

26-0610wc Neighborly Apologetics

Dr. Del Tackett's Neighborly Apologetics Webinar Series

26-0610wc - NA- 9-Jesus' Resurrection, Part 4.3, Dr. Del Tackett

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Neighborly Apologetics Transcript

26-0610-Transcript: 9 - Jesus' Resurrection, Part 4.3 (0:04 - 51:52)

Title: *Witnesses of the Empty Tomb*, **Facilitator:** Scott Reynolds

Part 1

(0:04) Let me offer also my greetings to all of you. (0:09) I will try to put these slides in a PDF and get those out to Mark as soon as we're done (0:17) here so he will have those out to you as well. (0:23) So this is, as Mark said, this is part of our series on neighborly apologetics.

(0:29) We call it neighborly apologetics as opposed to the classical academic apologetics. (0:37) We use those academic apologetics as a basis for understanding and we're thankful for all (0:44) of that. (0:45) But we're dealing here with how the Christian family can engage their neighbors when their (0:53) neighbors begin to ask questions that lead us to a particular area that we would want (1:00) to respond and give it a defense for.

(1:03) But it's going to be in the context of that deep relationship. (1:08) And so we're not talking about some kind of an argument. (1:11) We're not trying to win an argument.

(1:13) This is something that occurs as a result of us building a relationship with people. (1:18) And in the context of that relationship, to then respond to their questions as the scripture (1:25) says that we are to be prepared to give a defense to anyone who asks us for a reason (1:31) for the hope that is in us. (1:32) You have to do it with gentleness and respect.

(1:36) All this comes, of course, from the royal law, the law of Jesus to love your neighbor. (1:41) I think this is possibly what Paul's referring to when he talks about the law of Christ. (1:46) But Paul says everything is boiled down to this one thing, to love your neighbor.

(1:51) And so that is why we've created the engagement project, directing us to do that and praying (1:58) that the body of Christ will catch that vision, that the body of Christ will then begin to (2:04) impact the culture around us. (2:06) And so we have this, what I call the worldview postulate that God has entrusted the primary (2:11) work of the kingdom to the common everyday Christian

family who are to fulfill their (2:19) priestly role as a royal priesthood, a priestly role in their neighborhood. (2:26) So that is what is driving us.

(2:29) We've done a number of these so far, and so right now we're in part four of those apologetics (2:37) discussing the claims of Jesus and the resurrection. (2:41) Tonight we're going to discuss the witness of the empty tomb. (2:46) Here is a list of those neighborly apologetic categories.

(2:51) We dealt with the first one, evil and suffering, and now we are on number nine. (2:58) We skipped, we went from one to nine, and so we're going to be here on nine for quite a while (3:05) because there is just so much here in answering the question, who is Jesus? (3:10) And as we have done this so far, we've looked at the promise of the Messiah, the prophecy (3:16) concerning the coming of the Messiah, the life of Jesus, his words. (3:22) Now we're dealing with the death and resurrection of Jesus, and that's where we find ourselves (3:30) tonight.

(3:31) The resurrection of Christ, just to remind us from the last time we got together, (3:38) is really the heart. (3:40) It's the key of the Christian apologetic. (3:43) We find that in the writing of the apostles over and over again.

(3:47) It was the constant theme. (3:49) I think, unfortunately, we have walked away from that too much, but for us, as we begin (3:56) to build a relationship with our neighbors, we ought to recognize and understand that (4:01) it is the resurrection of Jesus that really is the heart of our apologetic and our defense (4:09) with people. (4:10) I remember last time we talked about how even the world around us has either directly or (4:18) indirectly recognized that it is the death and resurrection of Jesus that split time.

(4:24) All of history has been split because of that, and Paul makes a couple of these incredible (4:32) statements about the resurrection when he says, if Christ has not been raised, then (4:38) our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain. (4:43) A little later on, he says, if Christ has not been raised, then our faith is futile (4:49) and we are still in our sins. (4:51) Some incredible statements there about the importance of the resurrection, why it's (4:58) important for us and for our family to have a very firm understanding of what it means (5:06) and how we discuss that with the neighbors that we're building those relationships with.

