



WHAT REALLY HAPPENED AT EASTER

■ A STUDY OF MATTHEW 28:2-7 by Dr. John D. DeBrine ■

"He is not here: for He is risen, as he said, Come, see the place where the Lord lay." - Matthew 28:6

A few days after Easter in 1977, a reader wrote the Philadelphia Inquirer asking if the NBC two-part production of "Jesus of Nazareth" was available in book form. The paper replied by saying, "It has been available for nearly 2,000 years but if you want the NBC version you can get it from Ballantine Books for \$1.95."

The newspaper was truly correct, as almost two-thirds of the New Testament is devoted to the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Therefore, if you are looking for the account of what really happened at Easter, don't turn to the secularists - go to the Bible! Look with me at the Biblical account and make the following discoveries:

I. THE MIRACLE OF THE EMPTY TOMB (Matthew 28:6)

The fact that the tomb was empty is the foundation stone of Christian doctrine and the empty tomb is also the waterloo of infidelity and rationalism. Let me explain. How do I know beyond a doubt that I Cor. 2:2 is enough? "For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified."

The proof that this is enough is the resurrection. On some rare occasions a computer makes a mistake and I get a bill for something I have already paid. I don't have to hire a lawyer or display my old sin nature to correct the mistake. I just take the cancelled check to the company involved and they recognize immediately that the bill was paid in full. In a similar manner if I have any doubts about the

sufficiency of the death of Christ to deal with the record of my sin, I look to the empty tomb. That is God's "Paid in Full" proof! Therefore, I can never add to the Gospel or subtract from the Gospel. To do either would indicate that the death of Christ was not sufficient. I Corinthians 2:2 forbids such a thought. Are you trusting in your family background, your human effort (salvation by character), or your church pronouncements at some religious rite? John 1:13 states that some people do trust in these areas, but John 1:12 indicates that they are dead wrong. When an organization tells me that I have to be baptized in order to know God's deliverance from sin, I know that they misun-

derstand the cross - the work of Jesus. When they tell me that they anticipate some kind of purgatory in the future, I know that they misunderstand the Gospel.

The Bible says, "Christ died for our sins." Keep in mind as you read I Cor. 15:3 that you'll discover four verbs — died, buried, raised, and appeared. The word "died" has great meaning because the phrase, "for our sins" is added. The Greek word "hyper" means "on behalf of". Christ in His death became our substitute. Remember this — deity is incapable of imperfection or insufficiency. A simple question to determine if we grasp this would be our reply to the question, "How do I

Continued on Next Page

OPERATION OPPORTUNITY

Easter is a time to be reminded of something we already know — Jesus Christ is alive; therefore, opportunities explainable only by God should be the "norm". Because God is Omniscient, He knows every need, and because God is Omnipotent, He can provide for every need.

This idea is important to remember as Songtime begins broadcasting on the internet. This new opportunity allows people to access the Gospel message on Songtime during any 24-hour period, anywhere in the world! As God, in his omniscience, leads people to Songtime on the "net", we now must depend on God for the provision needed to make this venture possible. Our goal during the month is to emphasize the Resurrection as everyone on our mailing list helps throughout this Easter season to buy radio time and keep open this door of opportunity on the internet.

You can help by marking your Easter gift "Operation Opportunity" and sending it into Songtime with the special Easter envelope provided with this newsletter.

When sending in your Easter gift to the ministry of Songtime, please be sure to include the call letters of the radio station where you listen to Songtime. In this way, your gift can be applied to help your local station.

get rid of sin?" Further proof that the empty tomb is the Waterloo of infidelity is when the Bible says, "Taste and see" (Psalm 34:8) In other words try the pragmatic approach or meet the conditions and see the results. Because of this, you can help your unbelieving friends by encouraging them to do the following:

1. Pray - "God if You exist and if You reveal Yourself to me, I'll serve You."
2. With an open mind read a chapter a day in the Gospel of John.

John 20:31 will be their reward. Why does the formula work? The answer is... because the tomb is empty. Jesus Christ lives!

