

Turn to John 19:30. Every verse in the last part of John is packed FULL of deep meaning.

V. 30 - we looked at the first part of it, which was the sixth word - READ V.30 - now

He received a little vinegar at this time - He refused it at the outset. But after He has suffered and paid for our sins, He took just a little vinegar and He said 'it is finished'.

I dealt with that at length last time.

Notice the next line of this verse: now this is the very reverse of what we do and this shows the uniqueness of Christ. Man gives up his spirit (ceases to breath) and THEN bows His head. But Jesus dowed His head and THEN gave up the ghost (spirit). Now this indicates that Jesus Christ was in complete control of His own death. He, Himself said in John's Gospel (we've already looked at it - in John 10:18 (read) My life is in My hands and here He proves it.

Death could not have touched Him except he had willingly given Himself to death. Now notice it says 'He bowed His head'. It doesn't say 'it fell over'. It indicates a deliberate bowing of His head. He's in complete control, though He's been scourged twice and though He's gone through this awful suffering and trial, He has all of His faculties; He dies willingly. He didn't HAVE to die. That's the glory of His death. He didn't HAVE to die. He CHOSE TO DIE! For you and me.

LK. 9:51

Then it says 'He gave up the ghost'. Well, that's an ancient way of saying 'He ceased to breath'. The word 'ghost' is the word ~~xxxx~~ 'pneuma' - you know pneumatic tires - pneumatic equipment run by air. Well, that's where we get it. But this means 'spirit'. He gave up His pneuma. He gave up His spirit, but literally, ~~xxxx~~ 'gave up' is not the best translation. He dismissed His spirit. He bowed His head and He just dismissed His spirit. HE dismissed it! He's in complete control of His death.

It's an amazing and beautiful thing. Now when Stephen died, in the 7th chapter of Acts,

he said 'Lord, receive my spirit'. Stephens spirit was taken from him. Jesus ~~did~~ dismissed His spirit. It shows the beauty and the wonder of the death of JC, and, again, shows His uniqueness.

*Stephens's spirit + He took from him
Jesus gave up His Spirit*

V. 31(read) 'preparation' it was Friday. Indeed, the word 'preparation' means 'Friday' in the Greek. Indeed it was very close to the Sabbath because Jesus died at 3 P.M. in the afternoon. The Sabbath began in 3 hours. They had to get that body off the cross, and had to dress it and had to get it in a tomb before sunset, because the Jewish Sabbath began in 3 hours. So the Jews have a real emergency.

They've not shown any mercy upon Jesus and this is not mercy but this is simply keeping their law. Because it was the preparation on Friday before their Lords Day or their Sabbath, they, of course, are determined that the body of Jesus will be taken down. Because they don't want it up there. They don't want the body of a criminal up there on the Sabbath and especially, THIS Sabbath - it goes on to say that the body shall not remain upon the cross on the Sabbath Day for that Sabbath Day was a high day.

What does that mean? It was the Sabbath but not only was it the Sabbath, it was the Sabbath of the Passover. The word 'High' there is the Greek word 'megale' which means 'great' day. We speak of great days. We have great days in the FBC. We have Scrip. for this. There are certain days that are great days. The Sabbath in the Passover, was one of the greatest days of the Jews and they said 'He's GOT to come down because the Sabbath will start in 3 hours.' Not only the Sabbath, but the Sabbath of the Passover and not only the Sabbath of the Passover, but the first day of unleavened bread.

So it's not because of mercy that the Jews want Him taken down. Again, just to keep their little religious manushi - see? And so they intercede to see that He's taken off of the cross. So they besought Pilot that their legs might be broken. Why? What would ~~it~~ that have anything to do with it? Well, you see, in crucifixion, the victims died from suffocation

and when you broke those legs, no longer could they raise themselves up. They couldn't catch breath, after their legs were broken, they died almost immediately. So the Jews requested Pontius Pilot that their legs might be broken. Now ordinarily, they would have hung on that cross about 3 days.

The Romans wanted them to hang as long as they could, as an example, to say to people that say them 'you see this man here? He committed a crime against the state and you see Him on ~~there~~ the cross? You do something; you'll end up here too'. So they generally hanged for two or three days but Pontius Pilot was willing for this to be done. But he had no choice, he's in the Sovereign hands of God. The more I read ~~the~~ the Bible, the more amazed IXXXX I am that God absolutely is in charge.

