

BROKEN

“Broken Seal” Matthew 27:62-28:20

April 9, 2023

INTRO.: Welcome to our Easter series, **BROKEN!** This morning I want to invite you to come and see the empty tomb. Have you ever seen something so awesome that you wish somebody else was there to see it? It’s so exciting that not only do you invite them to come and see but to share it with someone else. This past week, as the sun was setting, Brenda noticed the sky had sort of a bright orange type glow to it. She quickly went outside to get a picture of it and here it is. She then shared it with all our sons and families via text message. A short time later the sky turned pink, and she ran out to get another picture which she also shared with everyone. The only problem with pictures is that you can’t quite get the full effect of the awesomeness of the moment. This morning we want to invite you to come and see the empty tomb! He is risen!! As we see the empty tomb we are encouraged to go and share this wonderfully grand news! We began this series two weeks ago with Pastor John sharing the theme **BROKEN WORLD**. This *broken world* includes you and me. So, I ask you, “Why is the world broken?” It is because of sin which, as Pastor John described it, is a direct assault against God. Rarely do we sin without it affecting someone else, but first and foremost sin is a violation against God. So, the dilemma is, “God is good and we are not!” How can a good God let sin go unpunished? He can’t! There is nothing you and I can do that would appease God’s rightful and just wrath against us because of our sin. **NOTHING!!!** If there was anything we could do, then the cross would have been unnecessary. The Apostle John clearly shares the only solution in the gospel of John.

John 3:36 Whoever believes (present participle) in the Son has (present, indicative) eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God’s wrath remains (present, indicative) on him.”

So, the ultimate question becomes: What have I done with Jesus?

Last week we looked at the theme, **BROKEN HEART**. As Jesus was entering Jerusalem He had two of the disciples go and get a colt which they put Jesus on and the crowd threw their coats and palm branches down in worship. As Jesus looked down on Jerusalem He wept because He knew they were going to be judged because of their rejection of Him as Messiah and King. We were reminded that through Jesus **WE GET TO!!** We get to:

*come alongside what God is doing

*worship God

*have the same love and concern for others that God does

That brings us to the theme this morning, **BROKEN SEAL**. So, I invite you to come and see. What about this empty tomb? Let’s take some time to read together a passage in the Bible found in Matthew 27 & 28. There is an outline in your bulletin that you can fill in and I also have some notes for you to take along.

Matthew 27:62–66 The next day, the one after Preparation Day, the chief priests and the Pharisees went to Pilate. “Sir,” they said, “we remember that while he was still alive that deceiver said, ‘After three days I will rise again.’ So give the order for the tomb to be made secure until the third day. Otherwise, his disciples may come and steal the body and tell the people that he has been raised from the dead. This last deception will be worse than the first.” “Take a guard,” Pilate answered. “Go, make the tomb as secure as you know how.” So they went and made the tomb secure by putting a seal on the stone and posting the guard.

Matthew 28:1-20 After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb. There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men. The angel said to the women, “Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples: ‘He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him.’ Now I have told you.” So the women hurried away from the tomb, afraid yet filled with joy, and ran to tell his disciples. Suddenly Jesus met them. “Greetings,” he said. They came to him, clasped his feet and worshiped him. Then Jesus said to them, “Do not be afraid. Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me.” While the women were on their way, some of the guards went into the city and reported to the chief priests everything that had happened. When the chief priests had met with the elders and devised a plan, they gave the soldiers a large sum of money, telling them, “You are to say, ‘His disciples came during the night and stole him away while we were asleep.’ If this report gets to the governor, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble.” So the soldiers took the money and did as they were instructed. And this story has been widely circulated among the Jews to this very day.

Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

So, let's come and see:

SECURED THE TOMB v. 62-66

The religious leaders (chief priests and Pharisees: who should have been able to recognize that Jesus was the Messiah, the One they read about in the Scriptures, the promised deliverer from their sins) come to Pilate to try to avert a potential problem.

"We remember that while he was still alive that deceiver said, 'After three days I will rise again.'

They so disliked Jesus that they refused to even utter His name!! Did they believe He would rise again? Absolutely not!! Remember what they said next?

So give the order for the tomb to be made secure until the third day. Otherwise, his disciples may come and steal the body and tell the people that he has been raised from the dead

"give the order:" this is in the form of a command. They are commanding Pilate to give a command.

What is Pilate's response?

"Take a guard," Pilate answered. "Go, make the tomb as secure as you know how." So they went and made the tomb secure by putting a seal on the stone and posting the guard.

"take a guard:" A normal Roman guard was made up of sixteen soldiers. Roman soldiers were well-known for their discipline. The penalty for negligence while on duty (falling asleep or abandoning their post) was execution. These men were not going to let any band of disciples take the body of Jesus. (Stuart Weber)

"go:" a command

"make the tomb secure:" a command

"seal:" was probably given by Pilate and showed it was under Roman protection

There, that was now taken care of! This trouble maker, so-called Messiah was dead and nobody could get in to steal the body. Case closed!! Or was it?

