



**Series:** Holy Week Messages

**Passage** Matthew 28

**Title:** The Power of Jesus' Resurrection

**Speaker:** Pastor David Menard – 4/12/2020

**Discussion Starter** –Jesus's opponents in Jerusalem had the benefit of all the earthly power possible, including the direct support of the Roman governor. But his opponents were afraid that Jesus' prediction of his resurrection might actually come true. A detachment of guards were posted at the tomb but God's plans could be not undone. Consider and discuss why the Jewish leaders continued to deny the divinity of Jesus given all that they had witnessed, including the afternoon of darkness, earthquake, and tearing of the veil at the temple. How is this an example of willful ignorance?

### **Prophecy fulfilled**

- What is the "day of preparation"? What was being prepared? What day follows the "day of preparation? What were the Pharisees doing on this day? How is this ironic?
- Why did the Pharisees visit Governor Pilate? What did they fear? Why did they say, "the last deception will be worse than the first"? (Matthew 27:64)
- How is the angel described? What did he do? Where was he sitting? When did Jesus leave the tomb (trick question maybe)? What was the purpose of the earthquake?
- Mary Magdalene and Mary, mother of James were the first to discover the empty tomb and to see the resurrected Jesus. Read Matthew 27:55-56 and 27:61. Why is it significant that these women were the first to the tomb? Does this show some special courage or faith?
- The Pharisees bribed the guards to say that they witnessed the disciples stealing Jesus' body. The guards had witnessed the angel opening the tomb. Before you were a believer did you ignore the clear evidence of God's presence in your life? Was this deception successful?
- What does Jesus call his disciples in verse 28:10? The disciples abandoned Jesus in his time of need, but he still addresses them fondly. How do you respond when wronged by someone? Why is it difficult to follow Jesus' example?

### **Willingly Ignorant**

- Some of the disciples doubted the account of Jesus' death and resurrection. Do you think they all overcame their doubt? How do you deal with occasional waning of your faith?
- The last time the eleven saw Jesus was at Gethsemane – the disciples ran from the guards in fear, abandoning Jesus. How do you think they felt seeing Jesus for the first time after his resurrection? How do you respond when you feel that you have disappointed Jesus? How does Jesus respond to the eleven?
- What does it mean to be willingly ignorant? How is this different from skepticism? How do we help our unbelieving friends to understand the difference?
- Why is a thoughtful study of scripture key to our relationship with Jesus? How is this related to the mission given by Jesus in verse 19?