

26-0527wc Neighborly Apologetics

Dr. Del Tackett's Neighborly Apologetics Webinar Series

26-0527wc - NA- 9-Jesus Resurrection, Part 4.2, Dr. Del Tackett

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Neighborly Apologetics Transcript

26-0527-Transcript: 9 - Jesus Resurrection, Part 4.2 (0:04 - 1:01:31)

Title: Christ's Resurrection, **Facilitator:** Scott Reynolds

Part 1

(0:04) Well, again, my greetings to all of you. I appreciate the fact that you've taken your time (0:09) to join us here tonight. And so tonight we finally come to what is probably the central piece of not (0:20) only Christianity, but it's a central piece in our apologetics.

I don't even know how many (0:27) sessions it's going to take us to get through all of the resurrection pieces, (0:32) but it doesn't matter. We're not trying to somehow, you know, run a race. Our job is (0:40) to do the very best we can to help you and to help your families be able to understand (0:47) the truth about Jesus, the truth about the scriptures, about God, about all of that.

(0:53) That's why we're doing this, neighborly apologetics. And just to remind you again, (1:01) our overall passion that we're running from, from the royal law that God has given to us, (1:11) Paul says that everything is summed up into one thing, and that is to love our neighbor. And we (1:17) believe that that's exactly what God has wanted us to do.

And so we are, we are following that (1:27) and the engagement. We believe that God has entrusted the primary work of the kingdom of (1:33) the common and every Christian family. And therefore, when we begin to build relationships (1:38) with people as we pray for them diligently, that God is going to begin to open their heart and their (1:45) mind.

And in that trusted relationship, begin to ask questions that we're going to begin to (1:50) understand what the obstacles are in their life. What are the experiences that have put a roadblock (1:59) between them and, and understanding who Christ is. So in that context, we're doing what we, (2:07) we believe is neighborly.

Okay. So these are the three questions that we've been kind of using as (2:12) a guide as we've been going through the neighborly apologetics. Why does God exist? (2:16) Is the Bible reliable? And then

who is Jesus? And it's in this section and answering the question, (2:24) who is Jesus? We've looked at these questions already, the promise that was laid out for (2:31) Christ and the scriptures, the prophecy that pointed to him and his life and his words.

(2:36) And we went through all of that. And then last time we're looking at his death and resurrection (2:42) we talked about the death of Jesus and the, all of the arguments against the, (2:50) the belief that Jesus was really dead, the swoon theory and all of those other things. (2:55) And now we're ready to deal with the resurrection of Jesus.

And this, again, as we mentioned before, (3:04) that this is really the heart and the key of the Christian apologetic. It's really the (3:11) fundamental heart of Christianity, of our faith in Christ. So this is a major piece that we're (3:21) looking at now.

I have a long thought about how critical it is for us to understand and to (3:31) have the ability to simply dialogue with people, our neighbors, when we get to that point where (3:38) we have that trusted relationship, that the reality is that all of history, all of world (3:45) history has focused itself and centered itself and split itself upon Jesus Christ. (3:55) So the times we look at when we talk about antiquity and talk about people who existed (4:03) and when Caesar began to reign, when the Roman empire first began, all the way back to other (4:12) antiquities, we, we date them according to what used to be a BC or AD date. It is more popular (4:21) now to use the before common era or common era.

And, but all of those, even that change itself, (4:29) even though it was, as you read about people talking about the common era and why it's common (4:35) era instead of BC and AD, it was to get away from the exclusivity associated with making dating (4:47) associated with Jesus. But it doesn't, it doesn't really change the fact that the dates that are (4:54) before Christ are now called BCE and the dates that are after Christ are called CE. (5:02) The reality is that our dating of history is focused upon this man.

And so I have always (5:09) thought it's appropriate to ask people, so, you know, if our history is dated based upon (5:15) the life of this individual, then it might be important to understand who that individual is. (5:21) Um, and so it is Christ's resurrection in the end that really has made, uh, this an important (5:29) event. Uh, the beginning when, uh, time began to be split, uh, according to this, it was basically (5:38) dated around the birth of Christ.

Uh, and, and people are very quick to tell us that, (5:45) well, that was all wrong. Uh, that's not really, uh, we, we made the mistake in the dating, (5:53) because Jesus was really born maybe three or four BC rather than, uh, one BC or one AD. There was (5:59) no zero there.

Um, and so they say, so it's not really valid dating. Well, the reality is we still (6:06) date those, uh, our dates, whether it's used in the common era or the use of BCAD dates, (6:15) they are all centered and focused around this split in, in time and world history based upon, (6:23) uh, the arrival of this man named Jesus. But that would not have been a big deal, (6:32) quite frankly, if it were not for the resurrection of Christ.

And we know that because yes, the (6:39) world, the history of the world is divided and split based upon that event, but it's really (6:46) the resurrection. And we know that we read this in Corinthians. Uh, and I want you to, (6:52) to not just let this verse pass by you, because there is something very deep and powerful (6:59) that is being expressed here by the scripture when it says,

if Christ had not been raised, (7:06) then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain.