II. THE MESSENGERS OF THE EMPTY TOMB (Matthew 28:2-4)

Those of us learning to live after 50 have to be impressed with the comparison between Matthew 28:3 and Mark 16:5. Matthew records the appearance of an angel but Mark adds additional information: "And entering the tomb they saw a young man clothed in a long white robe." Eternal youthfulness, as a mark of our eternity future, has great appeal to me. There is much to note about the messengers of the empty tomb and that includes the symbolic announcement. Read Matthew 28:2 - "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." Note that not a word is said, only an act performed, indicating that some of the greatest truths are demonstrated. There was not one word

spoken, but the evidence was obvious and very convincing! The earthquake certainly got attention and the empty tomb gave irrefutable proof of a living Christ. Are you aware of the number one way to communicate Christianity? Namely, not by **doing** but by **being**. Note I Pet. 2:9. The last part of the verse indicates a definition of witnessing, while the first part of the verse indicates four ways to make it happen. There it is — witnessing is not **doing**. It is **being**. Peter carries this idea further in I Pet. 3:14,15. Let me summarize.

We are to live so that people will come to us and ask for an explanation of our faith. Let me put it this way — what did you do last week that was only possible because you are a Christian?

I WILL LIVE THE WAY I PRAY

I knelt to pray when day was done,
And prayed, "Lord bless everyone".
Lift from each heart the pain,
And let the sick be well again.
And then I woke again one day,
And carelessly went on my way;
The whole day long I did not try
To wipe a tear from any eye.
I did not try to share the load
Of any brother on the road;
I did not even go to see
The sick man just next door to me.
Yet once again when every day was done,
I prayed, "Lord bless everyone."
But as I prayed, to my ear
Came a voice that whispered dear.
"Pause, hypocrite, before you pray;
Whom have you tried to bless today?
God's sweetest blessings always go,
By hands that serve Him here below."
And then I hid my face and cried,
"Forgive me Lord, for I have lied.
Let me but live another day,
And I will live the way I pray."

III. THE MESSAGE OF THE EMPTY TOMB (Matthew 28:5-7)

A heading appeared in The Calvary Herald (Canada) before Easter which read, "No Herald Good Friday".

Therein lies a parable. In how many "Christian" churches was there no herald on Good Friday? The Church has been entrusted with the Gospel and the Gospel by Biblical definition includes the death of Christ, His burial and His resurrection. Was that message heralded from the pulpits of our land on Good Friday — or were there nice little homilies about Jesus as an Example, or Jesus as a Martyr. The Church needs heralds of the Gospel. Not hucksters or heretics ... but heralds! A herald by definition is one who makes announcements. He is not responsible for editing the copy, or for embellishing the news. He is responsible for delivering the message just as it is — no corrections, no changes and no compromises.

Read it again — "He is not here: for He is risen, as He said, Come see the place where the Lord lay."

We Love to Get Letters!

"One of my oldest and best programs since becoming a Christian in '88 is Songtime Radio! You have kept me in touch with such people of God as Warren Wiersbe, introduced me to Ravi Zacharias and many other voices that keep the show interesting and informative."

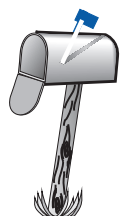
(WFCJ listener)

"Thanks to all of you at Songtime . There is so much that helps us grow in Bible study, thought-provoking teaching by John and the up-to-the minute explanations from Jimmy DeYoung, and of course the great music! May the Lord bless you who serve Him so faithfully."

(WLOB listeners)

"Thanks so much for the Audio Magazine. I've been loaning the tapes to a friend who drives from Hartford to Mystic each day."

(CT listener)



Dr. John's Speaking Schedule...

Sunday, April 5 - *Grace Bible Church*, 234 Central Street, E. Bridgewater
10:45 AM service.

Sunday, April 19 - *First Baptist Church*, 2 Tremont Street, Duxbury
10 AM & 6 PM services.

April 25 & 26 - *Grace Baptist Church*, 701 Pen-Ambler Rd., Ambler, PA.

April 30 - May 3 - *SONGTIME TOUR to Pennsylvania.*

May 2 & 3 - *Valley Christian Church* in Conway, NH
Saturday at 7 PM & Sunday at 10 AM and 6 PM.

May 9 & 10 - *Bethlehem Baptist Church* in West Boylston, MA
Saturday at 7:30 PM & Sunday at 10:30 AM.

May 17 & 18 - *New England Conference for CEO's*
at Hemlocks Conference Center in Hebron, CT

Sunday, May 24 - *East Baptist Church* in Lynn, MA
10:45 AM service.

