

The Burial And Resurrection Of Jesus

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[0 : 0 0] as you're turning there let me give you an idea of what my plan is lord willing for us for the next two weeks we're going to read a larger section today i'd like for us to start reading verse 55 and we're going to read all the way to verse 15 of chapter 28 and so we're covering a larger section i think it all fits together part of our belief of expositional preaching is you preach what's there in the text we preach all that's there in the text we preach basically in the units that the text presents as being connected and so today i'd like for us to look at this larger passage focusing on the witnesses of jesus's death and resurrection and i'll touch on this a little bit more in a minute but i think matthew's making a point of showing us that jesus really did die and really was resurrected and so he gives us these witnesses and we're going to look at that today and then again lord willing next week we'll look at chapter 28 1 through 10 and spend more time on the resurrection itself and kind of answer the questions what are the implications of the resurrection and so if you think of in those two parts today's going to be the fact that it actually happened and that being said the application is it really did happen see i've already told you the application of the sermon you can go home now right lord willing then next week we're going to spend much more time on what i would generally think of as application why does it matter and so the whole sermon in many ways they're going to be application of the resurrection so today the fact that the resurrection happened lord willing next week the implications of the resurrection so if you look with me starting in chapter 27 verse 55 and again reading to 28 15 there were also many women there looking on from a distance who had followed jesus from galilee ministering to him among whom were mary madeline and mary the mother james and joseph the mother of the sons of zebedee when it was evening there came a rich man from arimathea named joseph who also was the disciple of jesus he went to pilate and asked for the body of jesus then pilate ordered it to be given to him and jesus took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen shroud and laid it in his own new tomb which he had cut in the rock and he rolled a great stone to the entrance of the tomb and went away mary madeline and the other mary were there sitting opposite the tomb the next day that is after the day of preparation the chief priests and the pharisees gathered before pilate and said sir we remember how that imposter said while he was still alive after three days i will rise therefore order the tomb to be made secure until the third day lest his disciples go and steal him away and tell the people he is risen from the dead and the last fraud will be worse than the first pilot said to them you have a guard of soldiers go make it as secure as you can so they went and made the tomb secure by sealing the stone and setting a guard now after the sabbath toward the dawn of the first day of the week mary madeline and the other mary went to see the tomb and behold there was a great earthquake for for an angel of the lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone and sat on it his appearance was like lightning and his clothing white as snow and for fear of him the guards trembled and became like dead men but the angel said to the women do not be afraid for i know that you seek jesus who was crucified he is

not here for he is risen as he said come see the place where he lay then go quickly and tell the disciples that he is risen from the dead and behold he is going before you to galilee there you will see him see i have told you so they departed quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy and ran to tell his disciples and behold jesus met them and said greetings and they came up and took hold of his feet and worshiped him then jesus said to them do not be afraid go and tell my brothers to go to galilee and there they will see me while they were going behold some of the guard went into the city and told the chief priests all that had taken place and when they had assembled with the elders and taking counsel they gave a sufficient sum of money to the soldiers and said tell the people his disciples came by night and stole him away while we were asleep and if this comes to the governor's ears we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble so they took the money and did as they were directed and this story has been spread among the jews to this day let's pray together dear heavenly father we thank you for your word and ask your blessing upon it now that you would

