



Portion:

Title:

SCRIPTURES

- Matthew 28
- I Corinthians 2, 15:1-19
- Deuteronomy 16:19

THE GREAT CONSPIRACY

- Pick a Side
- Two Legitimate Gospels
- To Rise or NOT to Rise

It's the Great Commission. It's your main focus when you open the last chapter of this epic Gospel, but there's so much more. "Go therefore..." ends our journey that began at His birth. In between, we witnessed His baptism in the Jordan and heard the delighted voice of His Father from heaven. We watched His release into the wilderness to be tempered by fire, and had a front row seat at the launch of His ministry—the kingdom of heaven was indeed at hand.

It wasn't long before His ragtag collection of students were assembled, His would-be disciples, some of whom we come to know quite intimately on their travels. And Matthew's Gospel is stippled throughout by prophetic moments, each seemingly marked by a grand sermon, mysterious parable, deep lesson, supernatural encounter, or stiff admonishment. Along the way, we realize we are all kingdom scribes getting a kingdom education, but some don't

like it! It's undeniable, yet somehow people in certain positions do deny it. Extraordinary miracles occur, so outrageous that they can only be explained one way. Y'shua is the Son of God, the Christ!

We learn that He has a plan; He is going to pass His ministry onto others! But why? Is He going somewhere? He tells them over and over again that He is; but they don't like it, so they avoid it, even deny it. But, it's inevitable! He makes many enemies as He moves about, but really there is one most relevant; a power-hungry class of religious hypocrites. They still exist today and they're not who you think. You can spot them because they build their own kingdoms. Then and now there is one satanic antichrist spirit at work. It hates what He is doing and that His reputation is growing. You'd think religious leaders would be thrilled; He's the Messiah. But they're not! He's stealing the spotlight; attracting their donors; exposing the induration of their dark hearts; calling them hypocrites; and the majority of these religious elite are not ready to relinquish power, to surrender their man-made religious system.

As time goes on, He further clarifies who He is and what He will be, and what we will be in Him. And the clearer it becomes, the more resistant are those who have the most to lose—power, fame, fortune and control. And Y'shua meets their escalating denial and aggression with a move of His own—He becomes more brazen, more pointed, more intolerant. Gentle Jesus gives way to a

full exposé on hypocrisy. Then, He seals the deal with His final two lessons. One is about the end-of-the-age, who to be and how to prepare—from the Mount of Olives. The other is about the age-to-come, what it will be like and how to get there—at His last meal.

Finally, the powers that be have had enough and they conspire to murder Him, to do whatever it takes to eliminate Him. Nothing is off limits; lies, false witnesses, unproven accusations, even the willingness to partner with a pagan Roman system to get what they want; it's all on the table. Then they kill Him. They capture Him, and indict Him, and convict Him, and torture Him, and they murder Him. But it does not end there! The truth cannot be denied. Or can it? Even after He resurrects from the grave, even after the stone is rolled away and He is not there—He is risen; they conspire to tell yet another lie. "He has not risen; He's been stolen."

I take a deep breath and try to imagine the level of hatred; the level of self-righteous, self-serving narcissism; the vile incessant vitriol; the acid tongues and acid hearts that would not only deny the final obvious fact—He has risen; He is the Christ, but that they would instead master-mind the greatest coverup in human history. Humans can deny the obvious; that itself is obvious! Just tell more lies, spread more deceit, offer more bribes—hatch one more conspiracy. To this very day some people still believe it was all just a conspiracy. That is why we must go make disciples; preach that He

*has risen, and preach that we must become different because of it.
We are meant to become just like Him!*

PROPHETIC SEED:

“Tell them, ‘**His disciples came at night and stole Him away** while we slept.’” Matthew 28:13 NKJV

“So they **took the money and did as they were instructed;** and **this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day.**”

Matthew 28:15 NKJV

“**You shall not pervert justice;** you shall not show partiality, **nor take a bribe, for a bribe blinds the eyes** of the wise and **twists the words** of the righteous.” Deuteronomy 16:19 NKJV

PROPHETIC FRUIT:

“**Go therefore and make disciples** of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, **teaching them** to observe all things that I have commanded you...” Matthew 28:19-20 NKJV

“Now **if Christ is preached** that **He has been raised** from the dead, **how do some among you say that there is no resurrection** of the dead? But **if there is no resurrection** of the dead, then Christ is not risen. And if Christ is not risen, then **our preaching is empty** and **your faith is also empty.**” I Corinthians 15:12-14 NKJV

Let's Set the Scene: Portion in a blurb

Introduction

Last week in [Final Footsteps](#) the religious leaders launched their diabolical scheme to kill Y'shua. He was anointed for His burial in Bethany; and then Judas made a deal to hand Him over in the most infamous betrayal in history.

Y'shua sent His disciples ahead into Jerusalem to prepare for the Passover and then they had their preparatory meal in the upper room. It was the Last Supper during which He broke the bread that is symbolic of His broken body, and drank His final cup of wine, representing the blood that He will shed for the redemption of the sins of the whole world. At the meal He predicted He would be betrayed and then identified His betrayer. He also predicted Peter's denial of Him, which Peter vehemently denied will happen.

From there it was off to the Garden of Gethsemane where He prayed and surrendered His final will to His Father, and was eventually handed over to sinners by Judas with a kiss. He faced an overnight kangaroo court in the Sanhedrin and was found guilty because that was the predetermined, premeditated, prophetic outcome, not because He was actually guilty.

Then, Peter did exactly what was predicted and He denied knowing Christ three times. From the Sanhedrin He was handed

over to Rome and Pontus Pilate because, even with all their scheming, the religious leaders can find no legal justification to execute Him. Pilate also knew He was innocent, but innocent was NOT an option for the Jews, so the Jewish leaders traded Y'shua's life for Barabbas, a horrible criminal. And Pilate had such a weak character that He won't get in the way, even though His wife had a prophetic vision to stay far away from these corrupt proceedings. So he capitulated to the Jews, while he simultaneously, in his own mind, washed his hands from any guilt for spilling innocent blood. And the religious leaders were happy to take the wrap for Y'shua's blood, as long as they didn't have to perform the dirty deed! Unfortunately, for both sides, God will find them guilty and hold them responsible!

Judas tried to rework His deal and give back the money he was paid to betray Y'shua, but the religious leaders will not have it, so Judas committed suicide in his miserable regret. Y'shua was ultimately sentenced to death and then He faced all sorts of mocking and ridicule. Finally the Lord of glory was crucified and died on the cross. He was removed and buried in a rich man's tomb. Our narrative came to a close as Pilate was asked to set a guard around the tomb, so the disciples could not steal the body and fake His predicted resurrection—but that was not the end of the story!

This week the whole world will discover that Y'shua was telling the truth all along—He has risen! Some will ignore it; some will deny it; some will try to cover it up; some will struggle to believe; and some will be filled with faith!

The weekly Sabbath has ended and the next morning it is discovered that His tomb is empty. There is a supernatural encounter with an angel and instructions are given to do just as was previously instructed. The guards, who were assigned to watch the tomb, are witnessing the whole thing and are scared to death. They see with their own eyes that Y'shua has indeed resurrected. The report goes out quickly to the disciples—and Y'shua meets them in Galilee as promised.

Meanwhile, the guards head back to the city to report what they saw to the very religious leaders who illegally orchestrated Y'shua's execution. It's the moment of truth. It is so interesting that they chose to first report to the Jewish leaders and not Pilate. Will the Jewish leadership relent, repent and believe? No! Instead they conspire to cover it up with a large bribe. The soldiers are paid to tell everyone that *"Y'shua's disciples came at night and stole Him away while we slept."* It's a perfect cover story because it's the very reason they used to persuade Pilate to guard the tomb in the first place. *Pilate, "Please command that the tomb be made secure until the third day, lest His disciples come by night and steal Him away,*

and say to the people, 'He has risen from the dead.' So the last deception will be worse than the first." (Matthew 27:64)

Really, the only glitch in their new scheme is that they had originally convinced Pilate to assign guards because if the disciples were able to fake the resurrection, the political conditions for Pilate (motivated by keeping things calm in Jerusalem) would become worse than had they just chosen to free Y'shua instead of Barabbas, and to let Him keep on preaching. The political condition in Jerusalem, AKA whether or not self-indulgent Jewish leaders incite Jewish mobs, is on the line. Although he is the governor, Pilate certainly realizes, and has already witnessed, the capability of these nasty power-hungry hypocrites to incite political unrest! And the religious leaders know Pilate is a weak-minded man, who is a slave to expedience! In other words, they are pretty sure he will go with their plan.

The guards, however, are in a pickle. Pilate will blame them for allowing the disciples to steal the body because they slept on the job—and he will certainly execute them. Or, if they tell the truth and the Jewish leaders insist on an insurrection—Pilate will still blame them! Their best bet is to go with the lie because at least the Jews have promised to appease Pilate by changing their prediction; "It won't be as bad as we thought." Meaning, we won't create more trouble for you Pilate if you go with our story. The guards opt for the

pile of cash, the lie, and the support of the chief priests. It is amazing how so many people to this day would rather believe that lie than the truth of the resurrection.

Y'shua meets up with His disciples, even the ones still struggling to believe, and He passes on a two-fold commission. I have all authority and I am placing that mantle on you! Go make disciples everywhere. Preach the Gospel of Salvation, the born-again by grace through faith gospel. And also preach the Gospel of the Kingdom, the radical-grace-empowered-faith-based-obedience-discipleship gospel. I will be with you every step of the way!