(5:14) Tonight, we're going to deal with the empty tomb, and in particular, we're going to (5:18) talk about the witnesses of the empty tomb. (5:23) And this issue of the empty tomb, from my perspective, is that there are very few pieces (5:29) in our apologetic that are so concrete. (5:36) You know, we'll deal with the issue of, did Jesus exist? (5:41) And that is a concrete historical piece.

(5:46) So the answer to the question, did Jesus exist, is either yes or no. (5:52) There isn't any, well, you know, in between. (5:56) Did Jesus exist? (5:58) Yes or no.

(5:59) And the empty tomb is the same way. (6:01) It is a concrete piece of physical evidence. (6:04) It doesn't, the empty tomb doesn't lead us into some very difficult, complex theological (6:11) arguments and so forth.

(6:14) It's just a very raw piece of historical reality or non-reality. (6:21) The tomb was empty or it was not empty. (6:27) And so that is why it's so critical for us.

(6:31) We talked about this last time, but I want to deal with it just one more time, because (6:37) this was the thing that eventually caused Lee Strobel, in his words, to finally realize (6:46) that all of

this was true. (6:49) And he was a lawyer, but he was looking at what one of the top legal minds, foremost (6:57) legal minds, as he put it, Sir Norman Anderson, who had analyzed the resurrection and the (7:06) evidence for the resurrection and so forth, over a lifetime. (7:09) He'd spent a lifetime analyzing it all.

(7:13) And this is how he concluded, because it focuses on the tomb. (7:19) He said, the empty tomb, the empty tomb then forms a veritable rock in which all rationalistic (7:27) theories of the resurrection dash themselves in vain. (7:32) And this is what ultimately convinced Lee Strobel that the resurrection was true.

(7:45) So how do we know this? (7:46) How do we know that this is true? (7:48) So what is this rock of evidence? (7:52) And that is what we're going to look at. (7:57) So the question, was the tomb empty or was it not? (8:00) How do we know it was empty? (8:02) We're going to look at two categories of evidence. (8:05) We're going to look at direct evidence and we're going to look at the indirect evidence.

(8:09) Indirect evidence is oftentimes referred to as circumstantial evidence. (8:15) If you look at a crime, evidence is usually categorized as either direct evidence or (8:22) indirect evidence. (8:24) And so rather than talk about a murder, let's talk about something more pleasant.

(8:29) If someone left a bouquet of roses on your dining room table, direct evidence would be (8:38) if you have a video camera in your dining room, then that would be direct evidence that (8:46) you would be able to... (8:49) Okay, hold on just a second. (8:51) Margie, I don't know what you're trying to do here, but... (8:55) Okay, so that would be direct evidence. (8:58) The camera shows that an eyewitness who saw you put the roses on the table, that would (9:08) be direct evidence.

(9:10) Indirect evidence would be if someone says, well, I saw this person at the flower shop (9:16) that day, or if someone said, I saw them driving by the house that day, that's indirect evidence (9:23) or circumstantial evidence. (9:25) Um, we are not supposed to convict on, on simply circumstantial evidence, but when (9:33) there's direct evidence, uh, sufficient direct evidence, then circumstantial evidence, uh, (9:40) can support that. (9:41) So we're going to look at both, uh, both of these, uh, tonight.

(9:45) Okay. (9:46) All right. (9:47) Thank you.

(9:47) So the, the direct evidence we're going to look at, there are three here and I, I've (9:52) tried to boil these down to simply, um, uh, three each, three in the direct evidence (9:59) category and three in the indirect, um, evidence category. (10:05) And I think one of the things that happened to you, I've turned off my video. (10:08) That's okay.

(10:08) You don't need to see me, I suspect, unless Margie can do that. (10:13) Um, so the indirect evidence, uh, will involve the guards and, uh, the bribe. (10:22) It was made to, to the guards.