Now this idea that man determines things and that it's in our hands, Friends, is just NOT true. IT's been taught in a lot of churches and a lot of preaching, but you can forget it. God works through the devil, even, and through unbelievers, to accomplish His purpose. Pilot didn't even argue about it, though it was contrary to Roman custom. Pilot gave permission that they might - that their legs might be broken. You see, this verb 'broken' in the Greek, it means 'shiver to pieces'. They took a mallet - a big mallet - and just smashed the bones. The terriblemess of that.

So Pilot gives this permission that the legs of all three might be broken.

V. 32(read) they broke the legs of the thieves first. We cannot be sure why they chose them first, except I think this is the Sovereignty of God that the HS wanted Jesus just to stand out. They MAY have noticed that Jesus was probably dead but I really don't think that was it. I think it's still Sovereign action of God. They want Jesus to be given special attention, indeed, which He was.

Now one of these thieves has just received as his Saviour. YOu mean that a Xtn will have to

suffer? He may. Here's a thief; his legs are broken just like the man who didn't receive Him. To be a Xtn does not immune us from suffering. Some of you are Xtens and you're suffering and your family is suffering. This thief had so marvelously and courageously received the Lord and no sooner has He received the Lord, than His legs are shivered to pieces with a mallet - a pagan soldier. It can happen.

The thief had so suffer, though he was saved
I think of my friends today who are lying in prisons in Cuba, who love the Lord as much as I do. But they can't even get out of prison. I think of the hundreds of Xtens in Russia, today, who are behind closed bars. I thank God that He's been so good to me but He's not been as good to a lot of people and I do not know when I will be called on to suffer. This thief was called on to suffer the very day of his conversion - to suffer unbelievable things.

But Jesus had said 'today shalt thou be with Me in Paradise' in Luke 23:43 (the second word) and He's not supposed to die until two or three days later - not supposed to go to Paradise by ~~XXXX~~ custom, until Sunday or Monday of the next week. Jesus knows all things. He knew that they'd brake those legs. Those thieves would have lingered right there. The thieves would have stayed there at least two days and probably three days, before they would have died.

Because you see, the vital signs were not tremendously affected; the heart could still beat and the blood flow. It was a terrible thing. Some people went stark, raving mad in crucifixion. We can't even conceive of it today. It was such a terrible thing. I think the nearest thing in the world is Ideaumain and I'm still glad the U.S. Government has cut off his aid from him. He's a beast. Ideaumain - I ~~xxx~~ think he kinda does this thing and they're doing this thing in Cambodia today.

And they're doing this thing more than ever in history, since Xtn days, in my opinion. It shows, of course, the inhumanity of man to man, as we depart from God. But this thief died

V.33(read)

and the other one died. /But when they came to Jesus and saw that He was dead already, they brake not His legs. Jesus is dead already. Teh Father has had enough. Jesus has suffered six hours; he suffered, really, for 33½ yrs. He suffered for six hours and the Lord just relieved Him of this. But it had to happen this way, anyway.

As we'll see in just a few moments, it's the fulfillment of O.T. SCrip. Now Pilot said 'go and brake the legs of Jesus'. But the soldiers couldn't brake His legs. Or no NEED to brake His legs because H'es already died. He's already bowed His head; He's already dismissed His spirit. This was all in the hands of God.

2 reasons his side was pierced

XX V. 34 (read) why did he do this? Well, he evidently wanted to be dead sure that He was dead.

Now we have scholars today and there's quite a few of them that say 'well, Jesus really didn't die. He really wasn't even dead.' They say 'well, they took Him off the cross and He wasn't dead and He got in the cool tomb and those spices and they revived Him!' You know it's amazing to me - it's REALLY amazing to me - the faith it takes to believe the theories of liberal scholars. It doesn't take nearly as much faith to believe the Bible as it does to believe these concoctions of liberal scholars, who do not want to believe the record and therefore, they concoct these theories.