be with us that you would make your word clear that you would help us understand that you would help us to believe we pray this in christ's name amen what we have here what we just read is the account of something that's truly remarkable unique and remarkable i think when's the last time you attended a funeral where the person returned to life right it just doesn't happen typically at our funerals right any of you been to those kind of funerals no thank you someone answered that's not what we would expect to happen at a funeral and for good reason that's not what happens it doesn't happen if you were at a funeral and someone came back from the dead would you believe it i mean if you witness it even and then go and tell someone else if someone told you that they were at a funeral where that happened would you believe it i don't know if you guys have seen there's this video of this uh fake false teaching prophetic ministry where the guy's playing like he's dead you can see him breathing you know i mean it's obvious that he's alive right and they go and touch him and bring him back to life and pretend it's a resurrection you can look at it and see this isn't really a resurrection at all these guys are frauds but can you imagine being at something like that and that actually happened so i think matthew has intentionally structured his account of the resurrection to deal with our disbelief to help with our struggle to prove as it were this amazing event event really did happen and so he provides verifiable evidence that jesus really died and was resurrected and when i say verifiable what i mean is that as he's writing this the people still alive you can go and question them there's a reason he's appealing to them we'll touch on that in just a little bit and this is important this is very important so much so that i would argue that the christian faith stands on the death and resurrection of jesus the son of god if there is no resurrection there is no reason to trust in jesus christ now i know that sounds like a big really big and bold claim if there is no resurrection there's no reason to trust in jesus christ why is that the case well hear paul's words in first corinthians 15 17 through 19 he says and if christ has not been raised your faith is futile and you are still in your sins then those also who have fallen asleep in christ have perished if in christ we have hope in this life only we are of all people most to be pitied and so it matters it matters to the point that paul says that your faith is futile if you've trusted in jesus christ he hasn't really been resurrected it's false now again lord willing we're going to talk about why that's the case next week why does it matter why does christianity stand or fall on the resurrection but again today our scope is to consider it itself and the uh verity of it the truthfulness of it and so paul follows the statement i just read to you with this verse that i think we don't want to miss but in fact christ has been raised from the dead the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep for as by a man came death by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead for as in adam all die so also in christ shall all be made alive well there already we see some of the implications of it that we'll be looking at next week but what i want you to see that he says if christ isn't risen but in fact he is risen so he can't even discuss the possibility of the fact of him not being risen without driving home to us the fact that we need to know he has been risen and so we see there that our resurrection is dependent on jesus's resurrection and that's one of the things i want to look at next week but again this week the truth of the resurrection as demonstrated by the various witnesses and so i think that god has given us these witnesses to strengthen our confidence we know ultimately that faith is a gift of god and so i'm not arguing these witnesses as a means by which i think oh if i can just convince you of this then maybe you'll believe but i do believe that god uses means to work and maybe this will help some of you who maybe have struggled with this question but god has given us this matthew has written this to build our confidence that we can know that this actually happened that this was a true event that really did take place so my plan this week instead of just working through the text or anything of that nature is to look at the different witnesses spend some time looking at each set of witnesses who witnesses resurrection and what can we see from their witnessing of it so first there were the women that were discussed in the passage there's a group of women some of those other gospels say there were many women present matthew names two of them he as you look at the passage verse 56 among whom were mary madeline and mary the mother of james and joseph and uh the mother of the sons of zebedee so he names two and he references james and john's mother as well so three really that he identifies as being present uh down the road again he speaks of the two marys and it says in verse 55 that they had followed jesus all the way from galilee and that they had served him in some way now i think there's a reason why matthew brings this up and i think part of his point is to say they know him right they're familiar with who jesus is they can recognize jesus why well they have been in essence disciples of him they've been following jesus they've been present with jesus they've ministered to him probably bringing food to him taking care of him in different ways we see accounts of uh mary madeline in particular her service at the dinner

table around jesus they know him and so when it comes to the idea of witnesses to jesus's resurrection when they bump into him on the road and he shows himself to them

i think matthew's point is they're not mistaken in this they didn't misidentify him there wasn't a jesus look-alike running around they know him they can identify him just like you think of someone in your own family or a very close friend you know them when you see them right and you can tell an imposter and we see in verses 55 and 56 that they were there at jesus's death so they witnessed jesus's death they saw him die verse 55 says they were looking on from a distance which although that may sound not so great they're off a ways i think how much better than most of the disciples who are nowhere around who seem to have fled we know that there were a couple present but they're looking on from a distance they see jesus actually die look at verse 61 mary madeline and the other mary were there sitting opposite the tomb and that's after the account of joseph's burial of jesus and so i think matthew seems to be implying that they witnessed joseph of arimathea putting jesus in the tomb and ceiling or putting the rock in front of the tomb the stone in front of the tomb and so they witnessed his death and they witnessed his burial and then we see in verses 1 through 10 that they witnessed his resurrection now this is a little tricky based on matthew's account i think the the other gospels seem to make it more clear that uh the two mary show up after jesus is resurrected after the maybe they're walking as earthquake happens when they get there the tomb's already open and the angel's sitting there matthew leaves it open almost to the point that they could have been present when all of this took place but either way it seems to be apparent that they didn't see jesus actually come out of the grave itself but they witnessed it i thought about when i'm going to give you all these witnesses in my different points but i thought i could have added another witness the angel there's an angel present who rolls back the stone and sees jesus leave the tomb and then testifies to other and tells them to tell i mean he even testifies of what happened but when they get to the tomb there's this earthquake and an angel of the lord rolled away the stone and he sits upon it we see in verse 2 of chapter 28 and then the angel gives information to the women it says the angel said to the women this is verses five and six do not be afraid for i know that you seek jesus who was crucified he is not here for he is risen as he said and so there's the witness of the angel he is risen and so the women are given instructions by the angel to go and tell the disciples excuse me they're given two instructions first they're told to come and see where jesus lay and so even though matthew doesn't include it they go into the tomb and they see where jesus was and he's not there and then the angel tells them to go and tell the disciples what they've seen and so they go they obey and while they're on the way to see the disciples to tell them what they've seen jesus encounters them or they encounter jesus he comes they come upon the resurrected jesus and so they see him and so now in terms of witnessing resurrection even if you don't see someone digging their way out of the grave right if you come across their previously dead body now alive walking and talking to you that's a witness of the resurrection i think and so these women are really in a unique position in that they witness the death the burial and the resurrection and so they have a prominent uh prominent place here in the account they're witnesses to all these things and as they encounter the resurrected jesus it says they held his feet and worshiped him

