHER!**

 ***It’s not a matter of knowing more, it is a matter of acting on what you know.***