Saturday, May 30 - *'Country Gospel Day' at Lake Compounce* in Bristol, CT

THE HIGH PRICE OF SEXUAL SIN

■ Steven W. Butts ■

One day I was visited by a young man in his thirties who had a personal problem. He told his story somewhat like this: 'I work for such-and-such a company and I have a private office. Several months ago my secretary was absent and I had to use another girl. One day she brought papers for my perusal; she got too close, and when she leaned over the desk, she let her hair trail across my face. I fought it down, but after all I am a man and toward the end of the day I put my hand on her and she came right back to be kissed. Even while kissing her, I was visualizing my two children running to meet me and my wife standing in the door. I hated what I was doing but I kept on. I had the greatest desire to push her from me but I kept pulling her to me; my body was doing one thing and my mind was doing another.

When I went home that night, I hugged my children so hard that one of them cried, and when we got him to laughing, I told them that it was because I loved them so much. I had tears in my eyes and

my wife's eyes were shining. We all clung together in one of those moments that are indescribable. My wife was supremely happy because I walked around the house that evening, touching familiar things that we had scrimped to buy, expressing my love for the home and for her, and before God I was never more true. Next day, the office intrigue began all over again. I was never more miserable in my life.

Before a month had gone by I realized that my lust and my love were in a terrible battle. When I came home, there was everything that I wanted in life. When I went to the office the machine of my body seemed geared to something terrible that was purely mechanical. I wanted to get out of it more than any fly ever wanted to get off fly-paper. I heard my wife tell someone that I was becoming more and more of a homebody and that all I wanted to do was stay at home. And it was true. I followed her around the house, talked with her in the kitchen where she was working, and watched her as she put the children to bed.

This morning, when I left the house, she told me that she thought she was the happiest woman in the world, because I showed so much that I loved her alone. I could hardly talk. In fact tears came to my eyes and when I lifted a lock of her hair to dry them, I said to her, 'I love you

more than life itself.' She cried and I crushed her to me until she screamed and smiled at the same time. Then I ran off to my train. But now what shall I do?'

This man's agonizing question, "But now what shall I do?", has been asked many times by those who have given in to the powerful deception of sexual temptation. His story, as retold by the late Donald Grey Barnhouse, offers a sobering warning about the possibility of risking the most important things of life for temporary pleasures. Since the sexual revolution people have tried to re-write God's standards for sexual conduct. Sadly, however, many have done so only to be painfully reminded of the scripture, "Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows" (Galatians 6:7). Actions have consequences. If you are flirting with sexual temptation let this man's experience serve as a wake-up call. Think before you act! Are you willing to sacrifice what is lasting and valuable for some moments of personal pleasure?

"A man who commits adultery lacks judgment; whoever does so destroys himself" (Proverbs 6:32). Although God is willing to forgive the guilt of confessed sin, he does not promise to remove all the consequences. Some sins, like adultery, inflict deep wounds. These wounds can take years to heal and thankfully, God does give healing grace (Hebrews 4:16). Such grace, however, is not offered to those who hide their sin. "He who conceals his sins does not prosper, but whoever confesses and renounces them finds mercy" (Proverbs 28:13).

**"Country Gospel Day"
with Songtime USA!**

**at Lake Compounce in Bristol, CT
Saturday - May 30, 1998**

A day filled with entertainment, amusements, Southern Gospel music, interviews at the Songtime booth, and Bible teaching by Dr. John will be awaiting you on Saturday, May 30 with Songtime USA. Come join us at this 325 acre theme park with over \$35 million in new rides and attractions that have been added for young and old alike, including a new family water playground with water slides, tube slides, and a wave pool! Local musicians from throughout the Northeast will converge to bring a full day of Gospel music under the pavillion, and, of course, the Songtime Team will be there to cover it all with Dr. John providing the Bible teaching. Tickets are available through Songtime, with special group rates available for your church delegation or youth group. It's an event that has something for everyone in your family, so make your reservations today!

CALL: 1-888-SONG-USA

The *Songtime Newsletter* © April 1998. All rights reserved. Published monthly by Songtime, Inc., 131 Old Route 132, Hyannis, MA 02601. (508) 362-7070. Email: info@mail.songtime.com Web Page: <http://www.songtime.com>

President: Dr. John DeBrine
Chairman: Rod August
Treasurers: Eric Rorstrom & Wally Lundstrom
Editor/Layout: David Donnelly
Contributors: Dr. John D. DeBrine, Bill Dagle, Steven W. Butts, Dr. Bob Burrelli, Marge Demers



IN THE SONGTIME BOOKSTORE

☐ *"A Light in the Window"* by Jan Karon. This is a continuation of the series by Marge's "favorite author" who wrote the first of the series, *At Home in Mitford*. It would make a great Mother's Day gift!