(10:24) And then finally the, um, the fact that the corpse was, was, uh, never, never produced. (10:36) Okay. (10:37) So those are the, those are the three, uh, direct evidences we're going to look at and (10:42) the three circumstantial evidences that we will look at.

(10:46) So let's look first at, uh, the angels. (10:50) Uh, now someone may at this point would say, well, you know, we're going to talk about, (10:55) uh, people who don't believe in angels and that sort of thing. (11:00) We'll also deal with that in a later part of our apologetic.

(11:04) But, um, here at first we, the angels are listed in the historical documents and (11:09) manuscripts as giving testimony to the empty tomb. (11:14) And so they, they, uh, qualify as, uh, as a direct evidence. (11:21) You'd be surprised how many people do believe in angels.

(11:24) And so if Mrs. Smith, if you're, you're talking about, uh, Mrs. Smith, your neighbor, and (11:30) you find that, uh, she somehow has been caught up, uh, with the argument that the tomb was (11:37) not empty. (11:37) And we'll look at, we'll look at those arguments towards the end today that she's caught up (11:43) in one of those. (11:44) And you want to talk to her about it.

(11:46) You may be surprised that Mrs. Smith actually does believe in angels. (11:51) So it's not something to throw out, uh, if you find that your neighbor doesn't want to (11:56) even talk about angels and that's fine. (11:58) But, uh, we, we need to look at that direct evidence because it is, um, it is of course, (12:05) uh, given to us.

(12:07) So here, uh, for Matthew 28, and we're going to be reading a lot of scriptures tonight. (12:11) And I, I want you also to take the time to just slowly go through this, uh, because this (12:16) is the, uh, this is the evidence that we've been given. (12:20) For Matthew 28, uh, after the Sabbath, uh, dawn on the first day of the week, uh, Mary (12:27) Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb.

(12:31) There was a violent earthquake for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and going (12:36) to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. (12:39) His appearance was like lightning and his clothes were white as snow. (12:43) The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men.

(12:49) The angel said to the women, do not be afraid for I know that you are looking for Jesus (12:55) who was crucified. (12:56) He is not here. (12:58) He has risen just as he said, come and see the place where he lay.

(13:07) So we have this, uh, document that tells us that there was a violent earthquake. (13:14) Uh, we'll refer back to that. (13:16) When we talk about the guards in a minute, there was a violent earthquake, uh, Mary and, (13:21) uh, the scripture says the other Mary were there to look at the tomb, uh, and the angel (13:27) of the Lord, uh, who, whose appearance was like lightning, his clothes were white as (13:33) snow, uh, rolled the stone back.

(13:36) And no doubt the guards are watching this. (13:38) Uh, they become afraid, uh, like dead man. (13:42) They're frozen.

(13:43) But the angel then gives testimony to the women that, uh, he is not here, that the tomb (13:51) is empty, uh, and offers and invites them to look at the tomb and see the place where (13:59) Jesus lay and that he was no longer there. (14:05) So let's look at the women. (14:07) Now, this is the most fascinating, uh, direct evidence for me because, um, it is the women (14:14) and we will talk more about this later, uh, that the women, uh, were the first, uh, to (14:20) be given the news of the resurrection of Jesus.

(14:24) The women, uh, were the first to see Jesus, the risen Jesus. (14:29) Uh, this isn't a culture in which women were not even allowed to be witnesses. (14:35) Um, and this will be part of the evidence that we'll talk about later on when we deal (14:41) with the apologetic of, uh, that this is all just a myth, uh, or it is some legend that (14:47) has arisen.

(14:48) People don't make a legend and a myth, uh, in a culture where women are, are second class (14:56) citizens. (14:57) Women are not to be witnesses and that you would write them in the myth as the first (15:04) to be the witnesses. (15:05) Uh, so it's a, it's a powerful testimony of the reality that the, that the document is (15:12) real.