Matthew 28

He is Risen

1. The weekly Sabbath (Saturday) ended at sunset the night before, and as the sun was rising the next morning (Sunday), Mary Magdalene and the other Mary (Possibly Mary the mother of James the Less, the son of Alphaeus) came to see the tomb.
2. An angel rolled back the stone covering the opening to the tomb in what must have felt like an earthquake.
3. The angel was like a being of light and the guards placed there by Pilate to prevent anyone from stealing the body were so scared it was like they died standing up.

4. The angel encourages those searching for Y'shua to not be scared, and informs them that He is not in the tomb because He has risen from the dead. If you wish to check, come look at where He was laid to rest.
5. And once you see with your own eyes, go tell His disciples that He has risen from the grave after three days and three nights (as prophesied). And just like He revealed after the Last Supper, He will meet them in Galilee.
6. They were frightened and ecstatic and quickly went to report to disciples what they saw and heard.

Encountering the Risen Lord

7. On their way to give the report, Y'shua encountered them. He told them to celebrate! They knelt at His feet and praised Him.
8. He comforts them and assures them they need not fear. He reiterates that He will meet them all in Galilee.

The Great Conspiracy

9. Now the guards are compelled to report to the chief priests in Jerusalem what they witnessed—the true resurrection of the “madman” who claimed He would resurrect.
10. So, these bastions of leadership call for a meeting with their top consultants and decide that instead of admitting they were 1000% wrong, that this Jesus character was telling us the truth all along, we should pay off these guards with a large pile of

cash in exchange for their false testimony. Report that what we warned would happen did happen.

11. Say this: The lunatic followers of this Jesus-shyster came and stole His body in the middle of the night while we slept, so they could trick everyone into believing he raised from the dead.
12. And the religious hypocrites promise the guards that when Pilate finds out they will make sure he believes this story as well. They will convince him that it won't be as bad as they had predicted, so he does not need to punish the guards.
13. The guards took the bribe and did exactly what they were told to do. They lied to cover-up the resurrection. And this lie is still what Jews believe today.

The Great Commision

14. Then the eleven remaining disciples went to Galilee as instructed and met Him on the mountain.
15. When they met with Y'shua, some were convinced and praised Him and some still had doubts.
16. Then He gave them and us their future assignment.
 - (a) Y'shua has authority over all of creation and He is passing it on to His disciples.
 - (b) We are commissioned to make disciples throughout the whole world.

- (c) We are to baptize converts in the name of Father, Son and the Holy Spirit.
- (d) And we are teach them to advance the kingdom by living in radical-grace-empowered-faith-based obedience to God.
- (e) And remember that Y'shua will be with you forever, no matter what.

PICK A SIDE

1. Why is the tomb empty?

A. He is Risen (Matthew 28:1-8)

(1) They came to bring spices and oils...

(a) But who will roll back the stone?

1. "Now **after the Sabbath, as the first day of the week began to dawn**, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb." Matthew 28:1NKJV

a) The weekly Sabbath (Saturday) had ended at sunset the night before, and as the sun was rising the next morning (Sunday), Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb.

b) Food for Thought

1) Who this other Mary is raises some questions and there seems to be no way to know for sure to which Mary this refers. However, you can do

some exploration and consider some of the options.

- 2) Matthew mentions three women earlier at the cross in Matthew 27:56.
- 3) Luke tells us that the women who came with Him from Galilee returned to the tomb with spices and fragrant oils, but never gives any names in Luke 23:55-56; 24:1-2
- 4) Mark names three women between Mark 15:40-41 and 16:1.
- 5) And John names only one woman at the tomb in John 20:1, but possibly mentions four women who were standing at the foot of the cross in John 19:25.

(2) An angel from heaven will roll back the stone...

(a) Important to notice: The Guards are watching!

1. **“And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat on it. His countenance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow. And the guards shook for fear of him, and became like dead men.”** Matthew 28:2-4 NKJV

- a) An angel rolled back the stone covering the opening to the tomb in what must have felt like an earthquake.
 - b) The angel was like a being of light and the guards placed there by Pilate to prevent anyone from stealing the body **witnessed the whole thing**.
 - c) They were so frightened that it was like they died standing up.
- (3) The women are witnessing the tomb opening as well...
- (a) He is not here; for He is risen—Go tell the others!
 - 1. **“But the angel answered and 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 the Lord lay. And go quickly and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead, and indeed He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him. Behold, I have told you.””** Matthew 28:5-7 NKJV
 - a) The angel encourages those searching for Y’shua to not be scared, and informs them that He is not in the tomb because He has risen from the dead.
 - b) If you wish to check, come look at where He was laid to rest.

- c) And once you see with your own eyes, go tell His disciples that He has risen from the grave after three days and three nights (as prophesied).
- d) And just like He revealed on His way to the Garden of Gethsemane, after the Last Supper, He will meet them in Galilee.
 - 1) "Then Jesus said to them, "All of you will be made to stumble because of Me this night, for it is written: 'I will strike the Shepherd, And the sheep of the flock will be scattered.' **But after I have been raised, I will go before you to Galilee.**" Matthew 26:31-32 NKJV

- (4) Y'shua had risen from the grave the previous day just before sundown, late Saturday afternoon, precisely three days and three nights after He was placed in the grave. When the women arrived the next morning, He was gone!
 - (a) He was buried in a tomb in a garden in close proximity to the place of crucifixion...before sundown on Wednesday, because as the sun sets the Passover meal is eaten and the first day of Unleavened Bread begins, a High Sabbath, a Sabbath kept for the commanded feasts of the Lord, irregardless of on which day of the week it falls. In other words, a ***high day** is a Sabbath, but it

need not be a weekly Sabbath (Saturday). (See Leviticus 23 for all the commanded Feast Sabbaths.)

1. **He died around 3:00pm:** “Now it was about the sixth hour [**Noon**], and there was darkness over all the earth **until the ninth hour [3:00pm]**. Then the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was torn in two. And when Jesus had cried out with a loud voice, He said, “Father, ‘into Your hands I commit My spirit.’” Having said this, **He breathed His last.**” Luke 23:44-46 NKJV
2. **They want to take Him off the cross before sundown:** “Therefore, because **it was the Preparation Day**, that the bodies should not remain on the cross **on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a *high day)**, the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away.” John 19:31 NKJV
 - a) **Food for Thought:** John 19:31 is the verse all of Christendom has used for 2000 years to conclude that the crucifixion was on a Friday. Their reasoning is that He had to be taken off the cross before the Sabbath. Their error is not knowing what a ***high day** is, not knowing the Feasts of the Lord, which undoubtedly stems from the profound

antisemitism rooted in how the Jews were treated by Christians starting as early as the second century and accentuated after the birth of the Catholic Church in the fourth century~ *“You are mistaken, **not knowing the Scriptures** nor the power of God.”* Matthew 22:29 NKJV

- b) Passover that year was NOT a Friday, but a Wednesday! (The only way to get three days and three nights between the feast that foreshadowed His death (Passover) and the feast that foreshadowed His resurrection (Firstfruits) is when Passover falls on a Wednesday.
- c) Wednesday night as the sun set it became the First Day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, a ***high day** (a commanded Sabbath associate with a Biblical Feast).

- 3. **He is buried before sundown:** “Now in the place where He was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid. **So there they laid Jesus, because of the Jews’ Preparation Day, for the tomb was nearby.**” John 19:41-42 NKJV

4. **He would be in the Grave Three Days and Three Nights:** “But He answered and said to them, “An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. **For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.**” Matthew 12:39-40 NKJV

- a) Y’shua was very specific about precisely how long He would be in the grave before He rises.
- b) It would be **three days and three nights—72 hours!** He went in the grave just before sundown on Wednesday.
 - 1) Wednesday night to Thursday day (1st night, 1st day)
 - 2) Thursday night to Friday day (2nd night, 2nd day)
 - 3) Friday night to Saturday day (3rd night, 3rd day)
 - 4) He is out of the grave BEFORE sunset on Saturday—and the women wait until the next morning when it is light out to come to the grave. ~“*Then they returned and prepared spices and fragrant oils. And **they rested on the***

Sabbath according to the commandment.

Luke 23:56 NKJV

(5) Other Samples of third day prophecies:

(a) I will raise on the third day!

1. "From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be **raised the third day.**" Matthew 16:21 NKJV

(b) Comparing His body Temple of God

1. "Jesus answered and said to them, "Destroy this temple, and **in three days I will raise it up.**" John 2:19 NKJV

(c) The threat of Y'shua resurrecting in three days is precisely why they set guards over the tomb for three days...

1. "On the next day, which followed the Day of Preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees gathered together to Pilate, saying, "Sir, **we remember, while He was still alive, how that deceiver said, 'After three days I will rise.'** Therefore command that the tomb be **made secure until the third day, lest His disciples come by night and steal Him away,** and say

to the people, **'He has risen from the dead.'** So the last deception will be worse than the first." Pilate said to them, **"You have a guard; go your way, make it as secure** as you know how." So they went and made the tomb secure, sealing the stone and setting the guard." Matthew 27:62-66 NKJV

(6) How do the women react to their instructions?

(a) Quickly!

1. "So they went out quickly from the tomb **with fear and great joy**, and ran to bring His disciples word."

Matthew 28:8 NKJV

a) They were frightened, but also ecstatic, and quickly went to report to disciples what they saw and heard.

B. Encounter the Risen Lord (Matthew 28:9-10)

(1) Behold, it's the risen Lord!

(a) And they worshiped Him...

1. "And as they went to tell His disciples, **behold, Jesus met them, saying, "Rejoice!"** So they came and held **Him by the feet** and worshiped Him. Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid. Go and tell My brethren to go to Galilee, and there they will see Me.""