Paul continued later to say, if Christ (7:15) has not been raised, then your faith is futile and you are still in your sin. So what the scripture (7:24) is telling us is the resurrection of Christ, the reality of this event, and as Francis (7:31) Schaeffer would say in the warp and woof of time, that event itself is so critical to our Christian (7:40) faith that if that did not happen, then our faith is not only futile, but we are still in our sin. (7:48) So that means that the resurrection of Christ and our salvation, the forgiveness for our sins, (7:54) is somehow tied to this resurrection event.

So it's, it's hard to, to overstate the reality of (8:06) this event. And yet, uh, what has happened over time is that the event has been boiled down to (8:15) basically, um, some holiday that we observe. Uh, we spent a lot of time preparing for it, (8:22) and, uh, then it's over.

I remember when I was at the White House, uh, it was a big event every (8:29) spring, uh, to dress up, uh, the South Lawn of the White House, even though it was always dressed up, (8:36) but it was especially dressed up and prepared for, uh, the famous Easter egg roll that occurred. (8:43) And, uh, selected people were invited to come to that event. Uh, everything was decked out (8:50) and all kinds of goodies and everything were prepared and people flocked into the South Lawn.

(8:57) And then at the right time, when the event was to close, the Secret Service guys would come in and (9:03) make sure everybody was shuffled out. Uh, and then the place was rapidly cleaned up and it was all (9:11) back to normal. Uh, it happens all over, uh, in, in cities and towns.

Uh, people, uh, make (9:20) special preparations, uh, choirs and, uh, music bands, maybe working overtime, uh, for the event. (9:28) Lilies are somehow, uh, prodded, uh, to bloom at the right time and lilies are lining the front of (9:36) a sanctuary. Um, people, I don't know if they still buy hats and so forth, but people dress up, (9:43) people show up who haven't been in church for a year, uh, and they come and they show up on Easter (9:50) and, uh, they hear the music and the message and then, uh, they go home and watch the game and, (9:56) and, um, and it's over.

And Monday comes and it was just, uh, another holiday. But (10:04) from the spiritual perspective, the, and the history, uh, that we have in terms of Body of (10:12) Christ, that, uh, this was not just an event that occurred once a year and was celebrated, (10:20) uh, and then all the wrappings were put away. The, it was extremely prominent in the testimony, (10:28) the early testimony of believers and the apostles.

Whenever they spoke, it, uh, seemed as if they (10:37) were ready and eager to point to the resurrection. And I say that also to, uh, to, to say that (10:47) even Spurgeon, uh, later on in his life, lamented at this. He lamented as he, he said, (10:55) as he studied more and more, uh, the preaching of the apostles and the testimony of the early (11:02) believers, that he lamented that he had failed.

And one of the shortcomings of all of his preaching, (11:12) uh, was that he failed to focus on the resurrection. And, uh, and that is true today. (11:21) Uh, we don't really focus a lot on it unless we're talking about apologetics, (11:27) but in reality, and one of the reasons why I did a 40 day, um, article arriving on, (11:36) on Easter several years ago, and, uh, by the way, we're, we're hoping and praying that God's allow (11:42) us to, to finally print that as, as a book.

But the purpose of that was to spend 40 days every day (11:50) thinking and talking about the resurrection of Jesus in such a way that it may no longer just (11:57) simply be a one day holiday for

us, but it might be more cemented within the reality of everyday (12:04) life that Jesus lives, that he is risen, that he is alive, that we do not, uh, we don't belong to (12:14) some religious sect, uh, but we belong, uh, to the one who lives. And so it was prominent in the (12:23) early testimony, I call your attention to several of these passages. There are many more, but this (12:30) is a very critical one.

It's one that we're going to be pointing back to in, in, uh, several, uh, (12:37) sessions from now, because this is considered the very early creed that had developed within (12:44) Christianity. We will use this as the evidence against one of the arguments that resurrection (12:51) of Jesus, uh, was simply some legend and myth that had grown up, uh, over time, because this creed (13:02) was already, um, available and being used within the body of Christ, uh, within what some people (13:12) believe to be within months. This is Paul writing to the church in Corinth, and this is what he said, (13:20) Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which you received, (13:26) in which also you stand, by which also you are saved.

(13:31) Jehovah has the word which I preached you, unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you, (13:38) as of first importance, what I also received. And let me stop for a second.

Remember, uh, (13:45) that Paul, who is Saul, had been persecuting the church. This is very early, uh, in Christianity, (13:52) not that long after Christ, uh, had been, uh, put to death and then resurrected, and he was (14:00) persecuting believers. He was on his way to Damascus, uh, to put them in jail and possibly (14:06) put them to death and was there that, that Jesus, uh, appeared to him.

He was then sent to Damascus, (14:15) and he was blinded, uh, and he was there at the house of Judas on Straight Street, and Ananias (14:24) came to him, and it is not hard to think that Ananias was the one that gave this to Paul, (14:31) that this was the creed that was being given to Paul, uh, while he was there in Damascus, (14:39) because he said, this is what I received, that Christ died for our sins according to the (14:46) scripture, that he was buried, and that he was raised up on the third day according to the (14:51) scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas. Then did 12. After that, he appeared to more than 500 (14:57) brethren at one time, most of whom remain until now, but some have fallen asleep.