(15:12) It's not a myth. (15:14) Um, but the women and the testimony of the women that is given to us, uh, is incredibly (15:19) important. (15:20) Here are a couple of passages is also, we just read this.

(15:23) Uh, let me give you, uh, the verses here one and five through six after the Sabbath at (15:30) dawn of the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb. (15:36) The angel said to the women, do not be afraid for. (15:39) I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified.

(15:42) He is not here. (15:44) He has risen. (15:45) Just as I said, come and see the place where he lay.

(15:51) And, uh, no doubt the women that the document doesn't tell us what they did, but no doubt (15:56) the women then, uh, took that invitation and looked in the tomb. (16:01) And we know that's the case because we see what Mary Magdalene then says, uh, uh, later (16:06) on in Luke 24, on the first day of the week, very early in the morning, the women took (16:13) the spices they had prepared and went to the tomb. (16:16) They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they entered, they did not find the (16:22) body of the Lord Jesus.

(16:25) It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary, the member of mother of James and the others with them (16:31) who told this to the apostles. (16:35) So in the documents we have right here, we find that is not just one woman. (16:41) There are several.

(16:42) And when we look at all of the gospels together, uh, we'll find, uh, it could well be up to (16:48) a dozen, uh, women, uh, that had witnessed, uh, the empty tomb. (16:54) No doubt there were many women, uh, as the scripture says, who were following Jesus. (16:59) Uh, there were probably at least a dozen women who were preparing spices as we'll talk a little (17:04) bit later.

(17:05) And when we finally get to where we're harmonizing all of these, uh, accounts together, uh, of (17:12) the, the, the various women and where they were staying and all of them headed to the (17:16) tomb, various routes, uh, getting there at different times. (17:21) Uh, and yet the document, uh, tells us that, uh, there were more than three here. (17:27) Uh, Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary, the mother of James and the others with them who entered (17:36) the tomb and they saw that it was empty.

(17:40) Okay. (17:40) Now I want to take a little moment here, uh, because, uh, there are so many Mary's and (17:46) in the death and resurrection account, the crucifixion death and resurrection burial (17:51) resurrection account that I want to just take a moment to try and see if I can clarify this, (17:57) uh, a little bit, uh, for you. (17:59) I just call it the title of Mary, Mary, Mary.

(18:02) So number one, there are five main, uh, Mary's that we have her there. (18:07) Mary, who is the mother of Jesus. (18:09) We read about her in Matthew.

(18:11) This is concerning, uh, the crucifixion and resurrection stories. (18:16) Uh, number two, we have Mary who is listed as a wife of Clovis. (18:20) We find her in John.

(18:22) Uh, number three, we have Mary, who is the mother of James and Joseph. (18:26) We, uh, we see her in Matthew, Mark, and Luke. (18:30) Number four, we have Mary Magdalene.

(18:32) Uh, we find her in all four gospels. (18:34) And number five, uh, we have this interesting phrase called Mary, uh, who is the other Mary. (18:41) As, uh, we just read in, in Matthew.

(18:44) So what I'd like to propose to you is that there are really only three Mary's. (18:50) Uh, we have Mary, who is the mother of Jesus. (18:53) And then, uh, I would submit to you that number two, three, and five that are on your left (18:58) are all the same person.

(19:01) Uh, this is, uh, Mary who is a sister of, uh, Mary, who is the mother of Jesus. (19:09) Uh, she is also the mother of James and Joseph. (19:13) And she is also the one who is listed as the other Mary.

(19:18) Uh, we're not going to take the time now to try and list all the various ways that you (19:24) could have two sisters, both named Mary, but they're very plausible, especially in that day. (19:30) Um, that, uh, Mary, the mother of Jesus would have a sister named Mary. (19:37) Uh, and we'll look at a texture in just a minute for that.

(19:41) Then the third one is Mary Magdalene. (19:43) So to avoid confusion, and I did this in the articles that I wrote, and we're putting those (19:50) articles together into a book. (19:53) Uh, I, I hope we'll be able to publish that, but, uh, so we'll call Mary, the mother of (19:59) Jesus is Mary.

