

Father, we know that in Your great wisdom and providence You allow things to happen in our lives that almost wipe us out. We can be so discouraged and defeated. It will seem like everything is all over. There is no hope, and in those dark times, we need the truth, because only the truth can set us free. You are a God who will forgive. You are the God who raised Jesus from the dead. He is alive and He is coming back. Help us, Lord, to understand that. Help us not to be depressed by the circumstances of life when we have a Savior, who has saved us out of all of this. Help us to look into His beautiful face, by faith seeing what we see in the word, knowing that one day, literally and physically, we are going to see His face as the Bible says. Thank You for our precious Lord Jesus—our resurrected, living Lord. We give You all the praise and all the glory. For it is in the name of our Messiah—our Lord Jesus Christ—that we pray. Amen.

We are on the resurrection. Now let us start with Matthew 28. There is of course, the resurrection in all four accounts of the Gospels. Let us go to Matthew 28. You will be receiving a number of notes that are not in your outline, and so you might want to get some space handy to jot things down as they come to your attention and your heart.

Matthew 28:1 says, “In the end of the Sabbath...” Stop right there. The Greek word is plural. “In the end of the Sabbaths,” which means that we have to have two Sabbaths in a row? Now the weekly Sabbath occurs every Saturday, but we have to have another Sabbath. Which Sabbath is it?

Go back to Leviticus 23:

These [are] the feasts of the LORD, [even] holy convocations,
which ye shall proclaim in their seasons. (Leviticus 23:4)

Whenever you see “holy convocations” or “holy meetings,” it is referring to the same thing as a Sabbath. That is, the requirements and the regulations for a Sabbath day apply to a holy convocation. It is holy, which means that day is separated from all other days of the week. We have a holy convocation. To prove this, look at verse 3, “Six days shall work be done, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of rest, a holy convocation. You shall do no work therein. It is the Sabbath of the Lord in all your dwellings.”

We have some festivals that also are holy convocations.

In the fourteenth [day] of the first month at even [is] the LORD'S
passover. And on the fifteenth day of the same month [is] the
feast of unleavened bread unto the LORD: seven days ye must
eat unleavened bread. (Leviticus 23:5-6)

What time of day would the fifteenth day begin? At sundown. The Jewish day begins at sundown. Do not ever forget that or you will get messed up in the Gospels. On the fifteenth day, that would be sundown. The fourteenth day is when the Passover lamb is killed, according to Exodus 12, it has to be killed between the evenings. The fourteenth day starts on what in our time would be the thirteenth day, but it starts at evening. Now the next day, when it dawns, all day long, the

Passover lambs are killed. It was one lamb per ten people minimum and twenty people maximum. Josephus records in his *Antiquities of the Jews*, that on a Passover at the time of our Lord there were 256,000 lambs killed in one day. Using a little mathematics, you say, “How could they kill that many during the day when they have to do it before sundown? Well, it is very easy because all twenty-four courses of priests are on duty during the Passover. Normally they have a two week period they serve, twenty-four courses of them, but all of them, (thousands of them), are all in there killing lambs right and left. Can you hear the bleating of those animals? Can you see the blood being spattered everywhere? Can you see that the Passover was one of the most bloody sites you would ever see in your life? According to the Bible, there was a sweet aroma in the nostrils of God, for without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins.

All the time that this was going on, 256,000 lambs were killed, which means that the population of Jerusalem is over 2 million. You say, How can that be when it normally is only about 300,000 or 400,000. Every Jewish male, 20 years old and above, must attend Passover, Pentecost and Tabernacles (Pesca, Shaviot, and Saccot). So Jerusalem’s population swells. We have over 2 million people, perhaps 3 million people, all over the place, living where ever they can and laying on the ground. All these lambs are killed on the fourteenth day when sundown starts the fifteenth day. You eat the Passover meal on the fifteenth day, and not the fourteenth day. That is where Christians get confused all the time. According to Exodus 12, you eat the meal before midnight. Remember, they ate it before they left Egypt. “Leave nothing of it until the morning.” The Passover meal is eaten after sundown on the fourteenth day. Sundown begins the fifteenth day, so the very fifteenth day. We are talking about the month of Nisan.

By the way, Chanukah which you are probably all getting ready to celebrate, is tomorrow. It goes for 8 days. Jesus went to a Chanukah, so you better be careful how much you laugh. It is the

Festival of Lights, and commemorates a great victory when the Maccabbean family (under Judas Maccabbeus) liberated the temple from Antiochus Epiphanes (who had desecrated it and set up a god in the temple and even sacrificed a pig on the altar). They fought in the temple, literally, and they were trying to defend it, but they did not have much light. They wanted to fight all night and clean this out. It went on for eight days, and apparently the oil of the lamps in the temple were supernaturally was sustained for eight days. Oil would have normally lasted for one day, but the light stayed on for eight days while they cleaned house and finished the battle. Chanukah means “dedication.” They dedicated the temple again by cleansing and purifying it with anointing oil, and doing everything God told Moses and Aaron. They set it all up again, and it is a great story.