Then he appeared (15:05) to James, then to all the apostles, and last of all, Paul says, as to one untimely born, he appeared (15:12) to me also. This is the, this was the creed, and the creed, the vast majority of this creed is spent (15:22) talking about the resurrection of Christ, that he indeed, he indeed, uh, had risen from, uh, the, (15:32) the dead. Men of Israel, this is, this is Peter in, in the very first, uh, sermon, uh, that, uh, (15:39) Peter, Peter preached after Pentecost.

Men of Israel, hear these words. Jesus of Nazareth, (15:49) a man attested to you by God with mighty works, and wonders, and signs that did God, (15:57) that God did through him in your midst. As you yourself know, this Jesus delivered up according (16:04) to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God.

You crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men. (16:13) God raised him up, loosing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to be held (16:23) by it. Paul begins, uh, uh, when Paul is then speaking, I think this is before Agrippa, uh, (16:33) no, it is in Acts 17, Paul went in and discussed him on three Sabbath days.

He reasoned with them (16:40) from the scriptures, explaining and proving that it was necessary for the Christ to suffer (16:47) and to rise from the dead. So that, and that was the fundamental message that Paul was delivering (16:56) to the church, which is the fundamental part of the creed, that Christ suffered, he was, (17:03) he was put to death, he rose from the dead, saying, this Jesus, whom I proclaim to you, (17:09) is the Messiah. He is, uh, Christ.

Paul opens up his letter to the Romans this way. Paul, (17:18) a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, (17:25) which he promised beforehand through his prophets and the holy scriptures, (17:28) conserved his son, who is descended from David, according to the flesh, and was declared to be (17:35) the son of God in power, according to the spirit of holiness, by his resurrection from the dead. (17:42) Jesus Christ, our Lord.

He was declared to be the son of God by his resurrection from the dead. (17:52) That is the power of the resurrection and the depth of the meaning of the resurrection. (18:00) Paul then later in that, uh, in Romans, he says, he talks about this constantly.

(18:06) It will be counted to us, he says. It will be counted to us who believe in him, (18:11) who raised from the dead Jesus our Lord, who's delivered up for our trespasses, (18:16) and it was raised for our justification. And then, of course, he lays this out as clear as can be.

(18:24) If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, (18:32) you will be saved. And then his letter to the Thessalonians, for example, he said, (18:38) for since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so through Jesus, God will bring (18:44) with him those who have fallen asleep. Paul is using the resurrection of Jesus (18:48) as a purpose for our hope in our resurrection.

And then we began with Peter. We'll close with Peter (18:55) in his epistle. Blessed be the God and Father, our Lord Jesus Christ.

(19:02) According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope. (19:08) How? Through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. So the resurrection of Jesus, (19:16) which we are now beginning to deal with, is not just a minor piece of the apologetics (19:23) in Christianity.

It could well be considered to be the key piece. It is the central piece. (19:31) It is the essence, not only of our apologetic, it is the essence of our faith in Christ, (19:40) because it did prove that he was the Son of God.

Now, that should not surprise us, then, (19:49) that it is the resurrection of Jesus that has been under great attack. And reminding ourselves (19:59) that we're doing this and we're going through this not simply to arm ourselves with knowledge (20:08) that is important, but we are preparing ourselves so that as we pray for our neighbors and begin to (20:17) build that relationship with them, that we are loving them with a true agape chesed love. (20:27) And they begin to ask us a reason for the hope that is in us, that we will be able to understand (20:34) about what their issues are.

So we look at these various theories, (20:41) not for us to be puffed up in our knowledge, but we look at these theories in order for us to be (20:46) able to identify people who have believed these things so that we can then begin to address them. (20:54) So we're going to get seven, I would just call them four theories, because they really don't (20:59) have much evidence behind them. They're

just a way to strike out against the resurrection (21:06) of Jesus.

And then we're going to look at one that is a fair argument. That's a fair argument. (21:15) So these seven fourth theories, some of these we have dealt with a little bit, (21:19) but in terms of now looking at it from the standpoint of the resurrection, (21:25) there is a theory that Jesus had a twin.

This is one of those most remarkable theories, (21:31) you know, that somebody is clutching at straws, but that Jesus had a twin. It wasn't really Jesus (21:39) who died on the cross, or it was Jesus who died on the cross, and then his twin was the one that (21:44) showed up as the resurrected Jesus. As we go through some of these things today, I'm going (21:51) refer back to each of these theories, and when we look at the historical facts, we will ask (21:57) ourselves how in the world the theory could even come up.

There is also the substitution theory. (22:04) We've mentioned this earlier. This is one of the things that comes primarily out of Islam, (22:13) that Jesus, of course, could not have been crucified, but someone actually (22:19) was a substitute for that, and we mentioned how ridiculous some of these things are that (22:27) Jesus' mother would have been unable to recognize that that was not her son that was on the cross.

(22:35) The hallucination theory, where people were hallucinating about the risen Jesus, (22:43) the theory that they went to the wrong tomb, the swoon theory. We mentioned this last time (22:49) we were talking about the death of Jesus, but the theory that Jesus really had not died, but (22:58) he had gone into some sort of a coma. As we have seen and heard sometimes, the horror associated (23:06) with some people that were presumed to be dead, that they were buried, and yet became (23:14) conscious in a coffin, which is probably one of the most horrifying things you can imagine.

