

THE KING OF KINGS: A STUDY OF MATTHEW

The King's Commission: A Study of Matthew 21–28

STUDY EIGHTEEN

Those Final, Dreadful Hours

Matthew 27:27–50

God gave us His one and only Son to do for us what we could never do for ourselves. It took a spotless Lamb, Jesus, who was willing to bear the sins of the whole world. All our sins are fully and completely forgiven.

—Pastor Charles R. Swindoll

TO die on a cross was to die in shame. Even the Romans believed crucifixion to be “a most cruel and disgusting punishment.”¹ To the Jews, it was particularly vile. They categorized crucifixion with hanging, applying Deuteronomy 21:23 to both: “anyone who is hung is cursed in the sight of God.”

No right-thinking person would honor a crucified man, much less worship him. Yet, Christians look at Jesus and see God in human flesh, humbling Himself “to the point of death, even death on a cross” (Philippians 2:8 NASB). We see in Jesus’ death the ultimate expression of God’s “great love” for sinners (Romans 5:8); and in the cross, the power of God rescuing us from the curse of sin when Jesus “took upon himself the curse for our wrongdoing” (Galatians 3:13).

Let’s walk with Jesus through the final hours of His passion in reverential awe at the amazing truth unfolding before our eyes. Through Christ’s disgrace, God poured out His grace on us, and in the blood that flowed from Immanuel’s veins, we are cleansed.



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Those Final, Dreadful Hours

Matthew 27:27–50



PREPARE YOUR HEART

Prepare your heart to enter the somber scenes of Christ's suffering described in Matthew 27:27–50.

Father, I admit, the brutality of Christ's passion is hard to watch, and I long to turn away. Yet, on the cross of shame, Christ bore my shame, and through His death, I gain eternal life. Only You can turn a symbol of fear and abuse into a beacon of hope. Take me trembling to the cross and fill my heart with wonder, praise, and love for My Savior. In His name, amen.



TURN TO THE SCRIPTURES

Convinced Jesus didn't deserve the death penalty, Pilate ordered Jesus flogged with the intention of releasing Him (Luke 23:16). Accounts of the whip's fury were well known, so Matthew spared his readers the gory description of a Roman scourging.² He simply stated that Pilate "ordered Jesus flogged" (Matthew 27:26). Then Pilate relented to the mob and "turned him over to the Roman soldiers to be crucified" (27:26).



Observation: The Way to Golgotha and Death on the Cross

The Roman soldiers were barracked at Antonia Fortress, a large military complex on the northwest corner of the temple mount. From the towers on the four corners of the fort, sentries could keep watch over the temple area, standing ready to crush any insurrection.

Mocking and Abuse at the Antonia Fortress—Matthew 27:27–31

View the picture of a model of the Antonia Fortress on page 285 of Pastor Chuck Swindoll's commentary, *Insights on Matthew 16–28*, noting the size of the complex with its open courtyard. The governor's soldiers who brought Jesus to the fortress "called out the entire regiment," about 600 soldiers. They dragged Jesus into the courtyard as the soldiers stopped their morning routines to gawk sadistically at a Jew who claimed to be king.



Those Final, Dreadful Hours

Matthew 27:27–50

What did the soldiers do to Jesus, according to [Matthew 27:27–30](#)? Why do you think they abused Him in this way in front the entire regiment?

They cynically play-acted a coronation of Jesus, mocking Him and hitting Him repeatedly.³ It was as if each soldier was trying to top the other's joke and get a bigger cheer from the bloodthirsty spectators. Yet, Jesus bore it all with silent, patient dignity.

*He did not retaliate when he was insulted,
nor threaten revenge when he suffered.
He left his case in the hands of God,
who always judges fairly. (1 Peter 2:23)*

The Way of the Cross—Matthew 27:31–33

The soldiers then forced Jesus to carry the beam of His cross through the crowded streets of Jerusalem to the site of His execution. Exhausted from the flogging and multiple beatings, Jesus carried His cross for a while but must have fallen under the beam's weight at some point along the way. So what did the soldiers accompanying Jesus do, according to [Matthew 27:31–33](#)? Read page 286 of Pastor Chuck Swindoll's commentary for Simon's background and a description of the route.