That is what Chanukah is all about, and Jesus went to Chanukah. It is called the Feast of Dedication in the Gospel of John. They usually have beautiful candelabra in the court of the women (also called the court of treasury), where you bring your gifts and tithes. They have giant candelabra and they would light them at the time of Chanukah. It is a Festival of Lights, commemorating the eight days when the light of the temple was sustained. Jesus, at the top of His voice, yelled out in the court of the women (the court of the treasury), according to John, “I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.”

There are many people who say that the reason we celebrate Christmas on December 25, is because in early church history, they were confused with Jewish festivals. The Chanukah day of celebration is the 25th of Kislev. Is everybody listening to me? “But the 25th of December,” a lot of people say, “is celebrating the sun god and all of that.” I prefer to believe that they got a little messed up on Jewish festivals, which we should have been celebrating all along.

Chanukah is the Festival of Lights. You always have eight branches on the Chanukah menorah, with a ninth one in the middle. Number nine stays lit the whole time to symbolize that the light was on the whole time. In your home, number nine stays lit all during Chanukah. Now at the first day of Chanukah, like tomorrow, we light number one. At the end of the day, you blow it out, but keep the central one lit. The next day we light one and two, then blow them out. The next day, one, two and three, and so forth all the way through the eight days.

Before you get excited about Christmas gift giving, you might think about how Jews handle this. We give gifts every single day of Chanukah. We start out with something very meager, and they get more expensive, so by the time the eighth day comes, the kids in the family can hardly wait to see what they are going to get. You start out by giving them a pencil, a pen, a dollar or under—, well, you know. The next day, maybe five or ten bucks. The next day maybe a twenty-dollar gift, until the last day—many Jewish people give cars on that day. I hate to tell you. “Did you get your car on Chanukah?” It is a wonderful celebration, a festival—the Festival of Lights—but it is not called a holy convocation. It is not a Sabbath. There are seven feasts of *Yahweh* that are called holy convocations, which act like Sabbaths. Now, let us look at the fifteenth day.

And on the fifteenth day of the same month [is] the feast of unleavened bread unto the LORD: seven days ye must eat unleavened bread. (Leviticus 23:5-6)

Now we call that unleavened bread “matzo.” They are flat sheets that you use at Passover time. For seven days that is what you eat. You do not eat any good bread that has nice yeast in it. You eat this flat stuff for seven days, just like God said. I want to remind you all that our Lord Jesus is our unleavened bread. Leaven is a type of sin as the Lord Jesus Himself has said, “Beware of the

leaven of the Sadducees and Pharisees.” 1 Corinthians 5 tells us to “keep the feast of unleavened bread, not with the leaven of malice and wickedness, for Christ our Passover was sacrificed for us.” So the whole thing is symbolizing our blessed Lord. The night of the Passover when Jesus broke bread, it was unleavened bread. It referred to His body that had no sin.

Do you know how unleavened bread (matzo) is made? There is a machine that rolls on it and so in sheet of matzo bread you will see stripes. We believe that the Lord intended it to be made that way, so that the wonderful promise of the prophet Isaiah, in Isaiah 53, could be fulfilled, “By His stripes we are healed.” Now also these things that roll on there, they also have little ends on them that perforate it (it makes little holes). If you hold a matzo sheet up to the light, the light will come through it. He was pierced also, for our sins. It is quite a powerful symbol to say the least. Not only at Passover, but the whole feast goes on seven days.

In the first day ye shall have an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein. But ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD seven days: in the seventh day is an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein. (Leviticus 23:7-8)

Now, Matthew 28:1 says, “At the end of the sabbaths.” For a moment, let us suppose that Jesus died on Friday. Some people say it was Wednesday, and others say that it was Thursday. I happen to agree that it was Friday. I have had the other two views also, but I believe I was wrong. I have listened to my tapes and I disagree with myself. I now believe it was on Friday for a lot of reasons. First of all, if you get a Jewish calendar, you have a problem putting a Passover on

Wednesday and Thursday any time between AD 26 and 34, and so it is a little difficult. But in AD 29 everything fits.

Let us go to that day called the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Jews offered what they call the *hagiga*, which is in fact, a peace offering. The Bible says that Christ is our Peace. He broke down the middle wall of partition. It was by the blood of His cross, Colossians 1:20 declares, that He made peace. He is our peace offering, and He settled the enmity (or hostility) between Jew and Gentile, and wrapped them both into one body through His cross. He died on the Feast of Unleavened Bread, not on Passover. First of all, Jews who are in the temple sacrificing lambs are not going to be outside the city watching a crucifixion on the day of Passover. Those who have Him dying at that time, cannot also have Him eating the Passover meal. That is why they have Him eating a meal with the disciples that they say is not the Passover. I say that that is a bunch of hogwash. That is dumb. He ate the Passover with His disciples. That means they had to kill the lamb that day to have it at the meal. That means He died at the feast of unleavened bread, the first day. It is a Sabbath. Now if that is Friday, which I believe it was, then you have exactly what the Bible describes. At the end of the Sabbaths (plural), Friday and the normal one Saturday, is what it refers to. Sometime after Saturday night is when Jesus would have risen from the dead.