(20:01) Uh, we will call her sister, who is the mother of James and Joseph, uh, who is listed in (20:07) the scripture as the other Mary is Aunt Mary. (20:10) And it should not surprise us that the scripture talks about, uh, Aunt Mary as the other Mary. (20:17) That would make sense.

(20:18) You know, if you have Mary or Sister Mary, uh, the, we'd call Mary and the other Mary. (20:24) And then we have, uh, Mary Magdalene that we'll call Magdalene, referred to as Magdalene. (20:30) So here, this passage in John, uh, at the cross, uh, near the cross of Jesus stood his (20:38) mother, his mother's sister, Mary, the wife of Clopas and Mary Magdalene.

(20:44) Now, some people have said, okay, well, that's four people. (20:49) Uh, a lot of really good Greek, uh, scholars would say, no, it's not four people, uh, because (20:57) the phrase Mary, the wife of Clopas is really in a positive of his mother's sister. (21:05) So, uh, near the cross of Jesus stood his mother, his mother's sister, who is Mary, (21:11) the wife of Clopas and Mary Magdalene.

(21:15) So here we have the greatest evidence that, uh, Mary had a sister and her name was Mary. (21:22) So if you think of what John is faced with here, John is faced with, as he's writing this, (21:28) that near the cross of Jesus stood Mary, Mary and Mary. (21:32) And so if we'll use our little convention here, uh, near the cross of Jesus stood Mary (21:38) and Mary and Magdalene.

(21:41) And I think it's helpful for us to, to do this because we weren't alive in those days when, (21:48) when these things are very clear to us, we would know who Aunt Mary is. (21:52) We would know who Mary is. (21:54) We would know who Magdalene is.

(21:56) Um, and so, uh, that's been helpful, uh, to, to do that kind of convention. (22:02) So let's now look back at these passages again. (22:05) We're going to read through them again, uh, talk about these Marys, but talk about what (22:11) the testimony is that's being given to us.

(22:14) After the Sabbath at dawn on the first day of the week, Magdalene and Aunt Mary went

(22:21) to look at the tomb. (22:23) The angel said to the women, do not be afraid for, I know that you're looking for Jesus (22:26) who is crucified. (22:27) He is not here.

(22:29) He has risen. (22:30) Just as he said, come and see the place where he lay, uh, on the first day of the week, (22:37) very early in the morning, the women took the spices as he had prepared and went to the (22:40) tomb. (22:40) They found the stone rolled away from the tomb.

(22:42) But when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. (22:47) It was Magdalene, Joanna, Aunt Mary, and the others with them who told this to the apostles. (22:56) So what we're, what we're told here in Luke is that at least, um, when you say the others (23:04) with them, we're talking at least five.

(23:06) And as I told you before, I think there were probably at least a dozen women, uh, at the (23:12) tomb, but it was these three and the others who are now giving a testimony to the apostles (23:21) of the empty tomb. (23:23) And later when we do the harmonization of all of this, um, I think that will become (23:30) even more clear. (23:32) Now, this direct evidence that we have from Peter, John, to me is, is almost my favorite (23:38) because here we get some very, very detailed evidence associated with that empty tomb.

(23:46) It comes from John chapter 20, uh, early on the first day of the week, while it was still (23:51) dark, Magdalene went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the entrance. (23:58) So she came running to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one Jesus loved. (24:04) This is John and said, they have taken the Lord out of the tomb and we don't know where (24:10) they have put him.

(24:12) So Peter and the other disciple, John started for the tomb. (24:16) Both were running, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. (24:21) He bent over and looked in at the strip of linen lying there, but did not go in.

(24:26) Then Simon Peter came along behind him and went straight into the tomb. (24:31) He saw the strips of linen lying there, as well as the cloth that had been wrapped around (24:37) Jesus's head. (24:39) The cloth was still lying in its place, separate from the linen.