held his feet and worshiped him now i think both of those points are really crucial they're important first for them to hold his feet meant what that they could touch him that he had a corporal body i haven't watched all these movies and things but one of the commentaries i looked at was saying that they watched a movie where jesus's resurrection was portrayed simply spiritual jesus goes into the grave and then the resurrection he's in the clouds talking to them but there's no account of him on earth in a human body and we don't want to overly spiritualize this jesus was resurrected in a physical body that they could physically touch and hold and we're going to see that later even for example with someone like thomas i could say as i go on that yet it was also a glorified body somehow he enters into a room that's locked we see with the disciples in the upper room but they touch jesus they hold him so he is a corporal a physical body that has been resurrected it's not just an illusion it's not a ghost like we talk about ghosts sometimes right they're not just seeing a ghost this isn't a spiritual manifestation it had physical form this is truly jesus resurrected and then i would add the second point it says they worship him and what's not there but is implied i think is without rebuke they worship jesus if jesus were a man and he's being worshipped we have a problem don't we i think of some historical examples i remember nebuchadnezzar praising himself and worshiping himself did that end well for nebuchadnezzar do you remember he was struck dumb and wandered around eating the grass his fingernails grew like eagles it was really this horrific story but he praised himself and so here are someone these women they come and they worship jesus and they aren't

rebuked because why this is god incarnate this is god in their very presence he deserves to be worshipped there are a number of accounts of angels people bowing down oh no no they stop them no i'm not to be worshipped i'm just a messenger there's no such rebuke here this is god in human flesh and then jesus also does the same thing as angel he sends the women on to the disciples to bear testimony of what they've seen and i thought i should mention as well i think you guys are probably well aware of this but um our court system is much different than the court system was in that day women in general were not allowed to testify in court and so if you were going to try someone if you're going to have a case you needed two men to be witnesses in court and so some have even questioned well why have women played such a prominent role and i think if you were to look at such an account if matthew were making this stuff up he would want someone who could testify in court he would try to meet those needs if he was making that he would come up with two other people but i think the fact that these two marys play such a prominent role is indication of the reality of the account that they're not trying to meet those standards but this is reality this is what genuinely happened and again as matthew writes this these two women are still alive you could have gone and spoken to them is that really what you saw secondly i've kind of grouped these together i could maybe i could make the second point the enemies but the guards in the sanhedrin were witnesses to the resurrection we know that the soldiers verified jesus's death they made sure that he was actually dead