So this is a leading theory that Jesus ~~never~~ really never died in the first place. ~~XXXXXX~~ You see, they're trying to get around the resurrection. No such think as a resurrection, so He never died. He got in that cool tomb - He's a little sick up there, He's swooning and they put Him in the tomb. Well, this is further proof. The soldier wanted to be sure and so he pierced His side. Now Pilot had told the soldiers to break his legs. Soldiers can't break His legs because God had said a thousand yrs. ago (well more than a thousand yrs. before - 1500 yrs. before) His legs can't be broken.

(2) Well, Pilot didn't tell the soldier to pierce his ~~heart~~ but the soldier has to pierce His ~~heart~~ because prophesy had said 'they WILL pierce Him'. It's AMAZING - you see the Sovereignit

of God at the crucifixion in a marvelous way. And I don't know what this means to you today,..... In the ad in the newspaper, we put Lonely? Depressed? Well, this is just simply a general description of what we get out of Bible study. Someone said this morning 'are you gonna speak specifically on that?' And I said 'well, I didn't say THAT'.

But, listen, if you hear the Word of God, if you understand what the Bible is saying - this IS the answer to loneliness and depression. Certainly, if you're a Xtn today. You can rest assured, if you are a child of God today, and you're not simply just going in willful disobedience in bringing destruction upon yourself, that your life is in the hands of the Lord. Satan cannot determine your life - your boss man - people who hate you - they cannot DO THIS. They cannot prevail. We see it here in the most minute detail in the life of Jesus. THIS is the cure for depression. THIS is the cure for loneliness., is a heightened view of the sovereignty of God and the Love of God for His people. That's worth MORE than all the psychiatrists can ever tell us.

Now, if your faith level can receive this, you will rejoice. This is a wonderful thing. Is to KNOW that God's in charge of life. Well, he pierced His side. I have no doubt that he stuck that spear right toward his heart and latter part of V. 34 says 'and forthwith there came out blood and water'. What a statement! What a miracle! Here's a man that's dead. I don't know how long He's been dead, but it was a miracle for blood to flow. It was certainly a miracle for the water AND the blood to flow and as I ~~fix~~ read it in the Greek text, it says to me they flowed separately.

Stroud
They were not mixed. And there have been all kinds of views - a man by the name of Dr. Stroud has written a whole book on the physical causes of the death of Christ and he says that Jesus died of a ruptured heart - of a ruptured heart. The soldier piercing His heart and around the heart the paracardian, which holds the fluid (or the water) both of these came out. But there's a great deal more to it than just some water and some blood flowing.

There's a great and wonderful spiritual lesson here and another insight into salvation and

God's wonderful Plan of redemption. Really, you have here, the two ordinances of the church.
Water - that's the ordinance of baptism. ² Blood - communion. Holy Baptism - Holy Communion.
Coming out of Jesus. But you have MORE than that. We'll get to that in V.35.

V.35 (read) 'bore record' - gave his testimony, that is. Who's 'he'? That saw it? That's John. In I John 5:6 (read) that is, He was manifested by the water and blood. John saw it and he bore record, not only in the Gospel, but he bore record in his First Epistle - I John 5:6 - he told it twice. 'And the record is true' - John saw it. What does this mean? Well, I thought John was home with Mary.

1 John 5:6

Well, John took Mary to his home, according to John 19:27 - there at the latter part of the verse, notice it says 'and from that hour, the Disciple (that's John) took her unto his own home.' He took her unto his own home, but then he came back to the cross. I just love the Bible because it just shows us ourselves. Did you ever leave a meeting and have to go back to a meeting? John couldn't stay away. You can't stay away from certain things.

You may leave a sick loved one at the hospital; you can't stay away from the hospital; you've got to go back. John went back to the foot of the cross and he got there in time to witness that soldier putting that spear in the heart of Jesus. He saw it. Why was he there? God told him to go. He probably didn't intend to go back and I tell you you'll go a lot of places, if you're a child of God. You're in the hands of God. Don't you ever forget it - there's a Sovereignty in life that cannot be explained apart of the Sovereignty of God.

It's not our choice always; it's God who overrules, even ~~after~~ our own will. We can't say but we know that John was back at the foot of the cross because he saw the spear. V.35b - he knows what he says is true, that ye might believe. The whole record is to give proof of Jesus being the Son of God and the over-ruling providence of God, that we might believe. That's the purpose.