Matthew 28:9-10 NKJV

- a) On their way to give the report, Y'shua encountered them.
 - b) He told them to celebrate! And they knelt at His feet and praised Him.
 - c) He comforts them and assures them that they need not fear.
 - d) He reiterates that He will meet them all in Galilee.
- (b) John, the prophetic Gospel adds to the story...
1. "Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned and said to Him, "Rabboni!" (which is to say, Teacher). Jesus said to her, "**Do not cling to Me, for I have not yet ascended to My Father;** but go to My brethren and say to them, '**I am ascending to My Father** and your Father, and to My God and your God.' "" John 20:16-17 NKJV
 - a) When Mary goes to touch His feet, He says not to touch Him because He has not yet ascended to his Father.
 - b) The shadow picture here again points to the Biblical Feasts. He must offer the firstfruits offering to His Father—before He reengages with the world, just as the high priest had done for centuries for the Feast of Firstfruits

- c) The priest would be in seclusion for three days and three nights after the Passover, and he emerges to offer the first fruits of the barley harvest to God~
“...[When you], reap its harvest, **then you shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest to the priest. He shall wave the sheaf before the Lord**, to be accepted on your behalf; on the day after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it.” Leviticus 23:10-11 NKJV
- d) We saw in Matthew 27 that the graves opened at His death, but it is at His resurrection that the first fruits of those who would rise would be offered to His Father~ “and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; **and coming out of the graves after His resurrection**, they went into the holy city and appeared to many.” Matthew 27:52-53 NKJV
- e) Christ and those who had died in Christ at His resurrection are the Firstfruits offering~ “But now **Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits** of those who have fallen asleep. For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die,

even so in Christ all shall be made alive. But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who are Christ's at His coming." 1 Corinthians 15:20-23 NKJV

(2) Luke 24

(a) Luke adds interesting details, as well, about what happens after the women are given their instructions...
"Go and tell My brethren..."

1. They return to the disciples with the report and Peter runs the tomb to check it out. (Luke 24:8-12)
2. Y'shua encounters two men on the Road to Emmaus, *"And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself."* (Luke 24:13-27)
3. Y'shua goes into the village to stay the night with the men and as soon as He breaks bread with them, their eyes are opened and they realize who He is. They leave right away for Jerusalem to report everything to the eleven disciples (minus Judas). (Luke 24:28- 35)
4. As these two men make their report, Y'shua appears in their midst. He opens their eyes to everything...
"These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled

which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me.” And He instructs them to remain in the city until they receive power (a hint of the Holy Spirit coming at Pentecost!). (Luke 24:36-49)

5. Then, Y’shua ascends into heaven in their midst, as Luke leads into Part Two of his Gospel narrative, the Acts of the Apostles. (Luke 24:50- 53).
6. Note: Luke is the Author of Acts
7. See Section Three: To Rise or NOT to Rise

C. The Great Conspiracy (Matthew 28:11-15)

(1) Meanwhile from a pagan perspective...

(a) While all those interactions between Christ and His followers are transpiring, there is a parallel reality running from the perspective of the guards who were assigned to watch the tomb for three days.

1. “Now while they were going, behold, some of **the guard came into the city and reported to the chief priests all the things that had happened.**” Matthew

28:11 NKJV

a) The guards are compelled to report to the chief priests in Jerusalem what they witnessed—the true

resurrection of the one who claimed He would resurrect.

- b) Think about it—they reported exactly what had happened, what they witnessed!
- c) The stone rolled away supernaturally and Jesus Christ had risen from the dead.
- d) That is what happened and that is what they reported!

(2) The truth won't work for the agenda of the religious elite, so the Soldiers are bribed!

(a) The men receiving the report were the very same men who conducted the trial cloaked in darkness, those who paid for Judas and who invited false witnesses to testify.

1. “When they had **assembled with the elders and consulted together**, they **gave a large sum of money** to the soldiers, saying, “**Tell them, ‘His disciples came at night and stole Him away while we slept.’** And if this comes to the governor’s ears, **we will appease him and make you secure.**” Matthew 28:12-14 NKJV

a) The guards deliver the news to men who would rather have Barabbas, a convicted murder, loose on the streets, than a man who healed thousands

—and harmed no one (unless, of course, you consider it harmful to threaten those who won't surrender their corrupt power and man-made religion).

- b) Instead of reporting to their boss, Governor Pilate, they report to men whose hearts are so corrupt that they'd rather spew more lies, than face the undeniable truth—He is risen; He is the Christ!
- c) So, these bastions of leadership call for a meeting with their top consultants and decide that instead of admitting they were wrong, that this Jesus character was telling us the truth all along, we should pay off these guards with a large pile of cash, in exchange for them to say exactly what we predicted would happen. It's the reason we asked Pilate to post the guards in the first place—so it's a plausible story.
- d) Guards, say this: The lunatic followers of this Jesus-shyster came and stole His body in the middle of the night while we slept, so they could trick everyone into believing He raised from the dead.
- e) Isn't it interesting that the guards chose to first report to the Jewish leaders and not to Pilate. It is

very likely they knew that Pilate's immediate response would have been to execute them for their dereliction of duty.

2. But how will admitting they fell asleep help their case?
 - a) The religious leaders all but guarantee the guards that when Pilate finds out, they will make sure he believes this story as well.
 - b) They promise to convince Pilate that it won't be as bad as they had previously predicted, so he won't need to punish them!
 - c) It's sounds like a better option than telling the truth, as the truth will certainly guarantee their execution.
 - d) This is WHY the guards sought out the religious leaders first!

(b) Stories of Guards: conversion, execution, and protection

1. **The Centurion who witnessed the crucifixion was converted!** "So when the centurion and those with him, who were guarding Jesus, saw the earthquake and the things that had happened, they feared greatly, saying, **"Truly this was the Son of God!"**" Matthew 27:54 NKJV

2. **Peter is supernaturally released from prison by an angel and Herod executes the guards on watch!**

“Then, as soon as it was day, there was no small stir among the soldiers about what had become of Peter. But when Herod [*Agrippa*] had searched for him and not found him, **he examined the guards and commanded that they should be put to death.** And he went down from Judea to Caesarea, and stayed there.” Acts 12:18-19 NKJV (See Acts 12:5-18)

3. **Paul and Silas (and a prison full of prisoners) are supernaturally freed from prison and Paul prevents the guard from committing suicide (the guard and his whole family get saved!)**

“Suddenly a great earthquake occurred, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken. Immediately all the doors flew open, and the bonds of all the prisoners came loose. When the jailer woke up and saw the doors of the prison standing open, **he drew his sword and was about to kill himself,** because he assumed the prisoners had escaped. But **Paul called out loudly, “Do not harm yourself, for we are all here!”** Calling for lights, the jailer rushed in and fell down trembling at the feet of Paul and Silas. Then he brought them

outside and asked, **“Sirs, what must I do to be saved?”** They replied, **“Believe in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved, you and your household.”**” (Acts 16:26-31 NET) **“The jailer brought them into his house and set food before them, and he rejoiced greatly that he had come to believe in God, together with his entire household.”** Acts 16:34 NET (Read Acts 16:16-40)

- (c) The backbone of their new conspiracy: their original request of Pilate and their prediction...
 - 1. **“Therefore command that the tomb be made secure until the third day, lest His disciples come by night and steal Him away, and say to the people, ‘He has risen from the dead.’ So the last deception will be worse than the first.”**” Matthew 27:64 NKJV
 - a) The religious leaders had originally convinced Pilate to assign guards because if the disciples were able to fake the resurrection, the political conditions for Pilate (motivated by keeping things calm in Jerusalem) would become worse than had they just chosen to free Y’shua instead of Barabbas, and to let Him keep on preaching.

- b) Political conditions in Jerusalem were very often dictated by whether or not self-indulgent Jewish leaders were in the mood to incite Jewish mobs.
- c) Pilate certainly realizes, and has already witnessed, the capability of these nasty power-hungry hypocrites to cause political unrest!
- d) And the religious leaders also know Pilate is a weak-minded man, a slave to expedience!
- e) In other words, they are pretty sure he will go with their plan.

2. **Guard's Options...**

- a) Tell Pilate the truth—He will likely execute them over the missing body, whether or not he believes them.
 - b) Tell Pilate the disciples stole the body as they slept on the job—Pilate will blame the guards and execute them.
 - c) Or, they can place their lives in the hands of the Jewish leaders in hopes that Pilate's fear of an insurrection will be enough to save them!
- (d) Let's get our stories straight...
1. You say... *"His disciples came at night and stole Him away while we slept."*

- a) And we will appease Pilate... “We will explain to Pilate that it won’t be a problem—we are not angry that the body was stolen and we won’t make your political life difficult.”
 - b) This seems like better odds to the guards, so they agree to take part in...
- (3) The Greatest Conspiracy of all time!
- (a) Instead of Jewish leadership relenting, repenting and believing, they conspire to cover up the most important event in human history with a large bribe.
1. **“So they took the money and did as they were instructed; and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day.”** Matthew 28:15 NKJV
- a) The guards took the bribe and did exactly what they were told to do. They opt for the pile of cash, the lie, in return for the support of the chief priests.
 - b) It’s a perfect cover story because it’s the very reason the chief priests used to persuade Pilate to guard the tomb in the first place.
 - c) But it is amazing how so many people, to this day, would rather believe that lie than the truth of the resurrection.
- (4) Taking bribes and offering bribes!