You say, “Wait a minute, I thought it was after three days and three nights.” No, what you are doing is using something He said about Jonah being in the belly of the whale three days and three nights. Forget that for just a moment. Every time Jesus or anyone else tells you what day Jesus arose from the dead, it always says on the third day. It never says after three days. It says on the third day. Now, what about that illustration? “As Jonah was in the belly of the whale three days and three nights, so shall the Son of Man be in the heart of the earth three days and three nights.” The number one problem you and I have with that is that we work on 24 hour, solar days. We do

not think like Jews do. A part of a day is a day to a Jew, and you have the same exact thing in the Book of Esther. After three days she was to come and meet the king, and he was supposed to put out the scepter to her, but the text actually says it was in the third day that she actually came. So, a part of a day can mean a day. He is in the grave before sundown on Friday. He is in the grave all day Saturday. He is in the grave a part of the day that begins on Saturday sundown, so sometime before dawn, we know that He is gone.

You will hear a lot of other views. Look back at Leviticus 23:

And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest unto the priest: And he shall wave the sheaf before the LORD, to be accepted for you: on the morrow after the sabbath the priest shall wave it. (Leviticus 23:9-11)

What day follows Saturday? Sunday. The Feast of First Fruits, in which you take a sample from the barley harvest and you wave it before the Lord. Let everybody see it. Well, it is going to be good, or you might say, it is a little thin this year or whatever. That celebration, that feast is always on Sunday.

Turn to 1 Corinthians 15. It is always on Sunday, and has never been on any other day.

But now is Christ risen from the dead, [and] become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man [came] death, by man [came] also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. (1 Corinthians 15:20-23)

This text definitely connects first fruits with the resurrection. Now the resurrection is celebrated on Sunday. Has anybody ever asked you, “Why do Christians worship on Sunday morning? Why do you not use Saturday like the Jews?” For a very important reason, “We are celebrating the resurrection of the Messiah.” It does not make it wrong to worship on the Sabbath, but the Sabbath is a sign of the Mosaic covenant. Exodus 31:12ff. tells us that it is only for the children of Israel. If a person comes up to me and says, “You know the Sabbath is the mark of the beast, if you do not have it, you are going to hell.” I say, “Excuse me, are you Jewish?” If they say, “No,” then I say, “What in the world are you celebrating the Sabbath for?”

If you are Jewish, you understand me. The Sabbath is an everlasting covenant between us and the Lord, and it deals with the covenant of Moses. It is a sign of that covenant, but it does not apply to Gentiles—only to the children of Israel.

Let us back up. Passover is on the fourteenth, which was on Thursday the week that Christ died, I believe. Does that connect with Jesus Christ? Absolutely. 1 Corinthians 5:7 says, “Purge out therefore the old leaven that you may be a new lump as ye are unleavened, for even Christ, our Passover, is sacrificed for us.” There it is just as clear as a bell.

The morrow after the Sabbath is the First Fruits.

And ye shall offer that day when ye wave the sheaf an he lamb without blemish of the first year for a burnt offering unto the LORD. And the meat offering thereof [shall be] two tenth deals of fine flour mingled with oil, an offering made by fire unto the LORD [for] a sweet savour: and the drink offering thereof [shall be] of wine, the fourth [part] of an hin. And ye shall eat neither bread, nor parched corn, nor green ears, until the selfsame day that ye have brought an offering unto your God: [it shall be] a statute for ever throughout your generations in all your dwellings. And ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the sabbath, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave offering; seven sabbaths shall be complete: Even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath shall ye number fifty days; and ye shall offer a new meat offering unto the LORD. (Leviticus 23:12-16)

The Greek word Pentecost is talking about the fifty-day period. The Hebrew word is Shavuot. There are two reasons that we worship the Lord on Sunday. First, it is to celebrate the resurrection. Second, it is to celebrate the birthday of the church which began on the Day of Pentecost. Now what does the priest do on Pentecost?

Ye shall bring out of your habitations two wave loaves of two tenth deals: they shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven; they are the firstfruits unto the LORD. (Leviticus 23:17)

Why do we have leaven (or yeast) in these two loaves? Because it is not referring to Jesus, but to you. You have sin in your life. Why wave two loaves of bread on Shavuot? If you go down to your local bookstore and get the *Jewish Book of Why*, it has all these questions in it. There are two volumes, and I do recommend someday in your life, if you want to minister for the Lord the rest of your life, that you buy those two books. It is writing answers to the general public about why Jews do what they do. You look at Shavuot or Pentecost and say, “Why did the priest wave two loaves of bread? Why does the rabbi do that?” The answer is that we do not know. It is tradition.