(24:43) Finally, the other disciple who had reached the tomb first also went inside. (24:51) He saw and believed. (24:55) And we're given some incredible evidence here for a tomb that was empty, and yet it (25:02) wasn't entirely empty.

(25:03) There was no body here, but we had the grave cloths that were still here. (25:11) And we won't take the time now, we'll do this a little bit later, but look at the passage (25:18) there towards the end. (25:20) So Peter came in, he saw the strips of linen lying there.

(25:24) These are the strips that are wrapped around the body with the spices, as well as the (25:32) cloth that had been wrapped. (25:34) The Greek word there is more world, as in the world around Jesus's head. (25:41) The cloth was still lying in its place.

(25:44) So some people talk about, well, that cloth had fallen on the floor. (25:47) No, it's still lying in its place, separate from the linen. (25:53) Why? (25:53) Because there was no body, there was no neck that was now attaching the cocoon wrapped (26:01) around the body, and the cloth had been wrapped around the head of Jesus.

(26:06) And so if you can imagine now going in and seeing these grave clothes that were supposed (26:15) to be wrapped around a body now empty, that was what John saw and believed. (26:25) So this is part of the harmonization that we're going to do later on when we try to (26:32) put everything together, but this is a map. (26:35) I appreciate my nephew who took my very unprofessional highlighting on a map, and he's (26:44) done a much better job, but I want to use this map to talk a little bit about the evidence (26:50) that we're talking about here.

(26:54) So early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene went to (26:58) the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the entrance. (27:03) So she came running to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one Jesus loved, and said, (27:09) they have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we don't know where they have put him. (27:13) So let's stop for a second.

(27:15) If you can see on the map that I've designated here a place, A is the tomb. (27:24) I'm using the traditional Calvary rather than Gordon's Tomb for those of you that are (27:30) available, but it doesn't really matter which site you use. (27:34) It all works out the same, but we're using the traditional Calvary because it's on the (27:39) map.

(27:40) So A, so Magdalene is at the tomb, and when she finds that the body's now been gone, she (27:51) thinks it's been taken. (27:53) And so the first thing she does is she then runs to Simon Peter and the other disciple. (28:01) Now, an assumption I'm making, if you look at B, B is the upper room.

(28:09) I think that's where most of the disciples were huddled together. (28:13) I think Peter, just because of his shame of denying the Lord, was in a different place. (28:21) He's down in the lower city, and I think John is with him.

(28:25) So if you can see on that map, number three, it's kind of the red line that runs from A (28:32) down to C. (28:34) So Magdalene is now running all of that distance to get to Peter and John to tell them that (28:45) the Lord's body is gone. (28:48) Now, Peter and John have begun running to the tomb, and my guess is that Magdalene, (28:56) where she's now probably exhausted and out of breath, she follows them, and that's all (29:01) part of the story in her second return to the tomb when she sees the angels and that (29:07) Jesus appears to her. (29:09) So Peter and John are now running up along what I've labeled eight back to the tomb.

(29:18) So Peter and the other disciple started with the tomb. (29:20) Both were running, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. (29:24) He bent over and looked in at the strips of linen lying there but did not go in.

(29:29) Then Simon Peter came along behind him and went straight into the tomb. (29:33) He saw not only the strips of linen lying there as well as the cloth that had been wrapped (29:38) around Jesus' head. (29:40) The cloth was still lying in its place separate from the linen.

(29:43) Finally, the other disciple who had reached the tomb first also went inside. (29:47) He saw and he believed. (29:49) So the testimony that we're given here is really incredible.

(29:52) The evidence that we're given is really quite detailed for us, that the body was gone, just (30:00) as Magdalene told them. (30:02) But what Simon Peter and John are now seeing are these grave clothes that have been wrapped (30:10) around Jesus now empty. (30:13) Now, I don't know whether they're collapsed or not with the sticky spices that were the (30:20) aloe and everything they put on Jesus.

(30:21) Seventy-five pounds of spices. (30:24) It is possible that it had collapsed, but both the linen around the body and the cloth (30:34) that was whirled around the head of Jesus were now empty. (30:39) That is what the evidence here is telling us and what John and Peter saw.