- (a) Taking a bribe: blinds the eyes, perverts words, condemns the innocent, inspires schemes, takes away justice, defines the wicked, is associated with thieves, and WILL BE punished by Yahweh!
1. “You shall not pervert justice; **you shall not show partiality, nor take a bribe, for a bribe blinds the eyes** of the wise and twists the words of the righteous.” Deuteronomy 16:19 NKJV
 2. “**And you shall take no bribe**, for a bribe blinds the discerning and perverts the words of the righteous.” Exodus 23:8 NKJV
 3. “Lord, **who may** abide in Your tabernacle? **Who may** dwell in Your holy hill? **He who** walks uprightly, And works righteousness, And speaks the truth in his heart; **He who** does not backbite with his tongue, Nor does evil to his neighbor, **Nor does he** take up a reproach against his friend; In whose eyes a vile person is despised, But he honors **those who** fear the Lord; **He who** swears to his own hurt and does not change; **He who** does not put out his money at usury, **Nor does he take a bribe against the innocent.** He who does these things shall never be moved.” Psalms 15:1-5 NKJV

4. "Lord, I have loved the habitation of Your house, And the place where Your glory dwells. Do not gather my soul with sinners, Nor my life with bloodthirsty men, **In whose hands is a sinister scheme, And whose right hand is full of bribes.**" Psalms 26:8-10 NKJV
5. "Woe to men mighty at drinking wine, Woe to men valiant for mixing intoxicating drink, **Who justify the wicked for a bribe, And take away justice from the righteous man!**" Isaiah 5:22-23 NKJV
6. "**A wicked man accepts a bribe** behind the back To pervert the ways of justice." Proverbs 17:23 NKJV
7. "**Your officials are rebels, they associate with thieves. All of them love bribery, and look for payoffs.** They do not take up the cause of the orphan, or defend the rights of the widow. Therefore, the sovereign Lord who commands armies, the powerful ruler of Israel, says this: "**Ah, I will seek vengeance against my adversaries, I will take revenge against my enemies.**" Isaiah 1:23-24 NET
8. "Now it came to pass when Samuel was old that **he made his sons judges** over Israel. The name of his firstborn was Joel, and the name of his second, Abijah; they were judges in Beersheba. **But his sons**

did not walk in his ways; they turned aside after dishonest gain, took bribes, and perverted justice.” I

Samuel 8:1-3 NKJV

- a) Samuel’s sons were not looking to serve God or the people, but rather how they could benefit from their position. Is this not exactly what our political leaders are doing today?
 - b) Their perversion of justice led to the people asking for a King, and subsequently the selection of Saul, which ultimately worked out very badly for Israel, just as Samuel predicted! (See I Samuel 8-9).
- (b) Offering bribes and payoffs...
1. “Then Haman said to King Ahasuerus, “There is a certain people scattered and dispersed among the people in all the provinces of your kingdom; their laws are different from all other people’s, and **they do not keep the king’s laws.** Therefore it is not fitting for the king to let them remain. **If it pleases the king, let a decree be written that they be destroyed, and I will pay ten thousand talents of silver into the hands of those who do the work, to bring it into the king’s treasuries.”**” Esther 3:8-9 NKJV

- a) Haman convinced King Ahasuerus to institute a law that would require all the Jews to be exterminated, and he used a payoff to support his request.
 - b) First he lied about the Jews and then He promised that if the king would agree to kill all the Jews, he would donate a large sum of money to the king's treasury to pay for the soldiers who would carry out the slaughter.
 - c) In the modern day, this bribe looks like a donation to a re-election campaign, or a payment to high ranking official to garner certain policy decisions that would benefit the one paying the bribe (directly or indirectly). Sound familiar?
2. "And the Lords of the Philistines came up to her and said to her, **"Entice him, and find out where his great strength lies, and by what means we may overpower him,** that we may bind him to afflict him; and every one of us will give you eleven hundred pieces of silver."" Judges 16:5 NKJV (Read Judges 16)
- a) Delilah is offered a very large bribe to find out from where Samson's supernatural strength is derived, so they can strategize how to defeat him.

3. The whole story of Balak and Balaam in Numbers 22-25 is a bribery scheme and it works out horribly for both Balak, the the king offering the payoff, and Balaam, the pay-for-play prophet!

TWO LEGITIMATE GOSPELS

2. Entry Level & Advanced

A. The Great Commision (Matthew 28:16-20)

(1) The Meetup

(a) Meet in Galilee on the mountain...

1. “Then the eleven disciples **went away into Galilee, to the mountain which Jesus had appointed for them.**

When they saw Him, **they worshiped Him; but some doubted.**” Matthew 28:16-17 NKJV

- a) The eleven remaining disciples went to Galilee as instructed.
- b) When they met with Y’shua, some were convinced and praised Him and some still had doubts.
 - 1) The question is this; What mountain? Are they meeting Him on a specific mountain that He appointed for them to meet, or is it on the mountain on which He originally appointed

them to be disciples or to carry out a specific ministry?

(b) This expression... "*the mountain which Jesus had appointed for them,*" can be translated from three different perspectives:

1. *The mountain that Jesus had **indicated** to them...* this is the most common, yet we see nowhere in Scripture where He tells them this location.
2. *The mountain where Jesus had **instituted** them...* this is the mount where Jesus, according to the Gospel of Luke 5, chose and appointed the apostles by the Lake of Gennesaret, where the Sermon on the Mount was also delivered (Mount of Beatitudes).
3. *The mountain where Jesus had **given them orders**...*
In this case, Matthew is again referring to the Mount of Beatitudes on which Jesus had given His orders in the Sermon on the Mount, where He revealed the fundamentals and the foundation of Christianity in one sermon (Matthew 5-7).
 - a) Both the second and third options here point to the same mountain for differing reasons!
 - b) And for sure, the exact location of the place of the discourse is difficult to ascertain.

- c) What is certain is that the Mount of Beatitudes is where Jesus appointed His disciples and where He taught that sermon.
- d) It is highly probable that that the Mount of Beatitudes was the place where Jesus met the disciples and many others in Galilee, after His resurrection, and where He commissioned them to go to the nations with two gospels (good news).
 - 1) “and that he **appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve**. Then he **appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers and sisters** at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep.” 1 Corinthians 15:5-6 NET

(2) Now onto the Commission

(a) Make Disciples: Baptize & Teach!

- 1. “And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “**All authority** has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. **Go therefore and make disciples** of all the nations, **baptizing them** in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, **teaching them** to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, **I am with you always**, even to the end of the age.” Amen.” Matthew 28:18-20 NKJV

- a) Then He gave them and us their future assignment.
 - 1) Y'shua has authority over all of creation and He is passing it on to His disciples.
 - 2) We are commissioned to make disciples throughout the whole world.
 - 3) We are to baptize converts in the name of Father, Son and the Holy Spirit.
 - 4) We are to teach them to advance the kingdom by living in radical-grace-empowered-faith-based obedience to God.
 - 5) And remember, Y'shua will be with you forever, no matter what.

B. Two Commissions

(1) Commission: authority to perform a task or certain duties.

(a) The "Great Commission" here in Matthew 28:19-20 is **one** commission with **two** parts!

1. *"Make disciples of all the nations, (1) **baptizing them** in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, (2) **teaching them** to observe all things that I have commanded you..."*

a) Preach Christ crucified and baptize converts: this is the Gospel of Salvation

- b) Preach radical-grace-empowered-faith-based obedience to God: this is the Gospel of the Kingdom.
 - c) Note: the Gospel of the Kingdom commission has deep prophetic implications that were elaborated on in the Sermon on the Mount of Olives in Matthew 24-25. It was taught before the Great Commission, but is fulfilled as part of the Great Commission. (See [Prophetic Education](#) for a full teaching.)
- (b) The “Great Commission” in a sense is preparation for this “Prophetic Commission” which also has two parts with one generation between their fulfillment.
- (c) The Prophetic Commission (See [Prophetic Education](#))
1. *“And **this gospel of the kingdom will be preached** in all the world as a witness to all the nations, **and then the end will come.**”* Matthew 24:14 NKJV
 2. *“Assuredly, I say to you, **this generation will by no means pass** away till all these things take place.”* Matthew 24:34 NKJV
 3. *“**Who then is a faithful and wise servant**, whom his master **made ruler** over his household, to give them food in due season? Blessed is that servant whom his*

*master, when he comes, will find so doing. Assuredly, I say to you that **he will make him ruler over all his goods.***" Matthew 24:45-47 NKJV

(d) Food for Thought... Notice how what Paul was doing at the end of his life/ministry in Rome was the two-fold great commission and what John was warning about in Revelation also involved this two-fold commission.