(23:21) So the theory here is that, yeah, that's what happened to Jesus. There's the alien theory, (23:28) that the disciples stole the body, the legend theory. There are a lot of these theories, (23:33) but I'm just listing seven here, or taking a small bite.

The one argument that is worth (23:40) considering and talking about are the some of the inconsistencies in the resurrection accounts that (23:47) has to do with the number of angels, the women leaving at various different times, (23:55) and so on and so forth. We will deal with that. I will actually show you a map of Jerusalem (24:02) and try to lay it out for you that, in fact, the scripture is consistent. That will be for (24:08) a later time.

Part 2

(24:09) So let's look now at some of the historical facts. We'll look at a few of these (24:13) and talk about some of those here tonight.

When I say historical facts, by the way, we also, (24:23) and we'll deal with this in another place, we'll also deal with the reality that the (24:30) vast majority of the history that we have concerning Jesus and the resurrection of Jesus (24:39) are found, of course, in the scriptures. And yet, we cannot let someone discount those (24:48) as non-antiquity or documents from antiquity because they're just as valid as any document (24:57) from antiquity. And we will talk at a different point in terms of their validity and their value (25:08) as compared to other documents from antiquity.

We have more evidence from other non-Biblical sources (25:19) as well. When you look at whether or not Caesar lived, we have an abundant amount of evidence (25:29) that Jesus lived and very, very little that Caesar lived. But, of course, no one doubts that (25:37) Caesar lived.

And that itself should tell you that there's something about Jesus that people (25:44) are wanting to cancel. And so that motive should always be taken into consideration. It should (25:50) also be part of our neighborly apologetic to ask the question, why is it that no one, Newsweek (25:58) and Time Magazine every Easter don't have a publication that says, did Caesar really live? (26:06) It's always the Jesus, the search for the historical Jesus.

And so it's an interesting (26:12) question to ask your neighbors when you build that relationship, if you can ask that question. (26:17) Why is it that there is such a desire to try and cancel Jesus when there is no desire to cancel (26:24) the other figures in antiquity? So here are the historical facts that we have from the (26:32) documents that we have. Of course, we talked about the death and burial of Jesus.

And it was (26:36) in that examination that we realized that what Jesus went through in terms of, first of all, (26:45) going through, and this is a replica of the Roman spike that was used to drive through the wrists (26:54) and the feet of the people that were crucified. And the scourge, this is a replica of the scourge (27:03) that was used. It's a horrific device.

We talked about all of those last time. (27:09) And the reality is that no one survived the Roman crucifixion. No one.

There is no evidence (27:19) anywhere in history that anyone survived. It was an execution in the same way that if we execute (27:27) criminals today in the various ways that we do that, people don't survive that. And the Romans (27:37) were good at their execution.

They knew exactly what they're doing and no one survived that. So (27:43) here Jesus is in a state where many people didn't survive the scourging. He was now crucified, (27:51) nailed to a cross.

He was examined by professional executionists. When Pilate asked whether or not (28:02) Jesus was still alive, it was a fact that he was. They don't make those kinds of mistakes.

(28:13) And even then, Jesus is then wrapped in 75 pounds of spices, wrapped in linen, wrapped, (28:23) and around and around and around. His head is then wrapped and he's laid in a tomb. (28:31) And so no historian, there are no historians anymore who will attempt to try and argue (28:41) the swoon theory.

Jesus was dead and he was buried. The guard was then posted. This is important in (28:53) the historical analysis of the resurrection to again understand and accept the reality that the (29:02) guard had been posted in front of that tomb and the tomb had been sealed.

We're going to talk about (29:09) these things tonight as we look at the third day and the morning of the third day in terms of what (29:19) we know happened. I will label this first one this way and we're going to talk about this tonight. (29:26) I call it the creation claps its hands.

And I say that from the standpoint of saying that the (29:34) creation appears to be involved in these major events. We do not know exactly how that happens, (29:42) how God actually moves within the creation. It's very, very easy to somehow make Bambi as Disney (29:54) has done and other animation movies have tried to make non-human forms appear to be human.

(30:08) But the scripture does use those literary devices. God uses those literary devices. We (30:13) read about the trees and the mountains.

They clap their hands. They sing with joy and so forth. (30:22) The earth swallowing up Korah and so forth.

So I think it's appropriate to use the same (30:30) kind of anthropomorphic phrases. The creation claps its hands and we're going to talk about that. (30:37) The angel appears.

The stone is rolled away. The seals that were on the tomb are broken. (30:44) The guards are deeply impacted by this.

They're frozen although they still see what's going on. (30:52) And then the guards make a report of what had happened and then there's a false story. So (30:58) we will deal with these things tonight as best we can.

So we talked a little bit about this when we (31:07) talked about the crucifixion. That at the crucifixion the creation, I wouldn't say it (31:14) clapped its hands, but the creation shivered and trembled in grief as to what was going on. (31:25) You recall that there was a darkness that occurred over the land from the third to the (31:30) sixth hour from noon until 3 p.m. There were several historians from the first and second (31:35) century that wrote about that darkness.