(30:47) I don't think it was just John and Peter that saw. (30:50) Of course, the women that we're talking about. (30:53) When we look at the indirect evidence, I think we're going to talk about other people who (30:59) obviously went in and saw the same thing.

Part 2

(31:02) So let's talk about the guards first. (31:03) This is one of the passages, three passages that talk to us about the guards. (31:09) This is in Matthew 28.

(31:11) We dealt with this when we talked about the seal. (31:15) While they were going, behold, some of the guard went into the city and told the chief (31:21) priest all that had taken place. (31:25) So the guards had gone back to the chief priest because it was the chief priest that had contracted (31:32) with them to guard the tomb.

(31:35) So they went back to the chief priest and they told them, and I think it's very interesting (31:38) what the evidence here, all that had taken place, which in my mind means they had to (31:44) tell him about the earthquake, tell him about this person that looked like an angel in white (31:54) garb who by himself had rolled the stone back. (31:59) And I believe, and we'll see here in just a minute in the words that are said, they (32:04) had to have been gone into the tomb and found it empty. (32:07) And when they had assembled with the elders and taken counsel, they gave a sufficient sum (32:12) of money to the soldiers and said, tell people his disciples came by night and stole them (32:18) away while we were asleep.

(32:21) And if this comes to the governor's ears, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble. (32:26) So they took the money and did as they were directed. (32:28) And this story has been spread among the Jews to this day.

(32:33) And the only reason that the chief priests and the elders then bribed the soldiers to (32:42) say his disciples came by night and stole him away was if the tomb had been empty and (32:49) that they had seen that. (32:51) And of course, it's very obvious to any of us that if you were there guarding the tomb (32:56) and then all of a sudden the stone is rolled away and the seals have been broken and shattered, (33:01) the clay pieces lying on the ground, that you would have looked inside the tomb. (33:07) And that is what they told the chief priests and the elders.

(33:11) And so they were then bribed to then say that the disciples had taken the body away. (33:20) So that's indirect evidence that the guards also saw the empty tomb. (33:26) The bribe itself, the same passage that we just talked about, that the elders and the (33:34) chief priests had taken counsel as to what they were going to do now.

(33:38) So all of a sudden their worst fears, their nightmare had come to pass. (33:46) They had one of the guards to guard the tomb because Jesus had said he was going to rise (33:53) from the dead and the tomb is to be guarded so that the disciples wouldn't steal away (33:59) the body. (33:59) Now the guards are coming and telling them the body is gone.

(34:04) And there is something like an angel that rolled the stone away, broke all the seals (34:09) and the body is missing. (34:11) And it is even possible, I think quite possible for sure, that the guards then somehow (34:17) relayed to the chief priests and the elders that the grave clothes are still there and (34:24) they're empty. (34:27) So the bribe by the chief priests and the elders is another set of indirect evidence (34:38) that the tomb was empty.

(34:40) The third one, the simple one, is that a corpse was never produced. (34:45) The easiest thing to do, the easiest way for the chief priests and the elders to get rid (34:53) of this nonsense, as they thought, was to find a body. (34:58) There was a movie, I'm not sure if I remember the title of it, I think it may have been (35:02) the Centurion or something, that followed the Centurion, the one at

the cross who witnessed (35:10) the death of Jesus, the crucifixion of Jesus, and the darkened sky, and then all of a sudden (35:18) witnessed the empty tomb.

(35:20) And the pilot now sends him out to examine all the dead bodies that were rotting. (35:28) And it's kind of a horrible scene of him having his soldiers try to look at all of these dead (35:36) bodies, trying to find Jesus. (35:38) But if you think about it, that makes a lot of sense.

(35:42) Because it was in their deep and best interest, all of them, the chief priests, pilot everybody (35:49) to find the body of Jesus. (35:51) Otherwise, they've got this incredible resurrection story that they have to deal with. (35:56) And so the reality is that the corpse was never produced.