Those Final, Dreadful Hours

Matthew 27:27–50

The Crucifixion at Calvary—Matthew 27:34–50

Jesus arrived at Golgotha, meaning “Place of the Skull” (Matthew 27:33)—or in Latin, *Calvarius*, from which we derive *Calvary*. After Jesus refused the “wine mixed with bitter gall,” an elixir meant to dull pain, the Roman soldiers “nailed him to the cross” (27:34–35).⁴ Again, Matthew respectfully refrains from describing the details; instead, he focuses on the action around Jesus after His cross was raised and set.

What did the soldiers do in *Matthew 27:35–36*?

For what crimes were the two men on either side of Jesus crucified, according to *27:38*?

In the following chart, write down the three groups that hurled insults at Jesus and the accusations they made.

Verses	Group	Accusations
<i>Matthew 27:39–40</i>		
<i>Matthew 27:41–43</i>		
<i>Matthew 27:44</i>		



Those Final, Dreadful Hours

Matthew 27:27–50

What similarities do you see in their accusations? Also, how do they echo Satan's temptations of Jesus in the wilderness (*Matthew 4:3, 6*)?

Eventually, the taunting voices went silent. Darkness smothered the light of the noon sun for three hours, and out of the darkness, Jesus' voice rang out. What words did the Son of God call out at the climax of His suffering (*27:45–46*)?

Those nearby mistook the word, *Eli*, for the name of the prophet, Elijah. One of them extended a sponge filled with "sour wine" to Jesus' lips to quench His parched throat, while the others gaped to see if Elijah would save Jesus (*27:47–49*). Little did they realize that *they were the ones needing saving*, and the One doing the saving was right before them taking His final breath: "Then Jesus shouted out again, and he released his spirit" (*27:50*).

In that brief period of time, Jesus bore your sins, my sins, the sins of the whole world.
—Pastor Chuck Swindoll



Interpretation: Jesus' Cry of Dereliction

How should we interpret what theologians call Jesus' cry of *dereliction*, "My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?" (*Matthew 27:46*)? What took place in the darkness when Jesus voiced that lament from Psalm 22:1?



Those Final, Dreadful Hours

Matthew 27:27–50

For answers, read the following verses and summarize what happened in those moments: *Isaiah 53:6*; *Matthew 20:28*; *2 Corinthians 5:21*; and *Galatians 3:13*.

At Gethsemane, Jesus had vowed His willingness to drink the cup of God's wrath. Now, hanging on the cross, Jesus drained that awful cup to its dregs. Not a drop of judgment was left for us! "Now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus" (Romans 8:1)!

Had it not been for what Jesus did for us on the cross, we would all perish in our sins. We would die doomed, and our world would be a dark world without hope. Is there a worse way to live than without hope? Thank God for His forgiveness! —Pastor Chuck Swindoll



Those Final, Dreadful Hours

Matthew 27:27–50



Correlation: Prophecy Fulfilled

Throughout his gospel, Matthew has consistently shown how Jesus fulfilled Old Testament prophecy.⁵ What actions surrounding Jesus' crucifixion can you identify in the following prophetic passages?

Prophecy	Fulfillment in Jesus' Crucifixion
<i>Psalms 22:1–2</i>	
<i>Psalms 22:6–8</i>	
<i>Psalms 22:12–14</i>	
<i>Psalms 22:16–18</i>	
<i>Isaiah 53:3–5</i>	
<i>Isaiah 53:7</i>	
<i>Isaiah 53:12</i>	

Jesus' passion was finally over, and He could enter His rest. He had fulfilled His prophetic mission to bear our judgment and free us from sin's dreaded curse. In the next study, we'll witness the remarkable events that occurred in the aftermath. For now, let's linger at the cross as we offer our own sacrifice of praise for the sacrifice of our Savior.



Those Final, Dreadful Hours

Matthew 27:27–50



Application: Gratitude

In the following space, write a prayer of thanks to your heavenly Father for His Son and the price He paid for your salvation. What does Jesus' death mean to you?

Jesus' death was bittersweet—*bitter* as the cup of God's wrath He drank during His suffering and *sweet* as the forgiveness He offers all who believe. Praise God for the gift of eternal life made free to us through Christ Jesus our Lord!



A FINAL PRAYER

Father, in the brutalities of the cross, I witness the shameful reality of my sin. Not just the sins of the Jewish authorities, Pilate, or the Roman soldiers but my own sins. I also see Your incomprehensible love. Your own Son died to give me eternal life. What gift can I give in return, poor as I am? Take my heart, my life, my all. In Jesus' name, amen.