[20 : 27] again this isn't from matthew but this is an account from the gospel of john chapter 19 31 through 37 it says since it was a day of preparation and so that the bodies would not remain on the cross on the sabbath for that sabbath was a high day the jews asked pilot that their leads might be broken that they might be taken away so the soldiers came and broke the leads of the first and of the other who had been crucified with him but when they came to jesus and saw that he was already dead they did not break his legs but one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear and it once there came out blood and water he who saw it has borne witness his testimony is true and he knows that he is telling the truth that you may also believe for these things took place that the scripture might be fulfilled not one of his bones will be broken and again another scripture says they will look on him whom they have pierced and so john's account tells us that the soldiers went to make sure that they were dead before the sabbath came and so they broke they led to the other ones which without getting in all the gory detail you needed to pivot some on your ankles to be able to breathe when you were crucified on the cross and with broken leads they weren't able to push up to get the breath and so they would essentially suffocate and die there on the cross and so the other two were killed and as they come to jesus they realize well he's already dead and they want to verify it and so they pierce him and the piercing from what comes out they can tell that he's already been dead some time and john even goes on to tell us that this is to fulfill two different prophecies about jesus that his bones would not be broken and that he would be pierced and so these soldiers that were there at the cross witnessed the death and they verified the death they know that jesus actually died so again it's not as though jesus was in a coma he didn't pass out and then wake up sometime later it's been tested even by his enemies and the chief priests and the pharisees jesus come to pilot to prevent the body from being stolen or and i want to throw out that or there or to prevent his resurrection since jesus foretold that he would come back from the dead they go to pilot and they ask that there be some way of protecting it from happening and again they pose in terms of people stealing his body but i think it's just as possible that their goal is to prevent there from being an actual resurrection and pilot gives them permission to do so they're actively working to prevent jesus's prediction from coming to pass they want to make sure that he doesn't come back from the dead or there's any way that we could think that he came back from the dead i even think of just how silly this is because why would his disciples actually steal him away if that's that is the story that they come up with that they end up spreading but why would they do that just imagine for a second that you followed a guy for three years who was a great teacher who you thought was going to be the messiah and let me say first we've seen already in matthew the messianic misinterpretation the wrong messianic expectations their expectation was that jesus was going to overthrow the roman empire oops right he didn't do that the roman empire overthrew as it were jesus they put jesus to death so why bring him back from the dead if there's these questions if there's these doubts secondly if you've got to not bring him back from the dead why steal his body secondly if you've got to steal his body if you really think he is the messiah if you truly believe he's the son of god and you understood which is questionable how much they really understood it seems to be after the

resurrection they go oh yeah jesus said he'd come back from the dead but even if they understood that jesus said he was coming back from the dead stealing his body isn't jesus coming back from the dead if your teacher said this and you've trusted the things he said but he lied on this one point who wants to steal his body make it look like he's telling the truth and i would go on from there and even say the disciples die for this truth down the road they give their life in testimony that this actually happened and i just think how big a fool would you have to be if you stole the body and then lied about it all these years and even died to protect this lie so again i think the idea of them stealing the body is ludicrous in the first place but pilot acquiesces he gives them a guard of soldiers these would be roman soldiers to make it secure and to prevent jesus's body from being stolen or again i think to prevent the resurrection and so verse 66 says they went and made the tomb secure by sealing the stone and setting a guard so i don't understand the exact details of this but we know that joseph of arimathea perhaps with help we don't know how large the stone was but he rolls the stone in place to cover this opening to the tomb and now they've gone and sealed it in some way perhaps this was some degree of wax or adhesive of some sort but they've sealed the sides to make sure that now no one can push it away right once this sets i mean maybe even how we would think of cement or mortar once you set stone against stone with cement or mortar you're not just going to roll that to the side anymore and so they seal it some people think that maybe even they stamped it with the stamp of the sanhedrin the seal of the sanhedrin to say don't mess with this and so there's step one no one's going to come and just roll the stone away anymore we've made sure of it they've done all they could to make sure that no one could open the door as it were to the tomb and it says and they set a guard so these soldiers that were given to them they set up there at the tomb to make sure that no one comes and seals the body and so i think of this again just imagine the story they tell they said that they fell asleep and they came and somehow broke the seal and got jesus's body all this time while they're asleep again stone against stone they're moving that cracking a seal rolling it away while they're asleep and again these are roman soldiers i imagine at least they sleep in shifts these are the best trained the greatest army in the world at that time is sent to guard a tomb and the best excuse they have is that some lay people some normal people just come and fishermen come and overpower them or get the slip on them and steal a body away when they're not paying attention and we see in verse 4 that the guards actually witness the resurrection for fear of the angel the guards trembled and became like dead men so they see the angel they apparently hear what he says they're petrified to the point that they don't move but they do go back and tell the sanhedrin what they saw i won't go back and reread the whole thing we see the report in verses 11 through 15 but they go and tell them what happened and so i thought now the roman soldiers have become witnesses to the resurrection and i mean witnesses not just in the sense that they saw it happen but they're testifying before the sanhedrin before a court a religious court here's what took place which in some ways i think again argues the sanhedrin are witnesses to the resurrection though they didn't physically see jesus they've been told of it secondhand witnesses as it were of the resurrection