Psa. 34:20

V. 36 (read) let's turn back to Ps. 34:20. I do not know how much cross-reference you would

like to do. My tendency is ~~xxx~~ not to interrupt that much but from time to time, we will do the cross reference that you might see, with your own eyes, the beauty of Scrip. Look at 34:20 - that's a prophesy. When was that written? A thousand years before the cross.

Written by David. Now in the context, in the immediate context, he's speaking of a righteous man but you often have this. It's fulfilled. Just like the virgin birth. In the immediate context, there was an unusual ~~xxx~~ child born in the day of Ahaz, 700 ~~xxxx~~ yrs. before Christ but the literal fulfillment of that was when Jesus was born of the virgin. You often have this phenomana in Scrip.

You also have something that is maybe even more significant, in the second book of your Bible, Exodus 12:46(read) 'be eaten' (that is, the Passover Lamb). The Jews were commanded not to break one bone of the ~~Paschal~~ Lamb. How long did they eat the Paschal Lamb before the cross? 1500 yrs. And they never knew what it meant -not breaking the bone. This was all pointing forward to Jesus, who is the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. Jesus, HImself, being the Paschal Lamb, slain for our sins, once and for all.

Ex. 12:46 - Jews comm. not to break bone of Paschal Lamb
Oh, if the Jews could have seen in the O.T. what was there, -how different it would be. This heightens my faith to the highest level. No scholar, and I've sat under the worst, I've sat under infidels, I mean world renoun infidels, who denied the authority of the Scrip. No scholar can shake my faith. He CANNOT do it. Because of fulfilled prophesy. Here's the way to deal with your unbelieving friends. Any rational mind would have to agree that the Bible is the Word of God, if you can show him what it's message really is and how it fulfills Scrip.

They that rejected him looked upon him as fulfilled at Cross (2) End of Great Trib.
And again, another Scrip. - V. 37 (read) you find THESE words in Zechariah 12:10. That's a hard book to find. Just trust me - that's where it's found. They pierced HIm. That has a double fulfillment. Had a fulfillment at the cross; it's going to have a fulfillment at the end of the Great Tribulation. Did you know sometimes, prophesy ~~xxx~~ has a double fulfill-

ment? When the Jews see Him coming back with the church, at the end of the Tribulation, Rev. 1:7 - they'll weep and ~~morn~~ morn because they'll say 'here's the One we pierced; here's the One we pierced'. Well, what is the water and what is the blood? That flowed from the side of Jesus?

I said that this sheds tremendous light on the full Gospel and on God's full salvation. What is the water? ¹ First, the Blood. The Blood's before the water. That's forgiveness of sin. There's no forgiveness of sin without the shedding of blood (Heb. 9:22) read. Absolutely, you can't be forgiven of sin except for Christ's blood. That's Justification. That's what we call Justification. We're Justified by God - before God - through the shed blood of Christ. When we trust Christ - and Him alone - it has to be Him ALONE (if you add any works to it, that's not trusting Christ) we're Justified.

That means we're declared righteous before God. That's JUSTIFICATION. That's the blood.

² But how about the water? We need more than Justification. We need CLEANSING. We need cleansing from the defilement of sin. That's the great doctrine of SANCTIFICATION. You have both of these in the ordinances of the church. ¹ Baptism is justification; ~~water~~ The Blood. ² Water - is sanctification. This is the great work of Christ - a part of every true believer. He forgives - but He does more than forgive - He cleanses us. He takes the stain of sin out of our souls. He makes us a NEW creation in Christ.

Now Toplady's great song 'Rock of Ages, cleft for me' has this theology in it. 'Let the water and the blood, from Thy wounded side which flowed, be of sin the DOUBLE CURE' (PRAISE THE LORD) be of sin the double cure, save from wrath (that's the blood- this is the wrath- you're forgiven and no longer have do you have to worry about the wrath of God.) Or to put it in simple language: you don't have to worry about going to hell. That's a great thing. Until you're sheltered under Christ's Blood and until you're Justified, you are in danger of hell.