ENDNOTES

1. Cicero, as quoted by John R. W. Stott, *The Cross of Christ* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1986), 24.
2. "A soldier tied [Jesus] to a low post and stripped off His outer garments. To inflict the most damage, the *lictor*—the one responsible for the scourging—would typically select a whip with small weights or bits of sheep bone braided into the straps. Because this kind of whip caused so much physical harm so quickly, the victim often passed out or went into shock within just a few lashes." Charles R. Swindoll, *Swindoll's Living Insights New Testament Commentary: Insights on Matthew 16–28*, vol. 1B (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House, 2020), 280.
3. "The scarlet robe (Gr. *chlamys*) they put on Jesus (v. 28) was probably the reddish purple cloak that Roman military and civil officials wore. Perhaps the thorny spikes that the soldiers wove into a circle to resemble the one on Tiberius Caesar's head on Roman coins consisted of palm branches. The imperfect tense of the Greek verb translated "beat" means they beat Jesus on the head repeatedly (cf. Isa. 52:14)." Thomas Constable, "Matthew 27:28–31," Constable's Notes, netbible.org.
4. In "Excursus: Crucifixion" on page 289 of his commentary, *Insights on Matthew 16–28*, Pastor Chuck Swindoll describes how the Romans crucified victims and includes an illustration of the type of cross on which Jesus died.
5. Previous examples of Jesus fulfilling prophecy include His virginal conception (Matthew 1:22–23), location of birth (2:5–6), flight to Egypt (2:15), escape of Herod's slaughter of the infants (2:17–18), announcement in the wilderness (3:3), ministry in Galilee (4:14–16), healing ministry (8:17), ministry to Gentiles (12:17–18), three-day entombment (12:39–40), speaking in parables (13:13–15), triumphal entry (21:3–5), and betrayal by Judas (27:8–10).



THE KING OF KINGS: A STUDY OF MATTHEW

The King's Commission: A Study of Matthew 21–28

STUDY NINETEEN

... And Then, What Happened?

Matthew 27:51–66

The tearing of the veil of the Holy of Holies was an announcement: “No longer is there a barrier between sinners and their holy God.” We are now free to come through the open veil right into the presence of God.

—Pastor Charles R. Swindoll

It is *finished!*” (John 19:30). After Jesus said these words in His final moments on the cross, “he released his spirit” into the outstretched hands of His Father and died (Matthew 27:50). Christ’s suffering was finally over . . . but suffering wasn’t the only thing that was finished.

In those awful hours of darkness, God made His sinless Son “to be sin on our behalf” (2 Corinthians 5:21 NASB). Jesus became our substitute when “the LORD laid on him the sins of us all” (Isaiah 53:6).

Imagine that! The sum of all sins was accounted for at the cross, and Jesus bore them all—just as the writer to the Hebrews declared:

“With his own blood—not the blood of goats and calves—he entered the Most Holy Place once for all time and secured our redemption forever. . . . Christ offered himself to God as a perfect sacrifice for our sins.” (Hebrews 9:12, 14)

Through His death, Jesus had accomplished the *work of salvation* that God had sent Him to do. ***It was finished!***

The impact of Christ’s accomplishment sent shockwaves through the land in the form of three supernatural phenomena occurring in rapid succession. What incredible events occurred after Jesus died? Let’s find out in this *Searching the Scriptures* study.



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... And Then, What Happened?

Matthew 27:51–66



PREPARE YOUR HEART

Through Christ, we can come directly into God's presence. As you open His Word, thank the Lord for the access we have in Christ and ask Him to open your eyes to the wonders of His grace.

Father, in the aftermath of Your Son's death, some life-changing, earth-shaking, events took place. Help me understand the meaning of these events and fill my heart with a deeper love and appreciation for Jesus who leads me into Your presence and makes me dwell in Your grace. In His name, amen.



TURN TO THE SCRIPTURES

As you read [Matthew 27:50–66](#), you'll notice the setting begins in the place of Christ's crucifixion (Matthew 27:51–56) and shifts to the site of the tomb (27:57–66). The tomb was in a garden, perhaps a stone's throw away from the cross (John 19:41). In his commentary, *Insights on Matthew 16–28*, Pastor Chuck Swindoll helps us imagine the garden scene.