But there were huge earthquakes that occurred. The tombs (31:42) split and so creation was involved. The creation was involved at the birth of Jesus.

The creation (31:48) was involved at the crucifixion of Jesus. And the creation now is involved on the resurrection (31:55) morning. Now after the Sabbath, for the dawn of the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene, (32:00) the other Mary, went to see the tomb.

And behold, there was a great earthquake. I don't think it (32:10) should be missed that the scripture uses this adjective. There wasn't just an earthquake, (32:18) there was a great earthquake.

I have a good friend of mine, Dr. Steve Austin, if any of you have (32:25) seen the movie, it's just his history. And by the way, as an aside, the sequel to that movie (32:32) is just being released this week, I think. But in that original movie, Dr. Steven Austin has become (32:43) a close friend of mine.

He's just a brilliant man, a genius. He's a geologist. He and I had (32:52) many hours.

The picture you see there is before Mount St. Helens. We've spent many hours in the (33:02) at this point about Dr. Steve Austin, because he's done extensive work in the area of Jerusalem (33:10) and the surrounding areas. And he has done that work in order to try and see if he could find the (33:17) evidence for these great earthquakes, and he believes that he has.

The picture you see there (33:23) on the right is a picture of a layer. If you look towards the very middle, you will see a layer that (33:31) is quite distorted. That distortion is called a seismite.

That distortion is the result of an (33:40) earthquake that occurred while the material is soft. And when it is soft, then the earthquake (33:49) and the shaking of the earthquake causes those seismites in that layer. And it is in those layers (33:57) that Dr. Austin believes he has found, because the dating appears to be correct, (34:03) that would bring him right back to that 30 A.D. approximately time frame.

He believes one of (34:12) those earthquakes would have measured on the Richter scale of five. So it was a great earthquake, (34:20) and it would have been one that would have truly shaken people. We were told, (34:28) the historical documents tell us that the hinges within the temple hinges on doors were sprung.

(34:36) We also know that the veil was torn in the midst of that earthquake. Tombs were split open. (34:45) So it was not a minor event.

It was a major event. Now this earthquake that occurs (34:54) on the resurrection morning is labeled also as a great earthquake. So we say that because it (35:02) brings us now to the guards.

There are only three passages we have that mention the guards at all. (35:11) I want us to look at each one of these, because it's in these documents that we understand (35:18) the historical facts associated with these men. The next day, that is after the day of preparation, (35:28) the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered before Pilate and said, (35:32) Sir, we remember how that imposter, speaking of Jesus, said while he was still alive, (35:38) after three days I will rise.

Therefore, order the tomb to be made secure until the third day, (35:47) lest his disciples go and steal him away and tell the people he is prisoned from the dead, (35:53) that the last fraud will be worse than the first. Pilate said to them, (35:59) you have a guard of soldiers, go make it as secure as you can. So they went and made the (36:07) tomb secure by sealing the stone and setting a guard.

We're going to come back to the notion (36:13) of the sealing of the stone, but let's talk here for a second of what we learned. And I want to (36:21) recall a little bit later as well the notion that the Pharisees had not been lost on them, (36:29) that Jesus had predicted that he would rise from the dead. And they were concerned about it enough (36:39) that they went to Pilate to make sure that they were able to secure the tomb.

(36:46) Now, why they went to Pilate, and there was an argument here, we want to deal with this, (36:52) we can deal with this now, the argument associated with were these the Temple guards or were they (36:57) Roman guards? This has become a little bit of contention. We don't really know, but it's valid (37:05) for us to speculate. And in my mind, I'll give you my position, and that is that when we see Jesus (37:12) arrested, the Greek word that is used there was that there was a cohort that had come to arrest (37:20) Jesus.

A cohort is a term referring to a Roman unit of 600 men. The odds that it would have been (37:32)

used for the Temple guard, I think, are very small. And so at the arrest of Jesus, and by the way, (37:38) that gives us a little bit of an understanding of what that might have looked like.

The arrest of (37:42) Jesus was no small deal. In 600 men, a cohort of soldiers arrived to arrest Jesus. It is not (37:52) improbable to think that this cohort that had sent to arrest Jesus were also soldiers that were assigned (38:00) during the inquiry, during the trial.

They were assigned as well during the scourging, (38:09) they were assigned as well to the crucifixion, and I believe were assigned as well at the tomb. (38:15) And so it is highly possible, even if it does not, that the things that happened at the cross, (38:22) where if you recall, we were given the notification of a centurion who after he saw everything, (38:29) the darkness and the earthquake, he saw what Jesus said, and he said, certainly, (38:35) surely this was the Son of God. And so it is not beyond imagination to think that those events (38:45) that occurred at the resurrection are still fresh on the minds of these soldiers, and it could well (38:49) be that many of them were eyewitnesses of that, and they were now assigned to guard the tomb.

(38:57) But even if it was a combination of a guard of Roman soldiers or it was the temple guard, (39:05) the temple guard is not to be dismissed. Remember, if you think about some of the mighty (39:10) men of David and Benaiah who killed the lion and the others, these were mighty men, they were (39:16) slaying a thousand. So you don't get a lesser professional if you talk about the temple guards.