and the chief priests and pharisees had called jesus an imposter or some of your versions of the bible may say deceiver and said we remember when this imposter this deceiver was alive he said he'd come back from the grave i think it's somewhat ironic that they call him the imposter or deceiver and they find out that jesus really has been resurrected from the dead and rather than worship him what do these do we're going to deceive here's some money lie about it we'll cover your tracks so no one will know that he really did come back from the dead one thing that really strikes me about all of this is that the enemies of jesus serve god's purpose in all their efforts so they have done all they could to keep jesus from being resurrected and in the process they made it evident to all that no one stole his body no one could have stole that body there were soldiers the guard was the tomb was sealed who could go in and take that and so all their effort to prevent it actually proves to verify it to prove that jesus truly did come back from the dead and in a miraculous way psalm 2 1 through 4 i was reminded of why do the nations rage and the people plot in vain the kings of the earth set themselves and the rulers take counsel together against the lord and against his anointed saying let us burst their bonds apart and cast away their courts from us you guys remember how god responds he who sits in the heavens laughs the lord holds them in derision the best attempts of man to prevent god's plans come to nothing you can't prevent the resurrection and jesus or god in the heavens laughs at them he holds them in derision for even trying but god uses the sin of sinful men to bring about his glorious purposes and to bear testimony to the resurrection of christ in 57 through 60 we see joseph of arimathea who really becomes a witness of the burial

he's the one who carries out the burial we could ask who this man is luke gives us a little bit more detail luke 23 50 through 52 now there was a man named joseph from the jewish town of arimathea he was a member of the council a good and righteous man who had not consented to their decision and action and he was looking for the kingdom of god matthew adds that he was secretly a disciple of jesus and so the council maybe you've already put this together but the council is the sanhedrin so joseph like nicodemus you guys remember nicodemus comes to jesus by night wants to know how he might be born again so joseph apparently like nicodemus was on the sanhedrin and something about jesus's testimony what he witnessed convinced him that jesus truly was who he said he was and so he believed in him though he hid it but it lets us know that he didn't go along with their decision to crucify jesus and when jesus is actually dead he goes and buries him so understand this even though this man believes jesus's account he's still a part of the sanhedrin he's not a man to secretly hide the body he was placed in the tomb and as we've said already the women witnessed it and before he's allowed to bury jesus we've seen already that jesus's death was verified we see this again mark 15 44 through 45 this is joseph goes and asks pilot can he bury him we see here it says pilot was surprised

to hear that he should have already died and summoning the centurion he asked him whether he was already dead and when he learned from the centurion that he was dead he granted the corpse to joseph so before joseph could even get the body pilot had to verify with the roman guards that jesus truly was dead and verses 59 and 60 really only affirmed to us that joseph followed the typical burial procedure it was witnessed by the women verse 60 tells us that this was a new tomb that was cut into stone so again understand that means there is not a back door there's not some secret entrance imagine something being cut into solid rock solid stone right there's no way to enter out of that you can picture the disciples back in the back with dynamite and a jackhammer managing not to wake up those guards who had fallen asleep out front and i think in addition to the fact that joseph becomes a witness of jesus's death there's also the fulfillment of isaiah 53 9 and they made his grave with the wicked and with a rich man in his death although he had done no violence and there was no deceit in his mouth joseph is that rich man who buries jesus we could add that the disciples also are witnesses we're told in this that they go and tell them but we can read for example john 21 through 10 then simon peter came following him so that they heed the counsel of the women to go to the tomb and they went into the tomb he saw this is peter went into the tomb first he saw the linen clothes lying there and the face cloth which had been on jesus's head not lying with the linen cloth but folded up in a place by itself then the other disciple who had reached the tomb first also went in and he saw and believed for as yet they did not understand the scripture that he must rise from the dead so it's at that moment but what they see is enough that they believe that jesus truly is resurrected when i preached through john i remember just being struck with the fact that something about the way they saw the linen the wrappings the cloth there convinced them that jesus truly was resurrected from the dead and so i at least think it's likely that it's possible that things aren't unwrapped the wrappings are laying there just as it was but there's no body inside anymore again just as jesus would pass through the door he's passed through this and now he's resurrected and then we have john's testimony in 1935 i've read earlier but he says he who saw it he's speaking of the death his born witness his testimony is true and he knows that he's telling the truth that you may also believe and so he bears testimony to the fact of the death and in his writing to the resurrection and says i know i'm telling the truth because it's me the one who's writing it you can come and speak to me you can question me and then we know that jesus was with the disciples multiple times over the next 40 days for example in the upper room by the sea he appears to the disciples on the road to emmaus we have when he gives the great commission and his ascension for a few examples of that and acts 2 32 says this jesus god raised up and of that we are all witnesses and so part of their point is we're witnesses to the fact that jesus has been resurrected and so then paul appeals to this fact in probably the most powerful way paul says in first corinthians 15 3 through 8 for i delivered to you as of first importance what i also really received that christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures that he was buried that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures and that he appeared