We often picture the tomb of Jesus as out in the middle of nowhere, surrounded by a wooded area off the beaten path. Instead, we should picture a walled garden within sight of Golgotha itself, perhaps just across the street, with a door or gate and a staff of gardeners working inside.¹

Such a beautiful, serene location for Jesus' tomb. But before leading us into the garden where Jesus' body was laid to rest, Matthew's account carries at the foot of the cross.



Observation: Events Surrounding the Cross and the Tomb

Scripture comes to life when we can put ourselves into the scenes.² A shadow of death still shrouded the land in a kind of grief after Christ died. However, just as God's Spirit was hovering over the deep waters at creation to call forth new life, He was also moving in the darkness after Christ's death.



... And Then, What Happened?

Matthew 27:51–66

Events Surrounding the Cross—Matthew 27:51–56

What three supernatural events occurred the moment Christ died, according to [Matthew 27:50–53](#)?

In the interpretation phase, we'll explore the significance of the tearing of the veil, the earthquake, and the raised bodies. For now, according to [27:54–56](#), what life-changing impact did Christ's death have on the soldiers? Who witnessed the action from a distance?

How does the Roman soldiers' pronouncement about Jesus contrast with the Jewish leaders' charges in the mock trials and accusations ([Matthew 26:63–66](#); [27:41–43](#))? How does the Roman soldiers' statement reflect a central theme in Matthew's gospel?

The soldiers' confession still rings in the hearts of countless millions who have also experienced the Savior's power. Only one explanation makes sense: Jesus “truly was [and is] the Son of God!” (27:54).



... And Then, What Happened?

Matthew 27:51–66

Events Surrounding the Tomb—Matthew 27:57–66

What specifics does Matthew give regarding the *who*, *how*, *where*, and *when* of the removal and burial of Jesus' body, according to [Matthew 27:57–61](#)? Why do you think these details are important?

Joseph was an “honored member of the high council” (Mark 15:43) and “had not agreed with the decision and actions of the other religious leaders” (Luke 23:51). The next day, other members of the Sanhedrin went to Pilate. How do their motives and actions contrast with Joseph's, according to [Matthew 27:62–66](#)?

They sealed the tomb, and they posted guards to protect it. Are you kidding? We're talking about a God who can create something out of nothing and the Lord who is able to do the impossible. They put a few puny guards at the entrance and a little wax on the stone, and they think that's going to keep Jesus in! —Pastor Chuck Swindoll



... And Then, What Happened?

Matthew 27:51–66



Interpretation: Rending the Veil, Splitting the Rocks, and Raising the Dead

The tearing of the veil from top to bottom symbolized God opening access to His holy presence through the sacrificial death of His Son. This massive, inches-thick veil hung at the entrance to the Most Holy Place, the innermost sanctuary of the temple. At the time of Moses, around 1500 years earlier, a similar veil divided the tabernacle. What was hidden behind that veil, and what did it signify (*Exodus 25:22; 40:18–21*)?

Only the high priest could enter the Most Holy Place and only annually on the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur). On this day, the high priest atoned for the people's sins by sprinkling the blood of a sacrifice there.

How did Christ's death on the cross accomplish a similar work of atonement—only better? For help with the answer, read page 296 of Pastor Chuck Swindoll's commentary, *Insights on Matthew 16–28*. For an online resource, consult *Constable's Notes* at netbible.org.



... And Then, What Happened?

Matthew 27:51–66

The second sign was an earthquake that split apart rocks (Matthew 27:51). What do you think God was announcing about Himself and His Son's earthshaking accomplishment? *Isaiah 29:5–6* gives insight into the answer, and the soldiers model the appropriate response (*Matthew 27:54*).

Finally, as the earth shook, “tombs opened” and “the bodies of many godly men and women who had died were raised from the dead” (Matthew 27:52). How do we understand this sign? Read pages 297–298 in Pastor Chuck's commentary to find two possible interpretations. Based on your research, what do you think happened and why?

You do not need anyone to represent you when you go before the Lord other than Jesus Himself. We go to God through Christ, and we go instantly, boldly, and frequently because—thanks to the torn veil—we now have an open relationship with God.
—Pastor Chuck Swindoll



Correlation: A Heavenly Tabernacle and a Better Covenant

The writer to the Hebrews gives us a closer look behind the scenes of Christ's accomplishment. Christ's atonement not only gave us access to God, but it also ended the old sacrificial system, which was “only a shadow, a dim preview of the good things to come” (Hebrews 10:1).