(39:26) Here is the second passage we have concerning the guards. (39:30) After the Sabbath, toward the dawn of the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other (39:34) Mary went to see the tomb. And behold, there was a great earthquake.

For an angel of the Lord (39:42) descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like (39:46) lightning and his clothing white as snow. And for fear of him, the guards trembled and became (39:53) like dead men.

But the angel said to the woman, Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus (40:00) who is crucified. He is not here, but he is risen. As he said, Come, see the place where he lay.

(40:09) So this great earthquake and now the appearance of an angel, and every time we see the appearance (40:14) of a heavenly being, we almost always see that finite man is now on his knees. (40:22) And these professional soldiers are now also like dead men in the sight of this angel. (40:30) We don't know whether it's just simply because of the psychological fear that descends upon people.

(40:35) It could be the earthquake as well. It could be that God himself had frozen them, but they are (40:41) like dead men. They can't move.

And the angel rolls back the stone. Here is the third passage (40:47) that we have concerning the guards. While they were going, behold, some of the guard went into (40:59) the city and told the chief priests all that had taken place.

And when they had assembled with the (41:03) elders and taken counsel, they gave a sufficient sum of money to the soldiers and said, Tell people (41:10) his disciples came by night and stole him away while we were asleep. And if this comes to the (41:16) governor's ears, we will satisfy him, keep you out of trouble. So they took the money and did (41:22) as they were directed.

And this story has been spread among the Jews to this day. I think there (41:29) are more evidence here that these are Roman soldiers, although it doesn't really matter much. (41:34) They were soldiers.

And the fact that they had gone to the chief priests was not remarkable. (41:41) If they'd been assigned to the chief priests, as Pilate said, you have a guard. (41:48) And the Pharisees, the elders had said that they would, if this comes to the governor's ears, (41:57) well, if the governor heard about the Temple Guard, he wouldn't have anything to say about it.

(42:02) But they're assuring these soldiers that if Pilate heard about it, they would take care of (42:09) that for them. And so they spread the story that the disciples had stolen the body. (42:17) So here are some arguments.

Let's deal with these briefly. One of the arguments says, Well, (42:23) you know, wait a second, all this about the guards, all of this isn't Matthew. (42:27) And therefore, it's not really to be trusted because it's not in the rest of the Gospels.

(42:35) Well, let's think about this for just a second. Remember, John wrote this. Now, there are also (42:42) many other things that Jesus did where every one of them to be written, I suppose, that the world (42:48) itself could not contain the books that would be written.

Every historian, and we can consider (42:56) Matthew, Mark, and Luke, in this case, a historian, they're writing the story, the biography, (43:03) the events that occurred around the life of Jesus. Every historian must, by necessity, (43:10) make highly deep selections in all events that occur in order to record them. (43:19) And so, just because one of the Gospels and one Gospel alone records an event does not make that (43:29) historical event invalid.

Now, a historian would love to have two different sources or three or (43:38) four different sources, but it does not mean that that event is not invalid. What it means is the (43:46) historian decided that that was an event he wanted to record, and the other three decided there were (43:52) other things they wanted to record. For example, the washing of the feet by Jesus is only recorded (43:58) in John.

It's not recorded in the other three Gospels. Does that mean that that event did not (44:03) happen? No, it just means the other three chose to highlight other things, okay? Second, why do (44:10) the Pharisees take the resurrection prophecies seriously, but the disciples seem clueless? Okay, (44:16) this is an argument that is worth talking about, because it is very interesting, (44:21) because you remember that the disciples, when Jesus was talking about dying, here's one (44:31) we read in Mark, the Son of Man, he's telling his disciples, some of them are going to suffer these (44:35) things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes and be killed, and after (44:40) three days rise again. Now, one of the things we don't find in all of these times where Jesus is (44:46) beginning, as he has developed this relationship with the disciples, we're coming close to the end, (44:53) he begins to tell them that he's going to die.

In some cases, I'm going to be crucified. (45:00) And what's interesting, none of those say that Jesus was speaking to the Pharisees, (45:05) and so part of the argument is, well, how does the Pharisees even know this? Well, (45:09) what we do know is that the Pharisees were very, very interested in what Jesus was saying, (45:15) and it wasn't because they wanted to follow Jesus, because they wanted to find something (45:19) to trip him up. And so it's not unusual for us to find that the

Pharisees understood this.

(45:26) And no doubt they had people that were listening to Jesus as part of the crowd that was around (45:33) Jesus. But what is interesting is the question, because the disciples, remember, (45:39) didn't want to receive this. And it's possible that the disciples were emotionally involved (45:44) with Jesus.

In fact, in some cases, we can tell that some of the disciples may have had some (45:50) grand idea in terms of what the kingdom was going to look like, and they were going to rage, (45:55) sit on the right and left hand of Jesus, and so on and so forth. But they loved Jesus, (45:59) and they were emotionally involved with Jesus. And when Jesus is saying, I'm going to die, (46:04) remember, Peter is the one who took Jesus aside and rebuked him.