1. "Paul lived there two whole years in his own rented quarters and welcomed all who came to him, **proclaiming the kingdom of God** [*the Gospel of the Kingdom*] and **teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ** [*the Gospel of Salvation*] with complete boldness and without restriction." Acts 28:30-31 NET
2. "So the dragon became enraged at the woman and went away to make war on the rest of her children, **those who keep God's commandments** [*the Gospel of the Kingdom*] and **hold to the testimony about Jesus** [*the Gospel of Salvation*]." Revelation 12:17
NET

C. Two Gospels

- (1) The Gospel of Salvation

(a) *Make disciples of all the nations... baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit... This message is simple... CHRIST CRUCIFIED*

1. “And I, brethren, when I came to you, did not come with excellence of speech or of wisdom declaring to you the testimony of God. For **I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.** I was with you in weakness, in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching were **not with persuasive words of human wisdom**, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.” I Corinthians 2:1-5
NKJV

- a) To the unbelieving world there is only one message—Christ crucified.
- b) And you are NOT to deliver that message with any fancy persuasive words because you do not want unsaved men to be attracted to you, your wisdom, or charisma. “*Now this I say lest anyone should deceive you with persuasive words.*” Col. 2:4

- c) You are to leave room only for the power of God to move in someone's life by the demonstration of the Spirit.
 - d) This way there will be no confusion about what has taken place!
 - e) They won't mistake man's inspiration with a touch of the Holy Spirit. The distinction is this...are they being convinced by man or by God?
 - f) Then...**baptize them** *in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit!*
- (b) Other ways to say, *"I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified— baptize them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."*
1. "But to all who have received him – **those who believe in his name – he has given the right to become God's children** – children not born by human parents or by human desire or a husband's decision, but by God." *John 1:12-13 NET*
 2. "For this is the way God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that **everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.**" *John 3:16 NET*

3. “For **while we were still helpless**, at the right time **Christ died for the ungodly.**” Romans 5:6 NET
4. “But God demonstrates his own love for us, **in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.**” Romans 5:8 NET
5. “For **everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.**” Romans 10:13 NET
6. “For **by grace you are saved through faith**, and this is not from yourselves, **it is the gift of God;**” Ephesians 2:8 NET
 - a) Note the critical distinction about the Gospel of Salvation: You were helpless at the time you heard it and there would be nothing in you to receive it, unless God did something in you first—His grace through faith. It was all God and NONE of you!
 - b) This is vital to acknowledge in order for you to understand how dangerous it is to believe that someone can get born-gain by repeating some “sinner’s prayer” at the prompting of the persuasive words of a repeat-after-me-pastor.
 - c) Any version of a Christ crucified confession is a RESULT of being born-again (a heart changed by

grace through faith), not the CAUSE of being born-again (works leading to salvation).

- d) In other words, an authentic recitation of any version of the “sinner’s prayer” is the **FIRST WORK** of being saved! *“For we are His workmanship, **created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand** that we should walk in them.”* (Ephesians 2:10) **After that you have....**

(2) The Gospel of the Kingdom

- (a) *Make disciples of all the nations... **teaching them** to observe all things that I have commanded you! **This message is mysterious and complex... THE MIND OF CHRIST***

1. “However, **we speak wisdom among those who are mature**, yet not the wisdom of this age, nor of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. But we speak **the wisdom of God in a mystery**, the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the ages **for our glory**, which none of the rulers of this age knew; for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But as it is written: “Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man **The things which God has prepared for those who**

love Him.” But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so **no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God.** Now **we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God,** that we might know the things that have been **freely given to us by God.** These things we also speak, not in words which man’s wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. **But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him;** nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. [*“For the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.” 1 Cor. 1:18*] But he who is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is rightly judged by no one. For **“who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct Him?” But we have the mind of Christ.”** |

Corinthians 2:6-16 NKJV

- a) However—there is something that comes after Christ Crucified.
- b) You can uncover the deep mysteries of God because you now have access to God’s wisdom through the Holy Spirit.
- c) Prior to being born-again, you had access only to the spirit of a man (the spirit of the world) and when you were born again by grace through faith, you gained access to the Holy Spirit.
- d) In other words, before you were born-again you were limited to the spirit you had access to as an unbeliever.
- e) If you try to teach unbelievers (people without God’s Spirit) deep spiritual things, it will sound insane.
- f) In fact, if you even try to explain what it means to be born-again with complicated, detailed explanations, it will seem absurd.
- g) And that is why you **SHOULD NOT** resort to a persuasive charismatic teaching style in an attempt to overcome someone’s lack of understanding. If you do, you risk convincing someone they encountered God when they did not!

- h) A confession cannot cause grace to be experienced. Grace must precede faith and a confession comes as a result.
 - i) But, once you are born again, you have access to the Holy Spirit and God's continual grace, and you can be transformed by it. With that access you are called to explore the mysteries of God, while you live a life of radical-grace-empowered-faith-based obedience.
 - j) That is how you attain to the mind of Christ!
- (b) Other ways to say... *“teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you—we have the mind of Christ!”*
1. “Therefore, since we have been **declared righteous by faith**, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, **through whom we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand**, and we rejoice in the hope of God's glory.” Romans 5:1-2 NET
 2. “**For by grace you are saved through faith**, and this is not from yourselves, **it is the gift of God**; it is not from works, so that no one can boast. For **we are his workmanship, having been created in Christ Jesus**

for good works that God prepared beforehand so we may do them.” Ephesians 2:8-10 NET

a) Do you see it so clearly now?

1) We are declared right by faith which was empowered by God’s grace for free—the Gospel of Salvation

2) And then, by faith, we maintain access to that grace so we can walk in obedience (good works)—the Gospel of the Kingdom.

(3) Note on Disciples....

(a) By grace you are saved through faith, **it is the gift...** But, becoming a disciple is **far from a free gift**. It has an “if”, comes with a cost, and there **MUST** be evidence!

1. **“If anyone comes to me and **does not hate** his own father and mother, and wife and children, and brothers and sisters, and **even his own life**, he **cannot be my disciple**. **Whoever does not carry his own cross and follow me cannot be my disciple**. {33} In the same way **therefore not one of you can be my disciple if he does not renounce all his own possessions.**” Luke 14:26-27, 33 NET**

2. Then Jesus said to those Judeans who had believed him, **“If you continue to follow my teaching, you are**

really my disciples and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.””John 8:31-32 NET

3. “Everyone will know by this that **you are my disciples** – **if you have love for one another.**” John 13:35 NET

4. “Then he said to them all, “**If anyone wants** to become my follower, **he must deny himself**, take up his cross daily, and follow me.” Luke 9:23 NET

(b) Propagating Disciples—make disciples who can make disciples who make disciples, and so on...

1. “And **entrust what you heard** me say in the presence of many others as witnesses **to faithful people who will be competent to teach others as well.**” 2

Timothy 2:2 NET

D. The ONE Gospel Conspiracy

(1) There is ONLY ONE Gospel (Gospel of Salvation), and you only need to do ONE THING, confess some words!

(a) The gospel is the good news that God sent His only son to die for you, who shed His blood to cover your sins, and resurrected so you would not suffer permanent death. And all you need to do is confess these ideas and your eternal salvation is secure! And that confession is universally known as...

(b) The Sinner’s Prayer

1. “because **if you confess with your mouth** that Jesus is Lord and **believe in your heart** that God raised him from the dead, **you will be saved.**” Romans 10:9 NET

(c) Or any derivative of such idea...

1. “Therefore, since we have been **declared righteous by faith**, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,” Romans 5:1 NET
2. “For **while we were still helpless**, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.” Romans 5:6 NET
3. “But God demonstrates his own love for us, in that **while we were still sinners**, Christ died for us.” Romans 5:8 NET
4. “For by grace you are saved through faith, and this **is not from yourselves**, it is the gift of God;” Ephesians 2:8 NET
5. WARNING
 - a) Any true confession must be a RESULT of being born-again (a heart changed by grace through faith). It is not the CAUSE of being born-again (works leading to salvation).
 - b) It is dangerous to believe that someone can get born-gain by repeating some version of the

“sinner’s prayer” at the prompting of the persuasive words of a repeat-after-me-pastor.

- c) Extracting a confession without any true heart change is worse than ineffective. It is creating a “new church” filled with people who are convinced they are born-again because they “prayed the prayer,” yet they are not!
 - d) (See *The Parable of the Wheat and the Tares* in Matthew 13:24-30 in [All That Will Be Already Is!](#))
 - e) How do you evangelize an unbeliever who already believes he is saved? Hence, the danger of the persuasive words of the repeat-after-me-pastor!
6. See [Critical Roots Theory](#) to see what you are truly confessing in the words of Romans 10:9. This is an entire study itself.
- a) But the bottom line is this...You are confessing that Y’shua is Lord and Savior (the Gospel of Salvation) AND that you believe His commandments are not too difficult, that you can walk in radical-grace-empowered-faith-based-obedience to God (The Gospel of the Kingdom).

(2) Who is the Lord trying to teach this mature message?

(a) Is this all gibberish to you?

1. **“Who is the Lord trying to teach? To whom is he explaining a message? Those just weaned from milk! Those just taken from their mother’s breast! Indeed, they will hear meaningless gibberish, senseless babbling,** a syllable here, a syllable there. For with mocking lips and a foreign tongue he will speak to these people. In the past he said to them, “This is where security can be found. Provide security for the one who is exhausted! This is where rest can be found.” **But they refused to listen. So the Lord’s word to them will sound like meaningless gibberish, senseless babbling, a syllable here, a syllable there. As a result, they will fall on their backsides when they try to walk,** and be injured, ensnared, and captured.” Isaiah 28:9-13 NET

- a) When this message is explained to you, the distinction between the two gospels, does it sound like senseless babbling and meaningless gibberish to you?
- b) It will if you remain a spiritual infant, as if you were just weaned off your mother’s breast.
- c) As such, it will be as if you are unable to walk and you keep falling on your rump!

(3) Must you be spoken to as if you I am speaking to an infant?

(a) Are you spiritual people?

1. “So, brothers and sisters, **I could not speak to you as spiritual people**, but instead as people of the flesh, **as infants in Christ. I fed you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready. In fact, you are still not ready, for you are still influenced by the flesh.** For since there is still jealousy and dissension among you, are you not influenced by the flesh and behaving like unregenerate people?” 1 Corinthians 3:1-3 NET

a) Are you ready for for solid food?

b) Would you rather stay on milk?

(4) You should grow up already!

(a) In fact you should be a teacher by now!

