

The Resurrection in God's Redemptive Plan

"He Was Buried"

The Proof of His Death

1 Corinthians 15:4a

In our series on The Resurrection in God's Redemptive Plan, we have been following the Gospel as laid out in 1 Corinthians 15. We have already considered how death entered the world through sin and how Christ came as the Substitute who died for our sins according to the Scriptures, but the Bible doesn't stop there. Between the death of Christ and the resurrection of Christ, Scripture includes this simple but important statement: "and that he was buried."

At first glance, that may seem like a passing detail — almost a transition line between the cross and the empty tomb, but in reality, it is far more than that. The burial of Christ is part of the Gospel record, part of the apostolic witness, and part of God's redemptive purpose. It tells us that His death was real, that His humiliation was deep, and that His resurrection would be certain.

The cross tells us that He died for our sins.

The tomb tells us that He truly entered death.

And the resurrection tells us that death could not hold Him.

So this morning, we want to consider this phrase: "and that he was buried."

I. HIS BURIAL DECLARED THE REALITY OF HIS DEATH

When the Bible says, "*and that he was buried,*" it is not adding an unnecessary detail; it is giving us the proof that Christ's death was real.

A. His burial confirmed that His death was actual.

1. The burial was the public acknowledgment that Jesus had truly died. Men bury the dead, not the living.
 - a) Crucifixion had ended in death. Pilate himself wanted verification, and once received, there was official confirmation of Christ's death before burial — Mark 15:43-45.
 - b) His body was removed from the cross as a dead body.

Acts 13:29

²⁹ And when they had fulfilled all that was written of him, they took *him* down from the tree, and laid *him* in a sepulchre.
 - c) He was placed in a tomb because life had left Him — John 19:39-42.
2. The burial is the witness of history that Christ truly entered death. The tomb confirms the certainty of the cross.

B. His burial answered every denial of His true death.

1. The burial of Jesus stands against every attempt to reduce the cross to mere appearance of death.
2. There have been false theories around since Jesus died trying to explain away His actual death, but none of them hold up under the scrutiny of Scripture: that Jesus had to die to pay our sin debt.

C. His burial confirmed a finished atonement, not an unfinished one.

Some have taught that Christ went to hell to continue paying for sin, but Scripture presents His atoning work as finished on the cross. His burial was not the continuation of His suffering for sin, but the confirmation that He had truly died.

1. When Jesus cried, *"It is finished,"* the work of redemption had been accomplished.

John 19:30

³⁰ When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, **It is finished:** and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.

2. His body lay in the tomb, while His spirit was in the Father's hands, awaiting the resurrection morning.

Luke 23:46

⁴⁶ And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, **Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit:** and having said thus, he gave up the ghost.

3. He was with the repentant thief in paradise.

Luke 23:43

⁴³ And Jesus said unto him, **Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise.**

- Before the empty tomb could declare His victory, the occupied tomb had to declare His death.

II. HIS BURIAL DISPLAYED THE DEPTH OF HIS HUMILIATION

The burial of Christ was not just the outcome of death; it was part of the humiliation. The eternal Son of God, the Lord of glory, was laid in a grave. The One who is life itself entered the tomb. His burial shows how completely He identified with fallen man under the curse, though He

Himself was without sin.

A. He submitted to the lowest condition of human humiliation (Phil. 2:6-8).

Death itself is humbling, but burial carries that humiliation to its obvious, visible conclusion.

1. He was born in humility — laid in a manger in Bethlehem.
2. He lived in humility — He didn't have a place to lay His head.

Matthew 8:20

²⁰ And Jesus saith unto him, *The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.*

3. He died in humiliation — He died on a cross.

Galatians 3:13

¹³ Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed *is* every one that hangeth on a tree:

4. He was buried in humiliation — in a borrowed tomb.

B. He entered fully into the consequence of the Fall.

1. Not as a sinner, but as the sinner's Substitute.
2. The burial shows that He did not just touch death, He entered it fully. Hebrews tells us that Jesus tasted (underwent) "*death for every man.*" He did not stand at a distance from the curse; He entered fully into the reality of death itself. His burial displays that humiliation before our eyes.

The One who is Life was laid in the tomb.

Hebrews 2:9

⁹ But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.

Luke 9:27

²⁷ But I tell you of a truth, there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God.

3. Graves exist because sin brought death. Christ entered that “realm” willingly, not because of His own guild, but because of ours.
 - The grave is one of the clearest marks of the Fall in this world, and Christ went even there for us.

C. Even in His burial, God’s sovereign purpose was being fulfilled.

1. His burial was lowly, but it was not random. Even here, God was fulfilling His Word. He died among criminals, yet was buried in a rich man’s tomb. Even in humiliation, divine purpose governed every detail.

Isaiah 53:9

⁹ And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither *was any* deceit in his mouth.

2. The importance of this is seen in the shame of His death, the honor of His burial, and the sovereignty of God over both — Matt. 27:57-60.
 - From Bethlehem to Calvary to Joseph’s tomb, every step downward reveals the greatness of His

redeeming love.

III. HIS BURIAL DEMONSTRATED THE CERTAINTY OF HIS RESURRECTION

The burial of Christ did not only prove that He died and display how low He stooped; it also demonstrated the certainty and glory of the resurrection that was to follow.

A. A real burial made for a real resurrection

If Christ had not truly died and been buried, then the resurrection could be reduced to a figure of speech, a vision, or a mere revival from fainting. But because He was buried, the resurrection was bodily, historical, and victorious.

- The empty tomb means nothing unless there was first an occupant in it.

B. The sealed tomb made the triumph unmistakable — Matthew 27:59-28:6

1. The burial account in Scripture includes details that emphasize the certainty of the resurrection.
 - a) The stone was rolled to the door.
 - b) The tomb was known.
 - c) The place was observed.
 - d) The tomb was sealed and watched.
2. God so ordered the burial of Christ that even the precautions of His enemies became witnesses to His resurrection.

C. His burial assured the defeat of death for His people

Because Christ truly entered the grave and came forth victorious:

1. Death has been conquered at its core.

Acts 2:24

²⁴ Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.

Romans 6:9

⁹ Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him.

2. The grave is no longer the final word for the believer.

Revelation 1:18

¹⁸ I *am* he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.

3. His resurrection guarantees ours — 1 Thess. 4:15-17.

Conclusion:

The burial of Christ is not a small detail in the Gospel — it is a solemn and glorious testimony.

- It declares that His death was real — the Son of God truly died for our sins.
- It displays the depth of His humiliation — the Lord of glory was laid in a grave, entering fully into the condition brought upon man by sin.
- And it demonstrates the certainty of His resurrection — the tomb that received Him could not keep Him.

So when we read, “and that he was buried,” we are not reading a mere historical footnote. We are reading part of the saving work of Christ as it unfolded in history. He died — He was buried — and on the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures.

And that means the Gospel is real, the payment for sin was real, the victory over death is real, and the hope held out to sinners is real.

If you are here without Christ, then you need to understand that the One who was buried was buried because He truly died, and He truly died for sins — not His own, but ours. The question is not whether Christ died; the question is whether you have come to Him by faith. There is no salvation in admiring the story from a distance. There is only salvation in receiving the crucified, buried, and risen Christ as Lord and Saviour.

And for the child of God, the burial of Christ means that our Redeemer has gone all the way into death and come out victorious. He has entered the grave and conquered it. Therefore, the grave is not the end for those who belong to Him. Because He was buried and rose again, we have a living hope.

So let us not leave the tomb in despair, but in confidence — because the grave that proved His death would soon become the place that declared His victory.