I have mentioned this story before, but I will tell you again. I went out to eat with my Jewish rabbinical friend up the street. We went to Benji’s Restaurant. It is not Kosher, but it is Jewish. Anyway, we went there and it was lunch time. It was in the early summer, right before Shavuot (Pentecost). I like the way the rabbis do this. The line was out of the restaurant, about half a block long. It was so crowded as it always is during festival times. We are walking out of the car, and I am walking up with him. I walked right to the back of the line, but He grabbed my arm and said, “No, no, no. Come on. Come on.” I thought, “What’s he doing?” He walked up, and everybody said, “Oh rabbi, rabbi, rabbi.” He walked in through the door, and I am not lying. Half the restaurant picked up their dishes and food, and walked out of their booth and said, “Oh rabbi, please sit in my place.” “Please, sit here.” They gave up any place. He said, “Where do you want to sit?” I could not believe it. He sat down and said, “They do not treat you this way over there in your church do they?”

We were sitting at the table, eating our meal, and I said to him, “Hey rabbi, let me ask you a question.” He said, “What?” I said, “Why do you guys wave two loaves of bread on Shavuot? You’re going to do that this week? Now, why do you do that?” He said, “David, we don’t know. It’s tradition.” He kept eating. You have to understand this, this little Jewish pausing is very important. Anyway, we were pausing and I did not say anything, but kept eating. He puts down his fork, and looks at me, saying, “Don’t tell me. You think you know.” I said, “I have an idea.” And he said, “I thought you would.” He said, “Okay, what’s your idea?” I said, “I think... It’s just a thought.” I could see everybody in the booths of the restaurant. They were all like, “Wow, this is very interesting.” So I, of course, spoke louder and said, “When he waves those two loaves of bread with yeast in them, good bread, I think one represents the Jews and the other represents the Goyeb (the Gentiles).” The whole restaurant got absolutely, zero quiet. The rabbi looked at me and he said, “David, I’ll tell you what.” He said, “If the priests knew that one of those loaves represented the Gentiles, he would have thrown it on the floor.”

Now you see that is what happened on Pentecost. The Jews and Gentiles were brought into one loaf. We are one bread—one body in the Lord Jesus, because He is our peace. He has broken down the middle wall between us.

Why do we celebrate on Sunday? I do not care if you go to church on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, or Friday, which I do all the time anyway. It does not matter to me in one sense, but I will tell you that I cannot stay home on Sunday mornings, where ever I am—even while on vacation. My wife says, “Hey, you’re on vacation. Why don’t you just miss once?” I cannot do it, because I am legalistic? Well, you judge. There is something in me that says, “I need to be there to celebrate.” I do not care it is a little handful of ten believers somewhere. We are going to go

over there and celebrate, because this is a time every Sunday morning to celebrate the birthday of the church, the great work of God, and to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ. So on a test, you have to have that down.

[[This editorial break represents a fifteen-minute intermission.]]

Now, what we have established so far, hopefully, in your mind, is that the resurrection of Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of a Jewish festival in Leviticus 23, called the Festival of First Fruits, or the Feast of First Fruits. You should know that 1 Corinthians 15:20-23 teaches that Christ is our first fruits, speaking of His resurrection. I want you to understand that the Festival of First Fruits always comes on Sunday.

Now one more thing about Pentecost, it also always comes on Sunday. That is what the Bible says. Modern Judaism has changed this, so they will have Pentecost on other days of the week, because they count it from the time of Passover, and Passover varies as to what day it is. The Bible does not count it from Passover, but from First Fruits.

The Jews celebrating Pentecost on some day other than Sunday only started to happen in modern times. The reason is that they are counting it from Passover not from First Fruits, but the Bible counts it from First Fruits. There are a lot of things on this, but I want you to know I am more interested in what the Bible says, and not tradition. I want to learn what their tradition says, but I want to show why that is not so.

We are ready for Matthew 28. You think that we have had problems so far, but the fact is that we have a lot of difficulties on the accounts of the resurrection as well.

In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first [day] of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre. 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. His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow: And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead [men]. And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. (Matthew 28:1-6)

The other day I was talking about the impact of the empty tomb, and some guy said to me, “Who cares, man? It doesn’t make any difference.” “Beg your pardon? The angel said to the woman, come see the place.” Apparently the place was very important to the argument.

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. And they departed quickly from the sepulchre with fear and great joy; and did run to bring his disciples word. 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. Then said Jesus unto them, Be not afraid: go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me. 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. And when they were assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel, they gave large money unto the soldiers, Saying, Say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole him [away] while we slept. And if this come to the governor's ears, we will persuade him, and secure you. So they took the money, and did as they were taught: and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day. Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them. And when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted. And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, [even] unto the end of the world. Amen. (Matthew 28:7-20)

We call this last section “the Great Commission.” It certainly is great, and it is certainly a commission. Jesus told us to do that, actually it was only one command, and that is “Teach all nations.” That is the only command in the Greek text. It is a Greek word, *mathetuo*, which means, “to disciple.” No one is to be left out. There are three verbal participles connected to that

command. They are not modifying a noun, but a verb (“teach”). When you ask me, “What does it mean to disciple all nations?” I would answer you with the words of Jesus. There are three participles here, “going,” “baptizing,” and “teaching.” The words, “Go ye therefore” that are often put there by people as commands from the Lord, is not commanded here, but it is commanded in Mark. Literally He says, “Having gone therefore.” The first work that Christ assumed is that we would go to people and tell them about Him. We do not wait for them to come to us. Having gone, therefore, we will also baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. This is the first act of obedience of a new convert. We will teach them to “Observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.” It is a very constant teaching ministry.