1. “On this topic we have much to say and it is difficult to explain, since you have become sluggish in hearing. **For though you should in fact be teachers by this time, you need someone to teach you the beginning elements of God’s utterances. You have gone back to needing milk, not solid food.** For everyone who lives on milk is inexperienced in the

message of righteousness, **because he is an infant.**

But solid food is for the mature, whose perceptions are trained by practice to discern both good and evil.” Hebrews 5:11-14 NET

- a) Solid food means you have gone past the basic elements.
- b) Solid Food: the message of righteousness and trained by practice to discern both good and evil

(b) Move on to maturity!

- 1. “Therefore we must progress beyond the elementary instructions about **Christ and move on to maturity,** not laying this foundation again: repentance from dead works and faith in God, teaching about baptisms, laying on of hands, resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. And this is what we intend to do, if God permits.” Hebrews 6:1-3 NET

- a) Maturity means moving past the Gospel of Salvation to the Gospel of the Kingdom.
- b) Move past what is free and count the cost!

TO RISE OR NOT TO RISE!

3. The Scandal

A. How do some among you say that there is no resurrection?

(1) Lies about the resurrection from the start!

(a) His body was stolen...

1. “When they had assembled with the elders and consulted together, they gave a large sum of money to the soldiers, saying, **“Tell them, ‘His disciples came at night and stole Him away while we slept.’”**

Matthew 28:12-13 NKJV

(2) If Christ is not risen, your faith is futile!

(a) The Gospel of Salvation Basics

1. “Moreover, brethren, I declare to you **the gospel which I preached to you**, which also you **received** and in which you **stand**, by which also you are **saved**, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you— unless you believed in vain. **For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures**, and that He was **seen by Cephas, then by the twelve. After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once**, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep. After that He was seen by James, then by all the apostles. Then last of all He was seen by

me also, as by one born out of due time.” I

Corinthians 15:1-8 NKJV

- a) Christ died for our sins: Passover
- b) He was buried: Unleavened Bread
- c) He rose again the third day: Firstfruits
- d) Many undefinable witnesses!

(b) The resurrection is a non-negotiable!

1. “Now **if Christ is preached** that **He has been raised** from the dead, **how do some among you say that there is no resurrection** of the dead? But **if there is no resurrection** of the dead, then Christ is not risen. And if Christ is not risen, then **our preaching is empty** and **your faith is also empty.**” I Corinthians 15:12-14 NKJV

- a) How do some say there is no resurrection?
- b) Well, maybe they believe His body was stolen!
- c) If that’s the case—all our preaching about the death, burial and resurrection is useless.
- d) And...your grace empowered faith is useless!

(c) The REAL problem if there is no resurrection...

1. “Yes, and **we are found false witnesses** of God, because **we have testified of God that He raised up Christ**, whom **He did not raise up—if in fact the**

dead do not rise. For if the dead do not rise, then Christ is not risen. And **if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile;** you are still in your sins!" I Corinthians 15:15-17 NKJV

- a) All the faith we preach about is pointless if Christ did not rise!
 - b) And if there is no resurrection, you are still dead in your sins!
 - c) I guess it's easier for the Sadducees to deny the resurrection because they don't even believe the dead can rise~ *"For **Sadducees say that there is no resurrection**—and no angel or spirit; but the Pharisees confess both."* Acts 23:8 NKJV
- (d) Think about everything we base our faith on as Christians...
- 1. "Then also **those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished.** If in this life only we have hope in Christ, **we are of all men the most pitiable.**" I Corinthians 15:18-19 NKJV
 - a) If we die and stay in the ground, our faith is like fiat currency!
 - b) If this life is the only life there is we are a pathetic people.

Summary: PICK A SIDE

1. Why is the tomb empty?

A. He is Risen (Matthew 28:1-8)

(1) They came to bring spices and oils...

(a) But who will roll back the stone?

1. The weekly Sabbath (Saturday) had ended at sunset the night before, and as the sun was rising the next morning (Sunday), Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb.

2. Food for Thought

a) Who this other Mary is raises some questions and there seems to be no way to know for sure to which Mary this refers. However, you can do some exploration and consider some of the options.

b) Matthew mentions three women earlier at the cross.

c) Luke tells us that the women who came with Him from Galilee returned to the tomb with spices and fragrant oils, but never gives any names.

d) Mark names three women between,

e) And John names only one woman at the tomb in, but possibly mentions four women who were standing at the foot of the cross.

- (2) An angel from heaven will roll back the stone...
- (a) Important to notice: The Guards are watching!
1. An angel rolled back the stone covering the opening to the tomb in what must have felt like an earthquake.
 2. The angel was like a being of light and the guards placed there by Pilate to prevent anyone from stealing the body **witnessed the whole thing**.
 3. They were so frightened that it was like they died standing up.
- (3) The women are witnessing the tomb opening as well...
- (a) He is not here; for He is risen—Go tell the others!
1. The angel encourages those searching for Y'shua to not be scared, and informs them that He is not in the tomb because He has risen from the dead.
 2. If you wish to check, come look at where He was laid to rest.
 3. And once you see with your own eyes, go tell His disciples that He has risen from the grave after three days and three nights (as prophesied).
 4. And just like He revealed on His way to the Garden of Gethsemane, after the Last Supper, He will meet them in Galilee.

- (4) Y'shua had risen from the grave the previous day just before sundown, late Saturday afternoon, precisely three days and three nights after He was placed in the grave. When the women arrived the next morning, He was gone!
- (a) He was buried in a tomb in a garden in close proximity to the place of crucifixion...before sundown on Wednesday, because as the sun sets the Passover meal is eaten and the first day of Unleavened Bread begins, a High Sabbath, a Sabbath kept for the commanded feasts of the Lord, irregardless of on which day of the week it falls. In other words, a ***high day** is a Sabbath, but it need not be a weekly Sabbath (Saturday). (See Leviticus 23 for all the commanded Feast Sabbaths.)
1. **He died around 3:00pm:**
 2. **They want to take Him off the cross before sundown:**
 3. **Food for Thought:** John 19:31 is the verse all of Christendom has used for 2000 years to conclude that the crucifixion was on a Friday. Their reasoning is that He had to be taken off the cross before the Sabbath. Their error is not knowing what a ***high day** is, not knowing the Feasts of the Lord, which undoubtedly stems from the profound antisemitism

rooted in how the Jews were treated by Christians starting as early as the second century and accentuated after the birth of the Catholic Church in the fourth century~

4. Passover that year was NOT a Friday, but a Wednesday! (The only way to get three days and three nights between the feast that foreshadowed His death (Passover) and the feast that foreshadowed His resurrection (Firstfruits) is when Passover falls on a Wednesday.
5. Wednesday night as the sun set it became the First Day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, a ***high day** (a commanded Sabbath associate with a Biblical Feast).
6. **He is buried before sundown:**
7. **He would be in the Grave Three Days and Three Nights:**
 - a) Y'shua was very specific about precisely how long He would be in the grave before He rises.
 - b) It would be **three days and three nights—72 hours!** He went in the grave just before sundown on Wednesday.
 - 1) Wednesday night to Thursday day (1st night, 1st day)

- 2) Thursday night to Friday day (2nd night, 2nd day)
 - 3) Friday night to Saturday day (3rd night, 3rd day)
 - 4) He is out of the grave BEFORE sunset on Saturday—and the women wait until the next morning when it is light out to come to the grave.
- (5) Other Samples of third day prophecies:
- (a) I will raise on the third day!
 - (b) Comparing His body Temple of God
 - (c) The threat of Y'shua resurrecting in three days is precisely why they set guards over the tomb for three days...
- (6) How do the women react to their instructions?
- (a) Quickly!
 1. They were frightened, but also ecstatic, and quickly went to report to disciples what they saw and heard.

B. Encounter the Risen Lord (Matthew 28:9-10)

- (1) Behold, it's the risen Lord!
- (a) And they worshiped Him...
 1. On their way to give the report, Y'shua encountered them.
 2. He told them to celebrate! And they knelt at His feet and praised Him.

3. He comforts them and assures them that they need not fear.
 4. He reiterates that He will meet them all in Galilee.
- (b) John, the prophetic Gospel adds to the story...
1. When Mary goes to touch His feet, He says not to touch Him because He has not yet ascended to his Father.
 2. The shadow picture here again points to the Biblical Feasts. He must offer the firstfruits offering to His Father—before He reengages with the world, just as the high priest had done for centuries for the Feast of Firstfruits
 3. The priest would be in seclusion for three days and three nights after the Passover, and he emerges to offer the first fruits of the barley harvest to God~
 4. We saw in Matthew 27 that the graves opened at His death, but it is at His resurrection that the first fruits of those who would rise would be offered to His Father~

(2) Luke 24

- (a) Luke adds interesting details, as well, about what happens after the women are given their instructions...
“Go and tell My brethren...”

1. They return to the disciples with the report and Peter runs the tomb to check it out.
2. Y'shua encounters two men on the Road to Emmaus, *"And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself."*
3. Y'shua goes into the village to stay the night with the men and as soon as He breaks bread with them, their eyes are opened and they realize who He is. They leave right away for Jerusalem to report everything to the eleven disciples (minus Judas).
4. As these two men make their report, Y'shua appears in their midst. He opens their eyes to everything... *"These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me."* And He instructs them to remain in the city until they receive power (a hint of the Holy Spirit coming at Pentecost!).
5. Then, Y'shua ascends into heaven in their midst, as Luke leads into Part Two of his Gospel narrative, the Acts of the Apostles.