SEE v. 1-6

So, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary (mother of James the Lesser and Joseph) go to look at the tomb. An earthquake had come, an angel of the Lord, who had come down from heaven, rolled back the stone, and sat on it. This stone would have taken several men to move.

By the way, did the angel roll back the stone to let Jesus out? NO!!! Jesus had already raised Lazarus from the dead and many other miracles. After the resurrection He was able to walk through walls. Do you think a stone was going to keep him in the grave?

Take a moment and imagine that you are these women. You get to the grave and there is an angel on the stone that originally sat in front of the tomb. His description:
His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow.

That will get your attention and his appearance was such that the guards were so afraid they shook and became like dead men. They were most likely paralyzed by fear.

The angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified.

“do not be afraid:” this is a command.

I find it interesting that the angel doesn't tell the soldiers to not be afraid. These women were looking for Jesus, but the soldiers were not. Why did the women not need to fear?

Jesus would be forever remembered as *“the crucified one.”*

Mention the word, crucifixion, and who comes to peoples' minds? It's Jesus!! Why did they not need to be afraid? The angel says:

He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay.

Two things jump out at me here: He's risen, *just as He said!* Count on God to keep His Word. This book, the Word of God is 100% reliable! Secondly, there is proof for what we believe. Coming to faith in Jesus is not a blind leap of faith. There is more evidence and proof for the resurrection than any other historical fact. *Come and see*

God invites us to “come and see.” If you have never personally trusted Christ as your Lord and Savior, check it out.

The tomb was secured, the angel tells the women to see, and then he:

SENDS THEM

7-10

Then go quickly and tell his disciples: ‘He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him.’

Come and see, go and share. They were so excited they hurried off. In fact, they ran!!! They were afraid and yet filled with joy. As they have these two emotions swirling through their minds, what happens next?

We read this phrase: “Suddenly Jesus met them.” Jesus met them where they were at, in the midst of their fear and their joy. The Lord will meet you where you are at. Some don't come to faith in Jesus because they fear the reaction of their family, or maybe what, giving their life to Jesus, may mean for their job. Maybe there is a fear of it being too good to be true.

What was Jesus' message to the women?

Then Jesus said to them, “Do not be afraid. Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me.”

Jesus proceeds to give them three commands:

‘do not be afraid:’ fear has the ability to paralyze. Why don't we need to fear? He never leaves us, He has a plan, He will give me the strength I need.

“go:” there is to be action to our faith

“tell:” proclaim, announce, tell

With the resurrection we have a story to tell but it isn't like the story we read of next.

STORY

v. 11-15

The religious leaders know they're in trouble. If word gets out that they can't find the body of Jesus it's going to be worse than it has ever been. The resurrection demands a response. If it is true this changes everything!!

What's the story they come up with? The disciples stole the body while the guards were asleep. This doesn't even make sense in so many ways.

*The guards could be executed for dereliction of duty (would have to rely on the religious leaders to intervene on their behalf)

*The guards divided the evening into 4 shifts of 2-3 hours each. Some would keep watch while the others slept.

*If they were all asleep, how would they know the disciples stole the body?

*Only one of the disciples died of natural causes. Wouldn't you think that if they stole the body of Jesus they would say so, rather than die a violent death. Crucified upside down, stabbed, impaled with hooks & hung upside down, skinned alive, and the list goes on.

There are other supposed explanations for the resurrection. He only passed out. Medically, that does not hold water. The professional executioners made sure Jesus was dead.

Jesus' followers only hallucinated Jesus' resurrection. Well over 500 people were witnesses to His resurrection. How could so many have the same hallucinations?

We should not be shocked with opposition to our faith! This book has the real story: the Bible.

So, what's your story?

*The religious leaders got Pilate to **secure** the tomb (fruitless venture)

*Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were told by the angel to "Come and **See**"

*The angel **sends** them to tell the disciples and Jesus meets them where they're at and **sends** them as well

*The religious leaders make up a **story** which is absolutely ridiculous

SHARE

v. 16-20

When Jesus commissions them and us.

All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.

If anybody has a right to tell us what to do, it is Jesus.

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

"while you are going"

"make disciples"

"baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit"

"teaching them to obey everything I have commanded them"

"surely I am with you always"

SO WHAT???

God invites each one of us to come and see.

HE IS RISEN!

There is proof for the resurrection.

HE IS RISEN!

Every believer is called to go and share.

HE IS RISEN!

He will never leave the believer.

HE IS RISEN!

LET'S CELEBRATE!!!

HE IS RISEN!!!