Now, that is what Matthew says, but go to Mark 16.

And when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, had bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint him. And very early in the morning the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun. (Mark 16:1-2)

So we see that the other Mary in Matthew 28:1 is the mother of James. Salome is not mentioned in Matthew 28, and so some say that that is a contradiction, but she could have just been left out. Now, Matthew 28:1 says, “As it began to dawn,” but Mark 16:2 says, “At the rising of the sun.” Some people say, “Well, what’s half an hour or an hour among friends? Why argue about it?” Well, is it not possible that we have two visits here? We have those who came before the sun was up (Mary Magdalene, the other Mary, to see the sepulcher and there was one angel there). Is it not possible that a little later there was a second visit? Would you not have done this? “Salome, you

won't believe this." People say, "I don't know, because here they're bringing spices to anoint Him so they still think He's in the sepulcher, when the other story they believe He's gone." Now what are you going to do? You are looking at me, thinking, "You're the teacher. What, do you expect *us* to answer these problems?" Folks, I am telling you this is going to get worse. Do you know one of the major ways that liberal critics prove to you that the Bible cannot be trusted is by the resurrection stories?

There is a book called, *Life of Christ in Stereo*, by a man named Johnston Cheney. You can find it in Christian bookstores. I like this harmony of the Gospels a lot better than A. T. Robertson's because he takes all four Gospels as one story and the only indication that you are reading from one of the Gospels is a numbering system that is above the words. Number one represents Matthew; two, Mark; three, Luke; and four, John. He puts it all together and tells the story. It is very beautifully done and the resurrection all fits. It is a very interesting way of doing it.

I personally think that Salome was probably just not mentioned. That is all. That is an easy editorial answer, but let us keep reading.

And they said among themselves, Who shall roll us away the
stone from the door of the sepulchre? (Mark 16:3)

Now we have another problem. Go back to Matthew 28:2, the angel has already rolled back the stone. There was a great earthquake. Did it happen while the women were there asking who was going to roll away the stone? That is one possibility. The other possibility is that Mark 16 is talking about an earlier visit and then Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother James came back without Salome to see the sepulcher because He was already gone. That is a struggle for me. I

think it is better not to do that. “Who shall roll away the stone?” It is literally, “roll up.” They would go up an incline, and the stone was rolled down to lock in place in front of the door. And so it would have to be rolled up an incline to open the way.

And when they looked, they saw that the stone was rolled away:
for it was very great. And entering into the sepulchre, they saw a
young man sitting on the right side. (Mark 16:4-5)

Is that what you read in Matthew 28? It says, “He is sitting outside on the stone that rolled in front of the door.” Here it says, “He is sitting on the right side, inside of the sepulcher, clothed in a long white garment; and they were affrighted.”

And he saith unto them, Be not affrighted: Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: he is risen; he is not here: behold the place where they laid him. But go your way, tell his disciples and Peter that he goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see him, as he said unto you. And they went out quickly, and fled from the sepulchre; for they trembled and were amazed: neither said they any thing to any man; for they were afraid. Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils. And she went and told them that had been with him, as they mourned and wept. And they, when they had heard that he was alive, and had been seen of her, believed not. After that he appeared in another form unto two of them, as they walked, and went into the

country. And they went and told it unto the residue: neither believed they them. Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not. (Mark 16:6-14)

Now if you think this is tough, go to Luke 24. You say, “Can’t we just say Jesus arose from the dead and let us go?” One of our purposes in this school is to make sure you learn enough about the major doctrines of the Bible that you can give an answer for the reason that is in you—that you can answer these problems. If you have not already run into this, you will find that the cultists love to use this to undermine your Bible.

Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices. (Luke 24:1)

Who came? Go back to Luke 23. It was the women, according to 23:55, which came from Galilee, and had followed after and beheld the sepulcher, how his body was laid. They were there before, then they returned and prepared spice and ointments and rested on the Sabbath, according to the commandment. So now they are coming early in the morning, and they are bringing the spices that they prepared and certain others with them. Well, “women” is plural (verse 55), so there had to be at least two then. If you are bringing others that is plural (You had to bring at least two), but in the one story you have only two women, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary. In the other story you have three women, Mary Magdalene, the other Mary and Salome.

This must be why most preachers do not bother to tell you about this. These are difficult problems. Why not just tell the story and get on with it! No, these are problems. We have to deal with them. That is what you are here for. You are here to learn!

And they found the stone rolled away from the sepulchre. And they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus. And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold, two men stood by them in shining garments. (Luke 24:2-4)

This account does not mention the earthquake, or even that the angel of the Lord that came and rolled away the stone. It says that there are now two men, who are standing and not sitting. They are not sitting on the stone outside, and not sitting on the ledge inside. They are just standing there in shining garments. What do you think? Do you think that your head is hurting?