But not when you're sheltered under Christ's blood. 'Be of sin, the double cure; save from wrath (that's the blood) and make me pure (that's the water - that's sanctification)'.
You know I've said if we knew our Bibles and we just sang the hymns, we'd all be in a revival

meeting. You sing the great hymns. You sing 'A Mighty Fortress is Our God' - and you know your Bible, you're in a revival.

You sing these great hymns, they're just churck full of theology. The 'Double Cure'. We have two things wrong with us. We have the sins which we have committed in this life - we need to be forgiven of them. But we have something deeper than that. We have the old adamic nature - we need to be cleansed. The POWER of sin needs to be broken. This is ALL in the work of Jesus. All in the work of Jesus. Course there are tremendous theological implications here.

You've got the great work of the H.S. in Sanctification - I can't go into this, but it's all based upon Christ's work. The Water and the Blood that flowed from His side.

Now beginning in V. 38 thru 42, we have a study in Xtn biography and just let me say to you that one of the most ~~xxx~~ valuable studies that you can ever do is in Xtn biography. When you study the life of great Xtns - that inspires you, in my opinion, next to the Bible. And I would greatly encourage you. For instance, I would greatly encourage you to get the book "They Found the Secret" - that tells how 20 men were filled with the HS. That'll set you on fire. Just pick that up. "They Found the Secret".

And it's an account of how 20 great men were filled with the HS and how God used them and their lives. Well, here we have something about two great men. Jesus is dead. ~~He's~~ He's hanging on a cross. Where is He gonna be buried? Who's gonna bury Him? Where's His family? They don't believe on Him. Who's gonna take care of the corpse? O.K. The soldiera will do it. They've already dug three graves. We know this, from custom. They dug graves for crucified criminals. So they have three graves already dug.

They take these two thieves and they put them in these criminal graves. And they're getting ready to do this to Jesus. But God would not permit His legs to be broken and God's not gonna permit His body to be placed in a criminals grave. Let's turn to Is. 53 - how wonderful are the Scrip. Is. 53:9 (read) He was absolutely buried in luxury by a rich man, whose name was Joseph of Arimathea.

*Isa 53:9 - buried with
not*

The first statement there 'and He made His grave with the wicked' - ~~xxxxxx~~ that may sound a little awkward in the English text. What that is saying is: He was identified with the wicked on the cross between the two thieves and then His grave - He was buried in the tomb of a rich man.

V. 38(read) now it says he was a disciple of Jesus but he had remained secret about it because he was afraid of the Jews. Now who was this man, Joseph? Well, John doesn't tell us so much. But this man, Joseph, was a member of the Jewish high court - the Sanhedrin. As far as we know, he did not vote in defense of Jesus - he did not vote against Jesus. In all probability, he did not attend the session where Jesus was condemned. We can't know.

It's really sad. There's a sad note about Joseph because if he had spoken up before His death, he, indeed, would be a far more glorious figure. He didn't have the courage of his conviction and that's a sad thing for any human being - is not to have the courage of our convictions. I was reading about a man who was running for President of the U.S. - I don't know what his name was - but this is supposed to be a true story. And he was in Cleveland and he went in to a service, where the preacher preached a strong sermon on salvation and then he gave an invitation and he says 'people who would really like to be saved, come forth, kneel at the front here. We'd like to pray for you'.

And this candidate for the President ~~xxxx~~ of the U.S. - he started down and when he did, his political advisors around him said 'no, you ~~xxx~~ can't go. You're running for President of the U.S. It won't DO for you to go.' And this man turned to him and said 'but I'm a

candidate for Heaven. My ~~xxxx~~ candidacy is higher than the President of the U.S. I'm a candidate for HEAVEN and I KNOW that I'm a sinner and I know that I need to be saved and I'm going and let them pray for me'. It takes real courage to stand up when the majority is against you.

Joseph KNEW they were wrong; he did not stand up. We have much light on Joseph in the other Gospels. Turn to Matt. 27 - I just want to read about Joseph. He is a good character to study. Joseph of Arimathea - that's the town he was from is the reason he's called Joseph of Arimathea. Look at Matt. 27:57 (read) notice it ~~sa~~ says he was a rich man. V.58(read) 'begged the body of Jesus' - now in so doing, he jeopardized his life. He put his life in danger. He was subject himself, to be executed for this.