... And Then, What Happened?

Matthew 27:51–66

How was the offering of Christ better than the offerings made by the Jewish priests, according to *Hebrews 10:11–12*?

Through His once-for-all sacrifice, Christ cancelled “the first covenant in order to put the second into effect” (10:9). According to *10:15–18*, what amazing blessings do we enjoy under Christ’s new covenant?

How close is the Son of God to His Father? We are just as close in Christ. In the person of His Son—as we are when we come to Jesus as Savior—we are as near as the Son to the Father. The same access the Son has, we have. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll



Application: Where Are We in the Scene?

Like the women present in the aftermath of Christ’s death, we’ve witnessed the miracles, the changed lives of the Roman soldiers, and the entombment of Jesus. What lessons do we learn?

First, *when we come to the end of all hope, remember what happened right after Jesus died.* In their hopelessness, most of Jesus’ disciples had left the site of Jesus’ death. But by leaving, they missed God’s power! When all seems lost, even when a loved one dies, remember God is still present. He is still working in our lives.

Second, *when you think that someone you love is too lost for God to save,* remember the Roman soldiers. If the Lord saved those hardened men’s souls, then He can reach your lost loved one too.



... And Then, What Happened?

Matthew 27:51–66

Third, *when anyone tries to hinder God's plan, remember the resurrection!* How futile it was for the authorities to seal the tomb and put a guard at the entrance. God can overcome any human barrier to accomplish His will.

Which of these principles can you apply most directly to your situation? What can you do right now in response?

In your mind's eye, walk again through the scenes of the aftermath of Jesus' death and burial. What other principle from the passage can you draw? How can this truth guide your way today?

The burial of Christ set the stage for the resurrection, the Sunday-morning miracle that changed everything. Death no longer has the last word; instead, life now has the final say! The darkness has passed, and light from Christ's dawn streaks across the horizon. In the next *Searching the Scriptures* study, we'll step into that new day with our resurrected Lord.



... And Then, What Happened?

Matthew 27:51–66



A FINAL PRAYER

Father, before Christ died, all humanity sat under the ominous shadow of death. But then, Jesus bore sin's curse in His body on the cross, and now the light of a new day has dawned. Through Him, I come near to You. In Him, I live eternally in Your presence. With Him, I will walk through every trial in my life. In His name I pray, amen.

ENDNOTES

1. Charles R. Swindoll, *Swindoll's Living Insights New Testament Commentary: Insights on Matthew 16–28*, vol. 1B (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House, 2020), 302.
2. Learn more about Pastor Chuck's *Searching the Scriptures* method on the Web page, "[How to Study the Bible for Yourself](https://www.insight.org/how-to-study-the-bible-for-yourself)" at [insight.org](https://www.insight.org).



THE KING OF KINGS: A STUDY OF MATTHEW

The King's Commission: A Study of Matthew 21–28

STUDY TWENTY

Resurrection: What Happened . . . What Didn't?

Matthew 28:1–15

The angel moved back the stone not to let Jesus out but to let us in to see that the grave was empty. Jesus was not there!

—Pastor Charles R. Swindoll

THE tomb of Christ was in a private, peaceful garden, secluded from the noisy city outside its gate. Springtime flowers blossomed. Neatly tended beds burst with new life. Vines bearing their first-fruit buds stretched along trellises and climbed walls, casting the garden in a green, tranquil hue.

At the far end, the tomb was visible only by the round stone rolled in front of its entrance. On Friday, just before sundown, Joseph and Nicodemus encased the lifeless body of Jesus with linen cloth and sweet spices before laying Him to rest.

Jesus' tomb, however, was not a mere holding place for a decaying corpse. It was more like the fertile beds of the garden. Planted like a seed in the ground, Jesus' body would soon spring to life. Jesus' heavenly body would emerge, becoming the first fruit of "a great harvest of all who have died" (1 Corinthians 15:20).

Let's join the women as they enter the garden on that first resurrection Sunday and discover, to their amazement, an empty tomb and, to our relief, real hope for our dying world.



