

Study Notes - Matthew 28:1-15 – Graeme Clark 30 April 2017

Mat 28:1-15 NIV After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb. (2) There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. (3) His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. (4) The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men. (5) The angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. (6) He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. (7) Then go quickly and tell his disciples: 'He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him.' Now I have told you." (8) So the women hurried away from the tomb, afraid yet filled with joy, and ran to tell his disciples. (9) Suddenly Jesus met them. "Greetings," he said. They came to him, clasped his feet and worshiped him. (10) Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid. Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me." (11) While the women were on their way, some of the guards went into the city and reported to the chief priests everything that had happened. (12) When the chief priests had met with the elders and devised a plan, they gave the soldiers a large sum of money, (13) telling them, "You are to say, 'His disciples came during the night and stole him away while we were asleep.' (14) If this report gets to the governor, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble." (15) So the soldiers took the money and did as they were instructed. And this story has been widely circulated among the Jews to this very day.

1. Why do you think that the Chief Priests were so keen to hush up the evidence for the resurrection of Jesus from the dead? cf John 5:47
2. Can you think of everyday examples of people ignoring evidence because the implications do not suit them?
3. In a post truth society how could we answer when people say 'science has disproved the Bible, archaeology has disproved the bible, 'it's an accepted fact' that Jesus survived the crucifixion and set up home in the south of France with Mary Magdalene etc
4. Why are people often more ready to believe Dan Brown (da Vinci Code) or the latest sensationally discovered alternative gospel than the bible accounts?
5. In a society which has rejected truth, and will be unimpressed with e.g. evidence for the resurrection, is it more effective to demonstrate that Christianity works, than to argue that it is true?
6. Graeme suggested three ways in which we can operate in a post truth society in which speaking out is not appreciated. How do we respond to them?
  - You can live differently (see 1 Peter 2:12)
  - We can pray regularly (see James 5:17-18; Ephesians 6:10-12,18)
  - Speak out anyway (see Acts 4:1-20; 1 Peter 3:15-17)
7. Take time to pray for one another in our particular arenas of witness.

John S Smith 2 May 2017