And Jesus then rebuked Peter (46:10) for saying that. And so it's not surprising that the disciples who were emotionally involved (46:18) deeply were finding some ways to rationalize this, some ways to just selectively not accept it, (46:28) where the Pharisees didn't have those kinds of obstacles. And so it was very clear (46:35) that they understood Jesus had made this prediction.

And then there's a question that (46:42) I think is a minor question, but it's an interesting one. Did the guards even know (46:46) that the tomb is empty? Because none of the scripture says that they were overlooked inside (46:50) of the tomb. Well, I mean, if you think practically of this, if you're a soldier, (46:55) and you've been meant to guard the tomb, and then you have this incredible event of an angel (47:00) rolling back the stone of the tomb, you have this earthquake that, you know, if you've ever (47:06) been in an earthquake, there's nothing more unsettling.

I remember when I was in Puerto (47:11) Rico, and there was an earthquake, and the whole earth then feels like all of a sudden it's an (47:16) ocean. It's most unsettling. And the soldiers had gone through this, and now they're sitting (47:23) there, and maybe they're becoming unfrozen, and to think, well, none of the soldiers said, (47:27) hey, let's go look inside the tomb.

Of course they did, because when they went back and spoke (47:33) to the Pharisees, the Pharisees were then spreading the story, which I think is a confirmation (47:40) here, spreading a story that the disciples had stolen the body. They would not have said that (47:47) if the soldiers had not seen the empty tomb. But the other point of this is very, very important, (47:55) and we will come back again as another argument later on, but it's important to make note here (48:02) that Matthew is laying claim to the fact that the Pharisees were spreading this story, (48:10) and he was writing within this generation very, very early after the resurrection of Jesus, (48:17) and he is making this statement that this story is spread among the Jews to this day.

If that (48:22) had not been true, then people would have known it was not true when it was written. And so that's (48:28) part of the confirmation that people make when you're looking at historical documents. If you're (48:37) going to say something that could be disproven in the day it was written, then it just most likely (48:42) be true.

Okay, so let's look now at the angel rolling away the stone. Here is the testimony. (48:50) Now after the Sabbath for the dawn of the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene came together, (48:53) Mary went to see the tomb.

We read this earlier. And behold, there was a great earthquake, (48:57) where an angel, Lord, descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone and sat upon it. (49:04) His appearance

was like lightning, his clothing like a snow, and for fear of heavenly guards, (49:08) troubled it became like dead men.

But the angel said to the women, do not be afraid, (49:13) for I know that you seek Jesus who is crucified. He is not here, for he has risen, as he said, come (49:20) see the place where he lay. And so one of the questions, why was the stone rolled away? There (49:27) was an argument at one time, it doesn't hold much water anymore.

But one of the arguments was why (49:33) was the stone rolled away? I mean, the only reason to roll the stone away is the disciples need to (49:39) steal the body. You know, if Jesus is resurrected, and if he is in some resurrected body, then he just (49:47) why do you have to roll away the stone? Well, you have to roll away the stone in order for the angel (49:54) to invite the women to come and examine it. It wasn't for Jesus to escape the tomb.

It wasn't (50:04) rolled away. Jesus is somehow waiting inside there for the angel to roll the stone away, (50:11) and then he secretly steals away. The guards don't see him, the women don't see him.

No, (50:18) we know, we don't understand this completely, but remember, it was made very clear to us, (50:25) where Jesus came into a room that was locked. We're told two different times when he did this. (50:30) And very clearly, both times said that the door was locked, and yet Jesus appeared to them.

(50:35) Now, whether or not Jesus somehow materialized there, or whether he passed through the wall, (50:42) we don't know. But the reality is that Jesus didn't have to wait for the stone to be rolled (50:48) away. In fact, the reality is, the way the historical document reads, Jesus had already (50:56) left the tomb.

He had risen, and now the angel was rolling away the stone in order for the women to (51:04) see, for possibly the guards to see, which I'm sure they did, for the disciples to see, (51:10) for John to come and look and now understand what had happened for anyone. Because that stone was (51:18) rolled away, and now anyone could come. I have no doubt that the Pharisees themselves ran to the tomb (51:24) and examined it themselves.

I have no doubt that there are many people who visited that tomb (51:31) to look at the evidence. And this is a good time to talk about the fact that God has not (51:40) left us with a faith that is blind. Don't let people make that argument with you, (51:46) and help them understand that, look, the faith we've been given is not some blind faith.

We (51:53) don't have some blind leap in the dark. God has from the very beginning made all sorts of (52:00) efforts for us to be able to see the reality of who he is, the pillar and the cloud. All of these (52:10) things are the physical evidence that makes our faith real, the miracles that Jesus did.

(52:19) And now the resurrection is not left to us as some spiritual thing that happened that we're supposed (52:25) to kind of just believe in some material thing that occurred, and nobody could see it at all. (52:32) That's not the case. Not the case.

The angel rolls the stone away and says, okay, look at the evidence. (52:40) It's all right here for you to see. And this is why one of the foremost legal minds ever, (52:48) I mean he's considered one of the most legal minds that's ever existed, Sir Norman Anderson, (52:56) examined this whole thing for a lifetime, and he finally concluded this.