6. Note: Luke is the Author of Acts
7. See Section Three: To Rise or NOT to Rise

C. The Great Conspiracy (Matthew 28:11-15)

- (1) Meanwhile from a pagan perspective...
 - (a) While all those interactions between Christ and His followers are transpiring, there is a parallel reality running from the perspective of the guards who were assigned to watch the tomb for three days.
 1. The guards are compelled to report to the chief priests in Jerusalem what they witnessed—the true resurrection of the one who claimed He would resurrect.
 2. Think about it—they reported exactly what had happened, what they witnessed!
 3. The stone rolled away supernaturally and Jesus Christ had risen from the dead.
 4. That is what happened and that is what they reported!
- (2) The truth won't work for the agenda of the religious elite, so the Soldiers are bribed!
 - (a) The men receiving the report were the very same men who conducted the trial cloaked in darkness, those who paid for Judas and who invited false witnesses to testify.

1. The guards deliver the news to men who would rather have Barabbas, a convicted murder, loose on the streets, than a man who healed thousands —and harmed no one (unless, of course, you consider it harmful to threaten those who won't surrender their corrupt power and man-made religion).
2. Instead of reporting to their boss, Governor Pilate, they report to men whose hearts are so corrupt that they'd rather spew more lies, than face the undeniable truth—He is risen; He is the Christ!
3. So, these bastions of leadership call for a meeting with their top consultants and decide that instead of admitting they were wrong, that this Jesus character was telling us the truth all along, we should pay off these guards with a large pile of cash, in exchange for them to say exactly what we predicted would happen. It's the reason we asked Pilate to post the guards in the first place—so it's a plausible story.
4. Guards, say this: The lunatic followers of this Jesus-shyster came and stole His body in the middle of the night while we slept, so they could trick everyone into believing He raised from the dead.

5. Isn't it interesting that the guards chose to first report to the Jewish leaders and not to Pilate. It is very likely they knew that Pilate's immediate response would have been to execute them for their dereliction of duty.
- (b) But how will admitting they fell asleep help their case?
1. The religious leaders all but guarantee the guards that when Pilate finds out, they will make sure he believes this story as well.
 2. They promise to convince Pilate that it won't be as bad as they had previously predicted, so he won't need to punish them!
 3. It's sounds like a better option than telling the truth, as the truth will certainly guarantee their execution.
 4. This is WHY the guards sought out the religious leaders first!
- (c) Stories of Guards: conversion, execution, and protection
1. The Centurion who witnessed the crucifixion was converted!
 2. Peter is supernaturally released from prison by an angel and Herod executes the guards on watch!
 3. Paul and Silas (and a prison full of prisoners) are supernaturally freed from prison and Paul prevents

the guard from committing suicide (the guard and his whole family get saved!)

- (d) The backbone of their new conspiracy: their original request of Pilate and their prediction...
1. The religious leaders had originally convinced Pilate to assign guards because if the disciples were able to fake the resurrection, the political conditions for Pilate (motivated by keeping things calm in Jerusalem) would become worse than had they just chosen to free Y'shua instead of Barabbas, and to let Him keep on preaching.
 2. Political conditions in Jerusalem were very often dictated by whether or not self-indulgent Jewish leaders were in the mood to incite Jewish mobs.
 3. Pilate certainly realizes, and has already witnessed, the capability of these nasty power-hungry hypocrites to cause political unrest!
 4. And the religious leaders also know Pilate is a weak-minded man, a slave to expedience!
 5. In other words, they are pretty sure he will go with their plan.
- e) Guard's Options...

1. Tell Pilate the truth—He will likely execute them over the missing body, whether or not he believes them.
2. Tell Pilate the disciples stole the body as they slept on the job—Pilate will blame the guards and execute them.
3. Or, they can place their lives in the hands of the Jewish leaders in hopes that Pilate’s fear of an insurrection will be enough to save them!

(f) Let’s get our stories straight...

1. You say... *“His disciples came at night and stole Him away while we slept.”*
 - a) And we will appease Pilate... *“We will explain to Pilate that it won’t be a problem—we are not angry that the body was stolen and we won’t make your political life difficult.”*
 - b) This seems like better odds to the guards, so they agree to take part in...

(3) The Greatest Conspiracy of all time!

- (a) Instead of Jewish leadership relenting, repenting and believing, they conspire to cover up the most important event in human history with a large bribe.

1. The guards took the bribe and did exactly what they were told to do. They opt for the pile of cash, the lie, in return for the support of the chief priests.
2. It's a perfect cover story because it's the very reason the chief priests used to persuade Pilate to guard the tomb in the first place.
3. But it is amazing how so many people, to this day, would rather believe that lie than the truth of the resurrection.

(4) Taking bribes and offering bribes!

(a) Taking a bribe: blinds the eyes, perverts words, condemns the innocent, inspires schemes, takes away justice, defines the wicked, is associated with thieves, and WILL BE punished by Yahweh!

1. Samuel's sons were not looking to serve God or the people, but rather how they could benefit from their position. Is this not exactly what our political leaders are doing today?
2. Their perversion of justice led to the people asking for a King, and subsequently the selection of Saul, which ultimately worked out very badly for Israel, just as Samuel predicted! (See I Samuel 8-9).

(b) Offering bribes and payoffs...

1. Haman convinced King Ahasuerus to institute a law that would require all the Jews to be exterminated, and he used a payoff to support his request.
2. First he lied about the Jews and then He promised that if the king would agree to kill all the Jews, he would donate a large sum of money to the king's treasury to pay for the soldiers who would carry out the slaughter.
3. In the modern day, this bribe looks like a donation to a re-election campaign, or a payment to high ranking official to garner certain policy decisions that would benefit the one paying the bribe (directly or indirectly). Sound familiar?
4. Delilah is offered a very large bribe to find out from where Samson's supernatural strength is derived, so they can strategize how to defeat him.
5. The whole story of Balak and Balaam in Numbers 22-25 is a bribery scheme and it works out horribly for both Balak, the the king offering the payoff, and Balaam, the pay-for-play prophet!

Summary: TWO LEGITIMATE GOSPELS

2. Entry Level & Advanced

A. The Great Commission (Matthew 28:16-20)

(1) The Meetup

(a) Meet in Galilee on the mountain...

1. The eleven remaining disciples went to Galilee as instructed.
2. When they met with Y'shua, some were convinced and praised Him and some still had doubts.
3. The question is this; What mountain? Are they meeting Him on a specific mountain that He appointed for them to meet, or is it on the mountain on which He originally appointed them to be disciples or to carry out a specific ministry?

(b) This expression... *"the mountain which Jesus had appointed for them,"* can be translated from three different perspectives:

1. *The mountain that Jesus had **indicated** to them...* this is the most common, yet we see nowhere in Scripture where He tells them this location.
2. *The mountain where Jesus had **instituted** them...* this is the mount where Jesus, according to the Gospel of Luke 5, chose and appointed the apostles by the Lake

of Gennesaret, where the Sermon on the Mount was also delivered (Mount of Beatitudes).

3. *The mountain where Jesus had **given them orders**...*

In this case, Matthew is again referring to the Mount of Beatitudes on which Jesus had given His orders in the Sermon on the Mount, where He revealed the fundamentals and the foundation of Christianity in one sermon (Matthew 5-7).

- a) Both the second and third options here point to the same mountain for differing reasons!
- b) And for sure, the exact location of the place of the discourse is difficult to ascertain.
- c) What is certain is that the Mount of Beatitudes is where Jesus appointed His disciples and where He taught that sermon.
- d) It is highly probable that that the Mount of Beatitudes was the place where Jesus met the disciples and many others in Galilee, after His resurrection, and where He commissioned them to go to the nations with two gospels (good news).

(2) Now onto the Commission

(a) Make Disciples: Baptize & Teach!

1. Then He gave them and us their future assignment.

2. Y'shua has authority over all of creation and He is passing it on to His disciples.
3. We are commissioned to make disciples throughout the whole world.
4. We are to baptize converts in the name of Father, Son and the Holy Spirit.
5. We are to teach them to advance the kingdom by living in radical-grace-empowered-faith-based obedience to God.
6. And remember, Y'shua will be with you forever, no matter what.

B. Two Commissions

(1) Commission: authority to perform a task or certain duties.

(a) The "Great Commission" here in Matthew 28:19-20 is **one** commission with **two** parts!

1. *"Make disciples of all the nations, (1) **baptizing them** in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, (2) **teaching them** to observe all things that I have commanded you..."*

a) Preach Christ crucified and baptize converts: this is the Gospel of Salvation

- b) Preach radical-grace-empowered-faith-based obedience to God: this is the Gospel of the Kingdom.
 - c) Note: the Gospel of the Kingdom commission has deep prophetic implications that were elaborated on in the Sermon on the Mount of Olives in Matthew 24-25. It was taught before the Great Commission, but is fulfilled as part of the Great Commission.
- (b) The “Great Commission” in a sense is preparation for this “Prophetic Commission” which also has two parts with one generation between their fulfillment.
 - (c) The Prophetic Commission (See [Prophetic Education](#))
 - (d) Food for Thought... Notice how what Paul was doing at the end of his life/ministry in Rome was the two-fold great commission and what John was warning about in Revelation also involved this two-fold commission.

C. Two Gospels

(1) The Gospel of Salvation

- (a) *Make disciples of all the nations... **baptizing them** in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit... **This message is simple... CHRIST CRUCIFIED***

1. To the unbelieving world there is only one message—Christ crucified.
 2. And you are NOT to deliver that message with any fancy persuasive words because you do not want unsaved men to be attracted to you, your wisdom, or charisma. *“Now this I say lest anyone should deceive you with persuasive words.”* Col. 2:4
 3. You are to leave room only for the power of God to move in someone’s life by the demonstration of the Spirit.
 4. This way there will be no confusion about what has taken place!
 5. They won’t mistake man’s inspiration with a touch of the Holy Spirit. The distinction is this...are they being convinced by man or by God?
 6. Then...***baptize them*** *in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit!*
- (b) Other ways to say, *“I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified—baptize them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”*
1. Note the critical distinction about the Gospel of Salvation: You were helpless at the time you heard it

and there would be nothing in you to receive it, unless God did something in you first—His grace through faith. It was all God and NONE of you!