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? He is not here, but is risen: remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee, Saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again. And they remembered his words, And returned from the sepulchre, and told all these things unto the eleven, and to all the rest. (Luke 24:5-9)

Now, Mark said that they did not tell them, but now they are telling them. By the way, verse 10 is about to introduce someone new on the scene.

It was Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary [the mother] of James, and other [women that were] with them, which told these things unto the apostles. And their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not. 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. (Luke 24:10-12)

There is no mention of John here. Then we have the story of the two on the way to Emmaus and them appearing to the eleven, telling them that the Lord is risen. He had also appeared to Simon, but we do not have any record of when that happened. Then Jesus stands in their midst and invites them to behold His hands and His feet. Let us now go to John.

The first [day] of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre. (John 20:1)

Is the sun up or is it not? Is it beginning to dawn or is it not? Is it completely dark or is it not? Which is it? Do you see the problems? If you had this class in some liberal college or university, they would have you so messed up right now that you would not be able to see straight. Of course, I am messing you up too, because I have not answered any of it.

When Mary came to the tomb, she saw that the stone was taken away, which means that the angel of the Lord has already been there. This means we have already had the earthquake. Now, some

say that the earthquake probably woke everybody up. We do not have that far of a distance between the living quarters and the tomb, and so Mary Magdalene comes when it is dark, and she sees that the stone was taken away.

Then she runneth, and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and saith unto them, They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him. (John 20:2)

It says that she ran to Simon Peter and the other disciple, which is probably John. It does not sound like she has been told that He is risen. You are now getting an answer to the problem. Watch it carefully.

Peter therefore went forth, and that other disciple, and came to the sepulchre. So they ran both together: and the other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulchre. And he stooping down, [and looking in], saw the linen clothes lying; yet went he not in. Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes lie. (John 20:3-6)

I like that old fellow, Peter. He sticks his foot in his mouth, but you have got to like him. “What are you doing out here, John?” John is kneeling down and worshipping. Peter walks by, “Hey John, what’s going on.” He walks right in. I like Peter.

And the napkin, that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself. (John 20:7)

That is a proof that something unusual had occurred. There is no way—even if somebody unwrapped it—that you would have that. You have got myrrh and aloes weighing a hundred pounds. This is gooey and sticky, and it is wrapped all the way around His head. How in the world was it all nicely folded. It was as though it had not been wrapped in the first place.

Then went in also that other disciple, which came first to the sepulchre, and he saw, and believed. For as yet they knew not the scripture, that he must rise again from the dead. Then the disciples went away again unto their own home. (John 20:8-10)

Notice it did not say the “upper room” where He meets them the night of that same day. They went back home.

But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping: and as she wept, she stooped down, [and looked] into the sepulcher. (John 20:11)

Now we find out that Mary was by herself. She came not when it was beginning to dawn, and not while the sun was up. The earthquake and the angel that rolled away the stone could have happened Saturday night—any time after sundown. Did the earthquake wake her? We do not know, but Mary came as it was still dark. She says, “Somebody has taken Him.” She thought that somebody had stolen Him. There is no angel telling her anything here. There is nothing. So she

tells Peter, and he and John come in there, then all of this happens. Mary stays at the sepulcher, crying.

And seeth two angels in white sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him. And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away. Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master. (John 20:12-16)

There was something about the way that He said it the second time, “Mary.” Notice in this passage that she did not say, “My name is Mary Magdalene. Now where did you take Him?” No. She said, “Where did you take Him?” When He first talked to her, He just said, “Woman.” You see, she would have known it had to be Him, because He knew her name without asking. “Mary,” he said. Then she turned herself, and saith unto him, “Rabboni,” which is to say, “Master.”

Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend

unto my Father, and your Father; and [to] my God, and your
God. (John 20:17)

He was literally saying, “Stop clinging to me.” Now you know what Mary Magdalene did, she threw her arms around Him and hung on for dear life. She was so overwhelmed that she cannot believe it. Jesus’ response was, “Stop clinging to Me for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.”

Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that he had spoken these things unto her. (John 20:18)

The Bible tells us they did not believe her. That same day, at evening time, is when Jesus showed them who He was and breathed on them, saying, “Receive ye the Holy Spirit.”

What is the answer to all this? I am going to give it a little shot. You see what you think. It is still dark, and is some time on Saturday night or very early Sunday morning (somewhere around 1 a.m. to 2 a.m.). There was a huge earthquake, and the angel of the Lord came and rolled back the stone. Mary Magdalene, was probably still thinking about all the events as her heart was still broken. Remember the Bible says at the cross were the women who followed Him, including Mary Magdalene, out of whom He had cast seven devils. They stood at the cross watching Him there. She stood and watched Him there. Remember, my dear students, that the women wrapped His precious body with all those grave clothes and all those ointments. What if you were there? This is the Son of God, claiming to be the Messiah, casting demons out of you, telling you that your sins are forgiven, and He is lying there dead. You are washing His body.