to cephas then to the 12 then he appeared to more than 500 brothers at one time most of whom are still alive though 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 also to me and so what is paul doing paul's doing the same thing i think matthew's doing there are witnesses to jesus's death and resurrection and paul says he's appeared to 500 of the disciples at one time most of whom are still alive why does it

matter that they're still alive paul's saying go ask them if you don't believe me there are witnesses to jesus's resurrection and so finally why does this matter for us i told you that my main point wasn't to make application today but for us to look at the witnesses but i want to make just a few points first the major point that i think matthew is making in the passage is that christ truly died and was resurrected we are so accustomed to hearing this in the church that probably just doesn't seem all that amazing to us anymore but the reason he testifies with so many witnesses is because this is amazing people don't do this right people don't die and just come back from the dead i can't even testify to the fact that all the other times that we see this happen it's by the power of the miraculous working of someone else god working through someone else so jesus raises lazarus from the dead right we have elijah we have jesus's uh jesus's death we're told and we'll talk about that lord willing next week that there are some who come out of the tomb but again god working but here we have something unique jesus is in the tomb there's no outside prophet who's working he comes back from the dead and so this is the one time this has ever happened in history i'm sorry for those of you who like your zombie tv shows and movies right this isn't some undead virus jesus was truly alive physically and even in a better state than he was in his flesh before somewhat in a glorified state and so he truly died and was resurrected and matthew's written this account to make that point clear to drive that home for us and it's testified even by his enemies even by those who opposed him and didn't want him to come back from the dead they witnessed it and even made it more evident that he truly did come back from the dead secondly i want you to understand that the resurrection matters again this is a point we'll touch on next week but it testifies to the fact that jesus truly was the son of god and that he accomplished our salvation the atonement of our sins as he set out to do now if you'll accept that as a premise lord willing next week i'm going to try to prove that to you but the resurrection is god's testimony that jesus was successful jesus accomplished what he set out to do and thirdly finally i just want to ask you have you believed it have you believed that jesus truly was the son of god that he lived a perfect sinless life that he died for your sins and then the third day he was resurrected and i could add and now is ascended to the right hand of the father have you believed these truths i fully believe that in light of all the witnesses we have here that that's not going to be enough to convince people right i'm glad for these witnesses i hope that this was a helpful sermon for you to see what god has done to show it but ultimately we know that salvation comes by faith it's a gift of god it's by grace and so

[40 : 33] i'll pray for this in just a moment but my prayer is that you will have believed in what has been set before you and at the same time i want you to understand that faith isn't also just blind belief god hasn't just said jesus was resurrected you ought to believe it there were witnesses to it there were ways in which as we've seen in the passage it's been clear and evident to those who are around that jesus truly was resurrected from the dead and so though we're given proof let me say first proof should help us in our belief and yet we know that ultimately belief is a gift from god you may remember jesus's words to thomas when he appeared to thomas in the upper room you remember what he said to thomas he said have you believed because you have seen me blessed are those who have not seen and yet believed and of course that's us isn't it this is where we are we have the testimony of witnesses but we don't get to see jesus yet resurrected but what a blessed state for those of us who have though we have not yet seen we believe let's pray together dearly father we thank you for christ and we thank you for his death and his resurrection they truly did pay the price for our sins and that he truly did come back from the dead lord we even as we've stated we want to pray now that you'd work in the heart of all those who are in this room that they would truly believe in this resurrection lord we pray for those who have that it would lead us to worship our risen savior lord we pray again in accordance to your will that next week we can delve into this even more and see why this matters why is it so important but lord before we ever get to why it matters help us to know that it happened that it's true and that we would place our faith in our risen savior jesus christ we pray this in his name amen