The empty tomb forms a (53:04) veritable rock on which all radicalistic theories of the resurrection dash themselves abate. In (53:10) other words, the fact that the tomb was empty is impossible to get around. As he says, it's the (53:18) rock on which all of these theories dash themselves.

Okay, I want to talk finally here about the (53:25) seals broken, and we'll have to move quickly through here. And so I'll point you to just (53:31) the highlighted verses. We've read this passage before.

The soldiers were told to make it as (53:37) secure as you can, make the tomb secure by sealing. They went and made the tomb secure by sealing (53:45) the stone and then setting a guard. So the picture I think is valuable for you because (53:50) this is a very, very possible way that they had secured that stone, that they had put either (53:57) hooks, padded hooks into the rock and rings.

Those ropes were then wrapped around that stone (54:06) and various points, and those rocks were then sealed with ropes. So it would have been impossible (54:15) to move that stone without those seals breaking and that clay being destroyed. So let's talk about (54:22) the seals quickly.

First of all, seals in that day were inviolable. In other words, once a seal (54:29) had been made, you were not to break that seal. In the book of Esther, when King Ahasuerus issued (54:37) the order to save the Jews, he commanded them to seal it with the king's ring for an edict written (54:42) in the name of the king and sealed with the king's ring cannot be revoked.

When Daniel was thrown to (54:51) the lion's den, the stone was brought and laid on the mouth of Dan, and the king sealed it with his (54:55) own signet, with the signet of his lord, that nothing might be changed concerning Daniel. (55:03) In Isaiah, the vision concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, the scripture says this. So the (55:07) vision of all this has become to you like the words of a book that is sealed.

When men give it (55:14) to one who can read, saying, read this, he says, I cannot, for it is sealed. And that brings our (55:22) minds to remember in Revelation when John was weeping because there was no one worthy to break (55:29) the seals and open the scroll. But the lamb, standing as though it had been slain, was worthy (55:36) to break the seals.

And when he did so, that is when we had great calamity that came upon the (55:44) earth. So I want to close with this encouragement to us from John chapter 6. Do not work for the (55:53) food that perishes, but for the food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give (55:59) to you. For on him God the Father has set his seal.

That means this is a seal that will never (56:05) be broken. In Ephesians, Paul writes this, in him you also, when you heard the word of truth, (56:13) the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, you were sealed with the promised (56:23) Holy Spirit. No one can break that seal but God himself.

It is God who established us with you in (56:31) Christ and has anointed us and who has also put his seal on us and given us his spirit in our (56:38) hearts as a guarantee. You and I have been sealed and that seal of God is a seal that gives us (56:48) comfort and understanding that we are his. And as Jesus said, nothing can snatch you out of his (56:57) hands.

And the faith that we have is a faith that comes from the reality of that resurrection that (57:04) occurred. We have just begun to look at the very first part of the apologetics associated with the (57:12) resurrection. Again, I don't know how many sessions we have before us to get through all of

this, (57:18) but next we're going to look at the witnesses that came to the tomb and what those witnesses (57:24) declared as the result of that.

Okay, so Mark, I think we're probably, we may even be over, (57:31) but maybe we're right on time. And so I will turn this back over to you. Awesome.

Just a quick final (57:38) announcement that tonight's live stream recording will be made available around tomorrow morning or (57:44) a little bit later in the day. Along with that will be Dr. Tackett's slides, so no worries about (57:50) trying to capture all that information. We'll provide those in PDF format.

And then a reminder (57:55) that all of the series is available online at deltacca.com forward slash webinars dash two. (58:02) Just look up in the main navigation where it says webinars. Click on that and you'll see the series (58:07) of neighborly apologetics.

One last final thing to mention, big questions about the engagement (58:15) project. If that's something you have not checked out yet, please take a look at that. We've been (58:21) doing trainings for the last three years.

We've just launched a new online training (58:28) that makes it quick and accessible. No less important, but definitely a new way of presenting (58:36) that training. So I'll include all these links in the follow-up email.

Again, thank you so much, (58:42) Dr. Tackett, for this presentation. If you could close our time in prayer, we'll wrap up tonight. (58:48) Okay.

And again, thank you for all of you who joined us tonight. We pray that the Lord is going (58:53) to use some of this in your life, and most importantly in the life of those who've got (58:59) his providential place near you. Father, we thank you that you have given us a strong testimony, (59:05) that you have not left us with just some sort of blind leap of faith, but you, in fact, (59:13) sent an angel to roll the stone away and invited us to come in and examine the evidence, as you (59:20) have done all the way along, that people are invited to come and test and see that you are (59:29) who you say you are, that Jesus was everything that he said he was, everything that he demonstrated (59:34) to be.

And Lord, we pray that you would help us as we begin to pray for those who are around us, (59:43) as we begin to build those relationships, that you will begin to soften hearts, open eyes, (59:48) and in the midst of those relationships, their questions will reveal to us, you would help us (59:54) understand the obstacles that they face, and Lord, that we would be diligent and that we would find (1:00:00) ourselves then studying and learning to be able to respond to them. Lord, all for your glory, (1:00:09) in Jesus' name, amen. God bless.

Bye-bye. God bless you, everyone. Have a good evening.