People say, “It couldn’t have been Friday. It couldn’t have been even that day. I mean, what are you going to do? A guy dies, you immediately bury Him?” But that is what Jews do. Did you not know that? Jews bury a person immediately. They do not wait another day. They do not have a slumber room where they would sit around and look at a dead body. They do not do that, but they bury them immediately on the same day.

Can you imagine being Mary Magdalene as she was wrapping that whole body of Jesus? Imagine the thoughts that would be going through your mind: “What has happened here?” Do you think those women might have said to one another as they were doing this and crying their blooming heads off, “You remember what He did say, don’t you? He did say that He would be crucified. And He did say that He would rise again the third day.” I just happen to believe that Mary Magdalene had a heart for God all the way. She loved her Lord, and remembered what He said. She could hardly sleep on that third day. I do not need the earthquake to justify the waking of Mary Magdalene—human nature is enough. Mary Magdalene was contemplating about it all and thinking, “You know, it is what one o’clock.” She had no watch, but, “What is it? I gotta go. I gotta go. I can’t stand it.” Then she goes by herself to the sepulcher, and He is gone. She then cries her blooming head off and runs back to get the other women.

We also have the appearances of these angels, sitting on either side of Mary. That is an absolutely beautiful thing. These guys are floating in and out, and it was the angel of the Lord, just one angel, who rolled away the stone. We are also told that two men were standing there in white apparel. This is presumably the two angels. Now what if they are not?

Turn to Acts 1:9. Is everybody having fun? I sure am. This is the ascension, which was forty days after the resurrection. Remember, it says in Acts 1:3, “To whom He showed Himself alive after His passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days.” We know that they were in the upper room for ten days. He is going to ascend into heaven on the fortieth day, and Pentecost was another ten days after that.

And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. (Acts 1:9)

Now some of us have the idea that He was standing there and saying, “Guys it’s time. I gotta go,” then all of a sudden He is gone. Now the Greek does not indicate that. There are two things here that are notable. First, when it says that they were looking steadfastly toward heaven, it uses the root of our English word “theater,” which means to gaze a long time at something. It is as if you are watching a movie, and so they were watching Him ascend for a long time. It was not a quick glance. Also, when He was taken up, He was ascending slowly into heaven while they were watching.

And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven. (Acts 1:10)

There were two men in white apparel as Luke writes. Now they keep showing up in scriptures at interesting places. Turn to Matthew 17.

And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart, And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him. Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him. (Matthew 17:1-5)

Peter is out of his tree! He says, “Lord, it is so good to be here. Let’s make three tabernacles, one for You, one for Moses, one for Elijah.” No, there is no vacancy in the trinity. We are not going to be doing that. A voice comes out of heaven and says, “No, no, no. It’s not Moses. It’s not Elijah. This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. Hear you Him” (My translation).

And when the disciples heard [it], they fell on their face, and were sore afraid. And Jesus came and touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid. And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only. (Matthew 17:6-8)

They saw no man, save Jesus only. Now I have two men appearing on the Mount of Transfiguration, and they are Moses and Elijah. I have two men appearing also at the Resurrection. I have two men appearing also at the ascension.

Now, Revelation 11:3-6 shows that, apparently, they have been involved before.

And I will give [power] unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred [and] threescore days, clothed in sackcloth. These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth. And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed. These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will. (Revelation 11:3-6)

The two olive trees and candlesticks standing before the God of all the earth is found in Zechariah 4. The fact that fire comes out of their mouth and devours their enemies is interesting because Elijah did that. Elijah also had power to shut heaven that it rain not. Moses had power over waters to turn them to blood. Moses was also there when God had smitten the earth (or Egypt) with plagues.

These two men could be Moses and Elijah all along. They were there at the Resurrection. They were there at the Ascension. Well, what about the angels? The angels are always around too,

because the psalmist wrote in Psalm 91 that God will give His angels charge over Him (the Messiah), lest He dash His foot against a stone. The angels were always around Jesus.

Look at John 20. Let us find out what happened that night when He shows up to these disciples. I know that the specific answers we sometimes look for are not always forthcoming, but I suggest to you that the answer to the problem of what happened at the tomb is only answered—believe it or not—by examining with more careful detail than normal. A careless look at details will get you confused. A careful look at details will answer your questions. I believe the whole thing is answered by only one thing. That Mary Magdalene came to the sepulcher by herself while it was dark and there was no one there. That is not when the angel said, “He is not here. He is risen,” because she still did not know where He was. Jesus is the one that appeared to her, and I think that that is the answer.

Now turn back to John 20.

Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week,
when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for
fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith
unto them, Peace be unto you. (John 20:19)

Remind yourself that the women have already told them that He is alive. Mary told Peter, “I saw Him. I put my arms around Him. He told me to stop hanging on to Him.”

“Mary, what did you have for dinner?”

“I’m telling you, I saw Him.” “Are you on something, Mary?”