Joseph 'begged body of Jesus' (Matt. 27:58)
Also, he discredited himself with the Sanhedrin. He showed a great deal of courage here. No question about it. The trouble is - he's giving the flowers after Jesus is dead and ONE flower in LIFE is worth a TRUCK full of wreaths in DEATH. But it's good that he came out. He went to Pilot and Pilot commanded the body to be delivered to him.

Matt. 27:57-60 - facts about Joseph of Arimathea
V. 59(read) and V.60a - now this is VERY significant, so keep this in mind. Read 60b - this is very important and I'll point it out in just a few moments. Joseph didn't only come and ask for the body but Joseph TOOK that body and laid that body in his own tomb. To fulfill the Scrip. that was uttered 650 yrs. before the crucifixion 'He will make His death with the rich.' Buried in the tomb of Joseph.

Now I'm not gonna have time to get into the Nicodemus story but I just want to bring this in, in V. 39 and then I want to come back to this tomb. Nicodemus also came and he is also a member of the Jewish High Court. Nicodemus came by night - in John 3. In the 7th Chapter of John and V. 51, he raised a question before the Jewish Supreme Court. He says 'you don't condemn a man until you hear Him, do you?' That's all he said but he broke up the Court.

You remember when we studied that? Here he comes out. So you really ~~xxxx~~ have three chapters

in the life of old Nicodemus. ⁽¹⁾ The first chapter, we call 'Midnight'. It's night when he comes to Jesus. It's midnight in his soul - he's not a believer. ⁽²⁾ In the 7th chapter of John, you have 'Twilight'. *3 Stages in Life of Nicodemus*

He speaks up a LITTLE. Enough to upset that court. It has to break up. Said 'you don't condemn a man, do you, until you give Him a hearing?' ⁽³⁾ But here's 'Daylight'. Was Nicodemus a believer? I believe so. I believe this is unusual circumstances. ~~in his life~~ I think, today, if a man won't confess Christ, I don't have any confidence in his salvation. But I believe Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, because of the unusual circumstances, I believe that they were believers. I think that ~~they were~~ we'll get to talk to them in Heaven.

I'm looking forward to this. They're tremendous characters. But Nicodemus came and notice John ~~says~~ says 'which at the first came to Jesus by night'. Why does he emphasize that? Because it's tremendously important. He was in darkness, seeking the Lord, and John points it out to remind us the man without Jesus is in darkness. See, the whole purpose of the Gospel is to bring us to Light and to Jesus. And finish reading V.39.

V. 40 ⁽¹⁾ (read) what you have here - Joseph furnished the grave - the gravesite - or the tomb - and Nicodemus furnished the clothing and the spices. That's all you needed. They're gonna put Him away. They're gonna really put Him away in a great way.

V.41(read) keep in mind the garden mentioned here. V.42(read) I wonder if it was not near sunset by now? Took a little time to do this. And John says 'they got Him in that grave' before the Sabbath. They had to get Him in there before six. 'For the sepulchre was nigh at hand'. Now here's a beautiful thing. And it appeals to me because I have seen the tomb ~~and some of you have~~ and maybe some of you have. I do not know whether you know all the history or not.

There are two views today about where JC was buried and resurrected.

was crucified at the point of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre; that He was also buried in what is now the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, which is in the city of Jerusalem. This is a very popular view among Roman Catholics and maybe some others.

But there is a tomb outside of Jerusalem that is called Gordon's Tomb. Now Gordon's Tomb, to me, looks tremendously authentic. Now there are some things in ~~the~~ Holy Land that do not look authentic. But this is tremendously authentic. I pointed out last time that the Gordon's Calvary is on the side of a hill and it looks like a skull. And that's what the place means 'the place of the skull' - we saw that last time.

It says here that He was buried in a Garden. Well, it is a garden today. It's a rather beautiful garden. But this tomb is very, very interesting. He was buried in Joseph's Tomb - Scrip. tells us in Matt. 27 that it was hewn out of a rock. Well, indeed, the tomb - Gordon's Tomb, right close to Gordon's Calvary - just probably no further than from here to the Educational building across over here - carved out of a stone. Out of the side of a rock.