2. This is vital to acknowledge in order for you to understand how dangerous it is to believe that someone can get born-again by repeating some “sinner’s prayer” at the prompting of the persuasive words of a repeat-after-me-pastor.
3. Any version of a Christ crucified confession is a RESULT of being born-again (a heart changed by grace through faith), not the CAUSE of being born-again (works leading to salvation).
4. In other words, an authentic recitation of any version of the “sinner’s prayer” is the FIRST WORK of being saved! *“For we are His workmanship, **created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand** that we should walk in them.”* (Ephesians 2:10) **After that you have....**

(2) The Gospel of the Kingdom

- (a) *Make disciples of all the nations... **teaching them** to observe all things that I have commanded you! **This message is mysterious and complex... THE MIND OF CHRIST***

1. However—there is something that comes after Christ Crucified.
2. You can uncover the deep mysteries of God because you now have access to God's wisdom through the Holy Spirit.
3. Prior to being born-again, you had access only to the spirit of a man (the spirit of the world) and when you were born again by grace through faith, you gained access to the Holy Spirit.
4. In other words, before you were born-again you were limited to the spirit you had access to as an unbeliever.
5. If you try to teach unbelievers (people without God's Spirit) deep spiritual things, it will sound insane.
6. In fact, if you even try to explain what it means to be born-again with complicated, detailed explanations, it will seem absurd.
7. That is why you **SHOULD NOT** resort to a persuasive charismatic teaching style in an attempt to overcome someone's lack of understanding.
8. If you do, you risk convincing someone they encountered God when they did not!

9. A confession cannot cause grace to be experienced. Grace must precede faith and a confession comes as a result.
 10. But, once you are born again, you have access to the Holy Spirit and God's continual grace, and you can be transformed by it.
 11. With that access you are called to explore the mysteries of God, while you live a life of radical-grace-empowered-faith-based obedience.
 12. That is how you attain to the mind of Christ!
- (b) Other ways to say... *“teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you—we have the mind of Christ!”*
1. Do you see it so clearly now?
 - a) We are declared right by faith which was empowered by God's grace for free—the Gospel of Salvation
 - b) And then, by faith, we maintain access to that grace so we can walk in obedience (good works)—the Gospel of the Kingdom.
- (3) Note on Disciples....

- (a) By grace you are saved through faith, **it is the gift...** But, becoming a disciple is **far from a free gift**. It has an “if”, comes with a cost, and there **MUST** be evidence!
- (b) Propagating Disciples—make disciples who can make disciples who make disciples, and so on...

D. The ONE Gospel Conspiracy

- (1) There is **ONLY ONE** Gospel (Gospel of Salvation), and you only need to do **ONE THING**, confess some words!
 - (a) The gospel is the good news that God sent His only son to die for you, who shed His blood to cover your sins, and resurrected so you would not suffer permanent death. And all you need to do is confess these ideas and your eternal salvation is secure! And that confession is universally known as...
 - (b) The Sinner’s Prayer...Or any derivative of such idea...
 1. Any true confession must be a **RESULT** of being born-again (a heart changed by grace through faith). It is not the **CAUSE** of being born-again (works leading to salvation).
 2. It is dangerous to believe that someone can get born-again by repeating some version of the “sinner’s prayer” at the prompting of the persuasive words of a repeat-after-me-pastor.

3. Extracting a confession without any true heart change is worse than ineffective. It is creating a “new church” filled with people who are convinced they are born-again because they “prayed the prayer,” yet they are not! (See *The Parable of the Wheat and the Tares* in Matthew 13:24-30 in [All That Will Be Already Is!](#))
 4. How do you evangelize an unbeliever who already believes he is saved? Hence, the danger of the persuasive words of the repeat-after-me-pastor!
 5. See [Critical Roots Theory](#) to see what you are truly confessing in the words of Romans 10:9. This is an entire study itself.
 6. But the bottom line is this...You are confessing that Y’shua is Lord and Savior (the Gospel of Salvation) AND that you believe His commandments are not too difficult, that you can walk in radical-grace-empowered-faith-based-obedience to God (The Gospel of the Kingdom).
- (2) Who is the Lord trying to teach this mature message?
- (a) Is this all gibberish to you?
 1. When this message is explained to you, the distinction between the two gospels, does it sound

like senseless babbling and meaningless gibberish to you?

2. It will if you remain a spiritual infant, as if you were just weaned off your mother's breast.
3. As such, it will be as if you are unable to walk and you keep falling on your rump!

(3) Must you be spoken to as if you I am speaking to an infant?

(a) Are you spiritual people?

1. Are you ready for for solid food?
2. Would you rather stay on milk?

(4) You should grow up already!

(a) In fact you should be a teacher by now!

1. Solid food means you have gone past the basic elements.
2. Solid Food: the message of righteousness and trained by practice to discern both good and evil

(b) Move on to maturity!

1. Maturity means moving past the Gospel of Salvation to the Gospel of the Kingdom.
2. Move past what is free and count the cost!

Summary: TO RISE OR NOT TO RISE!

3. The Scandal

A. How do some among you say that there is no resurrection?

- (1) Lies about the resurrection from the start!
 - (a) His body was stolen...
- (2) If Christ is not risen, your faith is futile!
 - (a) The Gospel of Salvation Basics
 1. Christ died for our sins: Passover
 2. He was buried: Unleavened Bread
 3. He rose again the third day: Firstfruits
 4. Many undefinable witnesses!
 - (b) The resurrection is a non-negotiable!
 1. How do some say there is no resurrection?
 2. Well, maybe they believe His body was stolen!
 3. If that's the case—all our preaching about the death, burial and resurrection is useless.
 4. And...your grace empowered faith is useless!
 - (c) The REAL problem if there is no resurrection...
 1. All the faith we preach about is pointless if Christ did not rise!
 2. And if there is no resurrection, you are still dead in your sins!

3. I guess it's easier for the Sadducees to deny the resurrection because they don't even believe the dead can rise~
- (d) Think about everything we base our faith on as Christians...
1. If we die and stay in the ground, our faith is like fiat currency!
 2. If this life is the only life there is we are a pathetic people.

QUESTIONS & DISCUSSION

1. **Read Matthew 28:1-8...**

- A. There were two groups present when the stone rolled away; who were they and how did they react?
- B. What did one group do to confirm the Lord had risen?
- C. What instructions were they given after they saw it with their own eyes?

2. **In Matthew 28:9-10, what happens when they encounter the risen Lord?**

- A. What extra details do we get from John's Gospel? (See John 20:16-17)

- B. Who else sees Y'shua soon after His resurrection and highlight the important details about their encounter with Him from Luke 24:28-35.

3. Why might we consider Matthew 28:11-15 the greatest conspiracy in human history?

- A. What do the guards do after what they had witnessed?
- B. Why do you think they did that instead of reporting to Pilate? (See Acts 12:5-18 to help)
- C. What do those who hear their report do with the information?
- D. How is this related to Matthew 27:64?
- E. What choice do the guards make and how does God think about such things? (See: Deuteronomy 16:19; Exodus 23:8; Psalms 15:1-5; 26:8-10; Isaiah 1:23-24; 5:22-23; Proverbs 17:23; I Samuel 8:1-3)
- F. Describe how other guards reacted when they encountered the supernatural. (See: Matthew 27:54; Acts 16:16-40)

4. Read Esther 3:8-9 and Judges 16...

- A. How were bribes used in these passages?
- B. Bonus: read Numbers 22-25 and describe what a pay-for-play prophet looks like.

5. Read Matthew 28:16-20...

- A. What is the twofold commission?

- B. How is the twofold commission related to Acts 28:30-31 and Revelation 12:17?
- C. How does the first part relate to I Corinthians 2:1-5?
- D. How does the second part relate to I Corinthians 2:6-16?

6. Relating scripture to scripture...

- A. Relate I Corinthians 2:1-5 to John 1:12-13; 3:16; Romans 5:6-8; 10:13 and Ephesians 2:8.
- B. Relate I Corinthians 2:6-16 to Romans 5:1-2 and Ephesians 2:8-10.

7. Becoming a disciple is far from a free gift. It has an “if”, comes with a cost, and there MUST be evidence!

- A. Use the following scriptures to prove this is true. (See: Luke 9:23; 14:26-33; John 8:31-32; 13:35)

8. Use I Corinthians 2:1-5 to decide if the following statements are true or false.

- A. Any true confession must be a RESULT of being born-again (a heart changed by grace through faith). It is not the CAUSE of being born-again (works leading to salvation).
- B. It is dangerous to believe that someone can get born-gain by repeating some version of the “sinner’s prayer” at the prompting of the persuasive words of a repeat-after-me-pastor.

- C. Extracting a confession without any true heart change is worse than ineffective. It is creating a “new church” filled with people who are convinced they are born-again because they “prayed the prayer,” yet they are not!
- D. It is difficult to evangelize an unbeliever who already believes he is saved? Hence, the danger of the persuasive words of the repeat-after-me-pastor!

9. Read the following passages: (Isaiah 28:9-13; 1 Corinthians 3:1-3; Hebrews 5:11-14; 6:1-3)

- A. Write a short essay comparing and contrasting an immature and a mature Christian.

10. Review the great scandal in Matthew 28:12-13...

- A. Write a short narrative integrating that conspiracy with Paul’s lesson in I Corinthians 15:1-19.