

**POINT #1 - THE GREAT COVER UP**

These are the details of the cover up. The soldiers came to tell the leaders of the missing body of Jesus. After consulting with the elders they came up with a scheme. Tell everyone (and paid them for it) that His disciples came and stole the body while they were sleeping. First, it's really hard to give details of what happened if you were asleep. From Matthew Henry's commentary, *"For their own parts, they were resolved not to believe that Jesus was risen; but their care was, to keep others from believing, and themselves from being quite ashamed from their disbelief of it. They had put him to death, and there was no way of standing to what they had done, but by confronting the evidence of his resurrection. Thus they who have sold themselves to work wickedness, find that one sin draws on another, and that they have plunged themselves into a wretched necessity of adding iniquity to iniquity."* Some holes we find in this cover up:

- These cowardly men who forsook Jesus would sneak past sleeping guards to steal the body of Christ?
- Why weren't the houses where the disciples lodged searched?
- According to Roman law, a soldier who allowed a prisoner to escape would suffer the same fate as the prisoner.

Just for illustration purposes let's define a cover up as *"an attempt to hide the truth, suppress the truth."* Our first parents were guilty of the first ever cover up. They were covering their sin and disobedience. Some famous cover ups in history include: The Philadelphia Experiment in 1943 about a Navy destroyer, Jimmy Hoffa, James Earl Ray and Martin Luther King Jr and of course JFK.

**POINT #2 - THE WORD OF HIS RESURRECTION - Vs. 8**

The strange mixture of fear and great joy. Let's take note that it was great joy. Fear going into the tomb but great joy at knowing Christ is risen. He is alive. Matthew Henry notes *"Holy fear has joy attending it. They that serve the Lord with reverence, serve him with gladness. Spiritual joy is mixed with trembling."* Psalms 2:11 *"Worship the Lord with reverence And rejoice with trembling."* There are a few things we should take note of.

- They went to the tomb expecting to find a body
- The disciples certainly did not expect Jesus to rise again
- They left running as the angel had commanded
- Jesus met them on the way

As Charles Spurgeon notes concerning the nearness and presence of Jesus *"They needed not descend into the deep, to fetch Christ thence; he was not there, he was risen; nor go up to heaven, for he was not yet ascended: but Christ was high them, and still in the word is nigh us."* Imagine for a moment trying to explain the great joy of seeing the risen Christ.

**POINT #3 - THE ABUNDANT NT EVIDENCE OF HIS RESURRECTION**

Matthew, Mark, Luke and John all record evidence of His resurrection. The Book of Acts is a historical account of His resurrection. The book of Revelation repeatedly shows the reigning Christ in heaven and His predicted return. 1 Corinthians 15 "After that He appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time, most of whom remain until now, but some have fallen asleep; then He appeared to James, then to all the apostles; and last of all, as to one untimely born, He appeared to me also."

**POINT #4 - THE NATURE OF HIS RESURRECTION**

Christ's resurrection was not simply a coming back from the dead. The account we have of Lazarus (John 11:1-44) he was still subject to weakness and aging and eventually died again. But when Jesus arose he was the "first fruits" a new life, in which His body was made perfect, no longer subject to aging, death but able to live eternally.

On the road to Emmaus, it is true, that two of His disciples did not recognize Him. But we know the text says, "their eyes were kept from recognizing Him" and later "their eyes were opened" cf. Luke 24:16,31. Jesus had a resurrected body and we shall be like Him at the resurrection, 1 Corinthians 15:53 "For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality."

**POINT #5 - THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESURRECTION**

- Christ's resurrection causes our regeneration - 1 Peter 1:3 "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." This is the key to mortify sin because the power of the resurrection of Christ is in us.
- Christ's resurrection ensures our justification - Romans 4:25 "He who was delivered over because of our transgressions, and was raised because of our justification."

Wayne Grudem says, "By raising Christ from the dead, God the Father was in effect saying that He approved of Christ's work of suffering and dying for our sins, that His work was completed, and that Christ no longer had any need to remain dead." No more penalty to pay for sin, no more wrath of God to bear, no more guilt all had been completely paid for.

**POINT #6 - THE SIGNIFICANCE OF CHRIST'S RESURRECTION**

- It applies to our obedience. Because of the resurrection, we obey God and serve the Lord. 1 Corinthians 15:17-19 "And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in

your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If we have hoped in Christ in this life only, we are of all men most to be pitied."

- Because of the resurrection we can mortify sin - Romans 6:11-13 "Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus. Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts, and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God."

Conclusion: Back to the cover-up, why did all the disciples who abandoned Jesus now defend Him and die for Him? In Matthew 26:56 "But all this has taken place to fulfill the Scriptures of the prophets. Then all the disciples left Him and fled." The word used for left in this text can also be translated "forsook, deserted." They ran and left Jesus in the midst of trouble. Yet, we find these same men dying and preaching the gospel in the face of persecution. Why? They didn't die for a hoax they created. They had resurrection power.