**Cost: \$12.00 (p)
plus \$1.50 postage & handling.**

Dr. Bob Burrelli Answers Songtime Listener Questions

Q: What did Jesus mean when He told Martha that her sister, Mary, had chosen what was better?

A: In Luke 10:38-42, we have the true story of Jesus visiting two sisters, Mary and Martha. While He was at their home, Mary sat at His feet "listening to what he said" (v. 39). Not so with Martha, for "she was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made" (v. 40). In her frustration, she asked the Lord, "Lord don't your care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me". Jesus replies, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and upset about many things, but only one thing is needed. Mary has

chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her" (vv. 41-42). The "one thing that is needed" in life, which Mary chose, is the Word of God. Verse 39 says that Mary was "listening to what he said".

The words of God are recorded for us in the Bible. They are, according to Jesus, the only thing that is really necessary in life. That is, they must take priority in our lives and be our passion. I know what your thinking: "Isn't shelter a necessity in life?" - No. There are many instances in history where the

Lord allowed His saints to die from persecution in the form of nakedness and exposure. "Well, surely food is of necessity?" - No. There are also many instances in history where the Lord allowed His saints to starve to death (See Romans 8:35-39). Our spiritual wellbeing does not depend upon food, shelter, or anything else. No one will ever get to heaven on an eight course meal or by owning a three piece suit. None of that really matters, Jesus says. The one necessity of life, the one thing that a believer cannot live without are the words of life recorded for us in the Bible.

Have the concerns of everyday life prevented you from fulfilling your God-given responsibilities laid out for you in the Word of God? Have you allowed them to distract you from listening to the Word of God? If so, Jesus says that you are focusing your attention on the wrong things. Stop deeming them more important than that which Jesus says is of the utmost importance - the Word of God. Next time you catch yourself enslaved to the pressures of life, remember that a victorious life in Christ depends upon your knowledge and obedience to God's Word alone. We must always be concerned first and foremost with doing His will. Jesus once said, "My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work". We eat off the same plate, beloved. bon appetit!

A SONGTIME "HYMNSTORY"

■ *Bill Dagle* ■

At this time of the year, songs that speak of our Saviour's death and resurrection will be sung over and over again in our churches. Songs like, *The Old Rugged Cross* by George Bernard or *Jesus Paid It All* by Elvira Hall will be sung and certainly the hymn *Were You There (a spiritual)* will be heard by many. As for me, I think the one song that expresses best the significance of Easter is Al Ackley's song, *He Lives*, for in this song is found the answer for the unbelieving heart.

The year was 1932 and Rev. Al Ackley was preparing for Easter service at his Presbyterian Church in California. He was shaving and listening to the radio when a well-known liberal preacher from New York came on the air. "Good Morning," the preacher said. "It is Easter! You know folks, it really doesn't make any difference to me if Christ be risen or not. As far as I am concerned His body could be dust in some Palestinian tomb. The main thing is that His truth goes marching on!". "It's a lie!" exclaimed Rev. Ackley - almost cutting himself with the straight razor he was using. Well that was just the needed incentive for him to preach up a storm that morning. For how dare that liberal minister try to destroy that which had given the early church it's power and for which many had given their lives - proclaiming a resurrected living Saviour.

Then later that day, Pastor Ackley gave them the second barrel at the evening service but still that wasn't enough. Mrs. Ackley knew her husband well and sizing up the situation, she suggested that he do what he did best — put his feelings down on paper.

Heeding her advice, he went to his study, opened his Bible to Mark 16:6 and started to read. Soon the Holy Spirit took hold of his pen and in a matter of minutes he wrote the answer for the unbelieving heart.

We live in a day when all around us we are told that you can not know for sure there is a God and that His Word is of little value and it is just a matter of one's opinion versus another. Well, if all I had was religion, I'd have to agree with those unbelieving voices but thanks to God's redeeming grace, I can answer the skeptic with the words of Al Ackley's song. I can give a defense for the faith that lies within me. What can anyone say when to the unbelieving heart you respond, "You ask me how I know *He lives*? He lives within my heart." Proving once again the truth of Ephesians 5:19 "Speaking to yourselves in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord."

Changes in Cyberspace...

Our home on the "net" has moved! We are now located on the internet at -

<http://www.songtime.com>

Come visit us and browse through past editions of the Songtime Newsletter, get connected to great Christian resources, and listen to our new internet broadcast! That's right, **the Songtime Audio Magazine is now being broadcast around the world on the internet.** After you find our new web page and take a listen to Songtime on the "net", drop us a note on our new E-mail address -

info@mail.songtime.com