These guys would not believe the reports. Now remember, according to Mark 16:14, that Jesus (when He first talked to them after giving them the greeting, “Peace be unto you, shalom”) rebuked them for their hardness of heart and unbelief. They would not believe the report of the women. “Oh ye of little faith.” A lot of us do not believe the report of the word of God either. You say, “If I saw somebody come back from the dead, I’d believe.” No, Jesus said in Luke 16 (the story of the rich man and Lazarus), that even if one did come back from the dead they will not believe because they do not believe Moses and the prophets.

And when he had so said, he shewed unto them his hands and his side. (John 20:20)

You cannot believe how the cultist (these guys who wear white shirts and long ties, riding bicycles) will tell you at the door that it was only a hallucination. It was not a literal body. It was only an appearance. They say that the Bible does not say that the disciples touched Him.

Turn to 1 John 1:1. The same guy wrote this that wrote the Gospel of John. Let us see whether they touched Him or not. I know if I were there, I would have. If you thought it was a ghost, would you not explore it a little bit?

That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life. (1 John 1:1)

The life was manifested, and we have seen it. They are talking about Jesus. So the disciples do touch Him. Go back to John 20.

Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father
hath sent me, even so send I you. (John 20:21)

Luke 19:10 says, “The Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.” Our main mission is to seek lost people.

And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye
the Holy Ghost. (John 20:22)

I have a lot of commentaries on John and a lot of tapes by different guys. I decided to check it out. Do you know the majority of commentators do not believe that they received the Holy Spirit this night? They think Jesus was just predicting it, and that it is really referring to what would happen to them fifty days later at Pentecost. I was astonished because these are good Bible teachers that are currently on the radio. Now let us look at it again. “He breathed on them.” Listen, if Jesus breathes on you, you have something. Do you understand me? If Benny Hinn breathes on you, I am not sure about that. But if Jesus breathes on you, you have got it. What proof do I have? Job said the breath of the Almighty hath given me life. Human life was created by the breath of the Lord. God breathed into man’s nostrils the breath of life and man became a living soul. The heavens were created by the breath of God. The word of God itself, brought them into existence out of nothing. “All things,” it says of Jesus, “were made by Him. Without Him was not anything made that was made.” All things were created by Him, whether thrones, dominions, principalities, or powers—no matter what they are (Colossians 1:16-17). He is the

creator of everything. Do you understand that when He breathed, He breathed the entire physical and material universe into existence. I like to say that He probably just sneezed and there were the stars. When He breathed, it was there. When He said, let there be light, there was light diffused in the whole system at once. He did not need to wait for it to travel 186,000 miles a second and arrive at a planet that somehow got here ahead of time.

I just received a thick packet of materials from the most scholarly academic organization on science, creation, and evolution in the United States. They control the curriculum of our schools. The head of that organization was driving in his car in the Bay area and heard what I was saying on Genesis. He sent me a whole stack of stuff on why Genesis is wrong and evolution is right. On why we have no business teaching Creation in the schools because it is a religious theory. He says that Creation has nothing to do with fact, and so he sent me all this stuff. You know, as I read through that material, I noticed something. On almost everything they wanted to say that was contradicting the Bible, it was all theory. I then took a highlighter and highlighted all those little statements. “We suppose this happened...” “We think this might be what we...” Now, these were all guesses. They had no facts at all in the entire paper. I just highlighted them all, then wrote at the bottom, “In the beginning God. Case closed!”

People argue that when He, who created everything even human life, breathed on the disciples they did not get something. Now what did He say that they received? He said, “Receive ye the Holy Spirit.”

The receiving of the Holy Spirit is not talking here about gifts or tongues or any of that. It is not talking about the baptism of the Spirit either. The words, “Receive ye the Holy Spirit,” are talking about salvation.

Romans 8:9 says that if you have not received the Spirit, you are none of His. You do not belong to Christ. We are talking about being born again. If you find this on a test, you had better get it right. John 20:22 is talking about regeneration, not baptism. They were saved—born again—that night. They received the Holy Spirit! Your body becomes the temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which you have of God. You are not your own. You are bought with a price. That night all those disciples who did not believe in Him, who all forsook Him at the cross, received the Holy Spirit and were saved.

Why is this so important? Now we have got to explain what happened fifty days later when they were baptized and filled with the Holy Spirit when they already had the Holy Spirit.

There are a lot of whackos out there that are trying to say that we believe something which we do not believe. What we believe is that disciples were regenerated when they received the Spirit on the night of the Resurrection. This means that something else happened on the Day of Pentecost. They were baptized and filled with the Holy Spirit. We believe that the baptism of the Holy Spirit with power, is something other than regeneration (being born again). Do you understand me? People are scared to death of believing that the disciples got saved that night, because then they have to explain what happened on the Day of Pentecost, and we would not want to do that because you might get really flaky and start rolling in the aisles, jumping all over the place, and barking like dogs. No, none of that, but do you understand how critically important that is? You will need to know that.

Let us pray.

Father, thank You for Your wonderful word, and how excited we are to know that Jesus is alive and not dead. As we continue to study this, God, I pray that You would strengthen us so that we would know this major doctrinal point of salvation. We have to believe that God raised Him from the dead if we are going to be saved. Open up our hearts and minds. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.