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Resurrection: What Happened . . . What Didn't?

Matthew 28:1–15



PREPARE YOUR HEART

Only Jesus can guide us through death into life. Open this *Searching the Scriptures* study by setting your hope solely on Him.

Father, please lift the shadows that creep over my spirit when I focus too much on the affairs of this life. Through Your Word, help me to see beyond the horizon of this earthly existence. Fill me with Your hope. Empower me to experience the life of Christ now as I await the glorification to come. In Jesus' name, amen.



TURN TO THE SCRIPTURES

As you read [Matthew 28:1–15](#), notice how Matthew tells his readers *what happened* when the angel announced Christ is risen. Matthew also tells *what didn't happen*, specifically, Jesus' body was *not* stolen. This false story was circulating at the time, and Matthew's purpose was not only to record the truth, but also to debunk the lie.



Observation: The Miracle versus the Deception

To truly engage with this passage, we must use all our senses.¹ Feel the crispness in the early Sunday morning air. See the first rays of dawn spreading over the Mount of Olives. Sense the women's urgency as they hurry along the hilly route through the city. Smell the spices they carry to finish the job of anointing Jesus' body (Mark 16:1). Experience their shock when they arrive at the garden.

The Miracle of Resurrection—Matthew 28:1–10

What details do you observe in [Matthew 28:1–4](#)? The soldiers “fell into a dead faint” before the women arrived. What frightened them?



Resurrection: What Happened . . . What Didn't?

Matthew 28:1–15

What did the angel say to the women, according to [Matthew 28:5–8](#)? Why do you think the angel rolled back the stone?

According to Pastor Chuck Swindoll's harmonization of the resurrection accounts, Mary Magdalene rushed off to tell John and Peter (John 20:1–2), while the other women went to find the rest of the disciples.² What happened along the way, according to [Matthew 28:9–10](#)?

The False Testimony from the Deceivers—Matthew 28:11–15

The women weren't the only witnesses of the events that morning. After reviving from their dead faint, some of the guards "went into the city and told the leading priests what had happened" (Matthew 28:11). Amazingly, the priests believed their story! A miracle had happened, but still they were determined to stand in God's way. What did the Jewish authorities do to discredit what they knew to be a supernatural event, according to [Matthew 28:12–15](#)?



Resurrection: What Happened . . . What Didn't?

Matthew 28:1–15

The resurrection of Christ was so significant and miraculous that skeptics immediately planned a lie about it, and to this day, the lie is still being told. How much easier it is to believe a lie than to accept a miracle that you can't explain! —Pastor Chuck Swindoll



Interpretation: The Skeptics' False Explanation

From the beginning, skeptics have tried to cast doubt on the biblical accounts of the resurrection, offering alternative theories to explain what happened to His body. In his commentary, *Insights on Matthew 16–28*, Pastor Chuck Swindoll addresses the argument that the body was stolen and then gives reasons against it.

Read pages 316–317 of the commentary and in the space below summarize what you learn. Or, for an online rebuttal of the false theory, consult Matthew 28:12–14 of [Constable's Notes](#) at [netbible.org](#).

The “stolen body” theory just doesn't hold water. If the body was stolen, surely someone would have tracked it down and produced it, but no one ever has so the claim of the soldiers is empty.

In addition, the soldier's story that they fell asleep was ridiculous. How likely was it that *all* the soldiers fell asleep and *none* awakened at the sound of the disciples fumbling in the darkness? Besides, the disciples were defeated and scattered. None of them understood the meaning of the resurrection (John 20:9–10). How could this frightened bunch concoct such a bold plan so quickly? Furthermore, would they have later sacrificed their lives as martyrs for a cause they knew to be a lie? No way!

The angel's message is the only possible explanation for Jesus' missing body: *He is risen*.



Correlation: Our Hope Rests in a Living Savior

Jesus' substitutionary sacrifice on the cross set in place the cornerstones of Christianity, such as *redemption*, *justification*, and *forgiveness*. But without Jesus' resurrection, these stones would be buried under the tangled weeds of Joseph's lost garden.



Resurrection: What Happened . . . What Didn't?

Matthew 28:1–15

According to Paul in *1 Corinthians 15:17–19*, what would be our plight if Jesus had not been raised?