But here's something else: the ^{room}~~Bom~~ in the church of the Holy Sepulchre is only one grave. There's a place for four graves where Jesus is buried. Now, Joseph of Arimathea was a married man. We know he was because he was a member of the Sanhedrin. He had a wife, therefore. Probably had some children. It appears that Joseph had Hewn himself a tomb out and he'd hewn out three other tombs. There's really a partition between it and on one side, you have two graves and on the other side, two graves. I've seen it. You go there, you'll see it. You do not have this in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

It appears that here was a family man, who had hewn out several tombs. But here's one of the most interesting things of all. I went IN the tomb. Some of you may have been in the tomb. You notice at the head of the tomb, down at the bottom, say this is the head of the tomb; Jesus is lying here. Right here, this is carved out further. See that? That's carved out. Well, what I believe is: that Jesus was a little taller than Joseph of Arimathea

and they had to make an adjustment in the tomb. That sounds logical to me. They had to make an adjustment in it and so, they extended it a little. It doesn't seem logical that he would, originally, have made it that way. I think this is good supposition.

But, not only that, you've got the tomb. You've got the tomb and it 's in the side of a mountain and there is a little entrance here. And, indeed, you have to kneel down. You can't go through the door. Actually, the tomb of Jesus is over here. You've got to go in here and turn to the right. There's another grave here, another grave here, another grave here. But, in front of the tomb, there is a little trench. Can you see this? I don't know how to really write so that everybody can see it.

There's a little trench right in front of the tomb. And the Bible says 'they rolled a stone.' And, of course, a tremendous stone would fit in that. And the picture we get from the SCrip. is that they rolled a big round stone - they just rolled it in there - until it got there. And the Lord rolled that stone away. Now this suits my heart a great deal more than the church of the Holy Sepulchre. We cannot be dogmatic about it but it seems that this would fit Joseph's tomb.

Byzantine Chapel

Now, something else has happened in recent years. Modern archeology, right close to this tomb, have uncovered a chapel of the Byzantine period. And you, who know art, will understand what I'm saying - but that was a definite kind of art that dates back to the 4th Century. There's a little chapel right over here to the side - course it's under ground - but they dug it up - a shrine, that is - that was built. In other words, it seems that the early Xtns, about 400 - recognized that this was a shrine or a very sacred place and they built a chapel.

The evidence that I have would point to the fact that we really have the tomb of Jesus in Gordon's Tomb and also Golgatha. In closing, I just want to say this that it's an amazing thing that it took the death of Jesus to bring Joseph and Nicodemus out into the open. Jesus

had said, from what we've already seen, in John 12:32(read). And it goes on to say 'this He spoke of being lifted up on the cross'.

John 12:32

Now when Jesus was dying and did die, even a pagan Roman officer said 'He's the Son of God'. When Joseph and Nicodemus stood in the presence of His death, it could be that they saw Him die - they couldn't stand back any longer. They came out and Mark says that they boldly - that Nicodemus BOLDLY asked. And you know what Nicodemus brought? He brought enough spices for a King. I believe that Joseph AND Nicodemus believed that JC would rise again. Can't prove it but it was the cross - it was the death of Jesus that drew them to Him and they came out, as disciples.

Joseph & Nic. prob. had in return

This is still true. The center of the Xtn message is the cross of Jesus. Jesus ~~die~~ dying on the cross. And if the cross will not draw us to Jesus, nothing will. Nothing else will. It's to know that Jesus died for us and took our sins - that is the Great Message. That's the ~~magnant~~ of Xtnity and where that is preached, people are ~~going to~~ drawn to God.

They're drawn to salvation. This little story to illustrate:

SM - Reconciliation By Death

I read that in a western town a man and his wife separated and ~~were~~ went their separate ways. And then some years later, the man happened to be back in that city and decided that he'd go out to the cemetery where his only son was buried. He stood before the grave and while he was standing there, he heard some footsteps behind him in the gravel and he looked back and he saw his divorced wife. And at first, they had a tendency to just go their separate ways and not even speak.

And they began to think of how much they had in common in that grave and that the death of their only son had brought them there. And their hearts were moved and they both drew close to each other and one got on one side of that grave and one on the other and clasped hands over the grave of their dead son.

It's the death of JC which reconciles us and

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