Thankfully, Christ is risen! His triumph over death gives us hope of our own resurrection. In *15:42–44*, Paul contrasts our earthly bodies that die with our resurrected bodies. Read those verses in two Bible versions and use the following chart to list the contrasts.

Earthly Body	Resurrected Body

Our hope rests in a *living* Savior. According to *15:51–53*, what will happen when He returns?

The resurrection of Christ is a message of hope. We must not think we just move into “nothingness” when we die. With Christ, we live on and on, just like Him.
 —Pastor Chuck Swindoll



Resurrection: What Happened . . . What Didn't?

Matthew 28:1–15



Application: Which Story Do You Believe?

Skeptics find it easier to believe the stolen body theory rather than surrender their lives to a living Savior. To be certain, believing in the resurrection without seeing Jesus alive takes faith.

However, while believing without seeing calls upon a higher level of faith, it yields a greater spiritual blessing—just as Jesus declared when He appeared to Thomas:

“You believe because you have seen me. Blessed are those who believe without seeing me.”
(John 20:29)

Are you going through a dark period of grief or loss that has cast a shadow across your spirit—just like the disciples after Jesus died? What is causing you to be discouraged?

What about Jesus' empty tomb and the angel's earth-shaking announcement revives your hope?

Perhaps the greatest blessing of the resurrection is the assurance that God has a future for us as well as His entire creation. Close this study by declaring with Paul your faith in Jesus whose resurrection guarantees your life beyond the grave.



Resurrection: What Happened . . . What Didn't?

Matthew 28:1–15

Let me tell you a wonderful secret. We will not all die, but we will all be transformed! It will happen in a moment, in the blink of an eye, when the last trumpet is blown. For when the trumpet sounds, those who have died will be raised to live forever. And we who are living will also be transformed. For our dying bodies must be transformed into bodies that will never die; our mortal bodies must be transformed into immortal bodies.

Then when our dying bodies have been transformed into bodies that will never die, the Scripture will be fulfilled:

“Death is swallowed up in victory.

O death, where is your victory?

O death, where is your sting?”

For sin is the sting that results in death, and the law gives sin its power. But thank God! He gives us victory over sin and death through our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Corinthians 15:51–57)



A FINAL PRAYER

Father, thank You for raising Your Son from the dead and giving me hope beyond this life. I claim by faith the promise of eternal life through faith in Jesus, my living Savior. He is risen! He is risen, indeed! In His name I pray, amen.

ENDNOTES

1. Learn more about Pastor Chuck's *Searching the Scriptures* method on the Web page, "[How to Study the Bible for Yourself](#)" at [insight.org](#).
2. Charles R. Swindoll, *Swindoll's Living Insights New Testament Commentary: Insights on Matthew 16–28*, vol. 1B (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House, 2020), 312–313, 319. Read the entire harmonization of the resurrection accounts as it is presented in three parts. "Excursus: Resurrection Accounts Harmonized, Part 1—From Thursday to Saturday," 303–305. "Excursus: Resurrection Accounts Harmonized, Part 2—From Saturday Night to Sunday Morning," 311–313. "Excursus: Resurrection Accounts Harmonized, Part 3—Sunday and Beyond," 319.



THE KING OF KINGS: A STUDY OF MATTHEW
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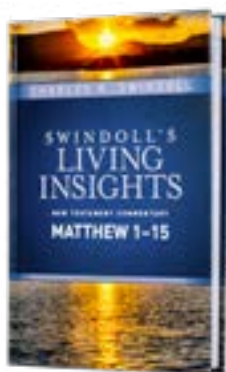
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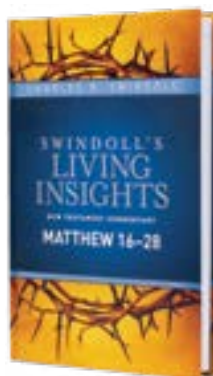
Matthew 28:1–15



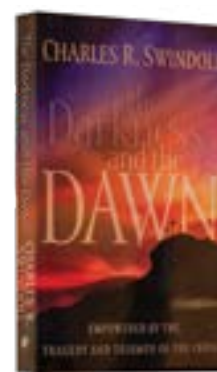
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For the 2021 broadcasts, this *Searching the Scriptures* study was developed by Bryce Klabunde, vice president of *Searching the Scriptures* Ministries, based upon the original outlines, charts, and transcripts of Charles R. Swindoll's messages.



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