(36:03) And we know that from the document, the manuscript in Matthew that says, and this story has been (36:09) spread among the Jews to this day, which means that that lie was still being spread. (36:16) Well, you wouldn't continue to spread the lie and say, oh, well, we found the body. (36:20) But the lie was still spread because there was no body.

(36:24) So those are the three indirect evidences. (36:30) I think both the direct evidence and the indirect evidence, these three and now six should be easy (36:38) for us and your family to talk about, to learn so that you can express those to Mrs. Smith. (36:47) Now, when we say a corpse was never produced, a body did appear, but it was the risen body of (36:54) Jesus.

(36:55) And so the next time we get together, we're going to talk about the appearances of (37:01) the risen Jesus. (37:02) But what I want to do now is talk a little bit about the realization that there were other (37:16) people who would have gone to check out the tomb. (37:19) And this would be a great discussion for you to have with your family to just, you can ask (37:24) your children, ask each other, well, who else do you think would have gone to check out the tomb? (37:31) First of all, for example, let's talk about the chief priest.

(37:36) So the guards have now come and told him this incredible story about an angel rolling about (37:41) this stone, about the grave clothes that are still in the tomb, but they're empty, they're (37:48) collapsed. (37:51) And we will talk about this a little bit later, but you say, well, if somebody stole the body, (37:57) and we'll talk about this in a minute as one of the areas, if somebody stole the body, (38:01) then why in the world would they try to pull the body out of the linen? (38:08) Why not just take the body with the linens? (38:13) So you think the chief priest would have gone to check out the tomb? (38:16) I think they would have. (38:18) Do you think the elders would have gone to check out the tomb? (38:20) I think they would have.

(38:23) I think about the shopkeeper. (38:26) Think about Jesus, you know, we're introduced to the Sermon on the Mount with these words. (38:34) And Jesus was going about in all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming (38:38) the gospel of the kingdom and healing every kind of disease and sickness among the people.

(38:46) And the news about him went out into all Syria, and they brought to him all who were ill, (38:51) taking the various diseases and pains, demoniacs, epileptics, paralytics, and he healed them. (39:00) And great multitudes followed him from Jerusalem and Judea and from Decapolis and from beyond (39:07) the Jordan. (39:08) So Jesus is not just some unknown person.

(39:11) This is not just some little rabble rouser thing there, and somebody's talking about (39:17) maybe he rose from the dead. (39:18) This is a person, if you recall, when Jesus came into Jerusalem, people, you know, assembled (39:26) out there. (39:27) They were waving palm

branches.

(39:29) They were singing hallelujah. (39:33) The Pharisees and the elders and the scribes and the Sadducees, they were doing everything (39:40) they could to try and trap him. (39:42) They arrested him.

(39:44) They took him to Pilate. (39:46) So this is not just some obscure person. (39:49) And now all of a sudden in Jerusalem, you have the darkness of the crucifixion.

(39:55) You have the earthquake. (39:58) You have the tombs opened up. (40:01) You now have the resurrection.

(40:03) Now you have all people shouting about Jesus. (40:07) The tomb is empty. (40:08) And so I think the shopkeeper, and whether he was a believer or not, whether he even (40:14) knew Jesus, the shopkeeper is going to go look at the tomb.

(40:19) I think Joseph of Arimathea went to the tomb. (40:22) So who knows how many hundreds, maybe thousands of people ended up going to the tomb, and (40:30) yet there was never any evidence that the tomb was not empty. (40:37) So let's look briefly at seven arguments.

(40:41) We're just going to look at four of them tonight. (40:44) The first one, and as you'll see, really these are clenching at straws arguments, but I've (40:52) heard them. (40:53) I've heard people offer these arguments, and it's possible that Mrs. (40:57) Smith would offer this argument because, well, that's what she heard.

(41:02) Number one, the disciples stole the body. (41:04) Well, this was the lie that the guards were bribed to say, and Matthew said that lie is (41:11) still in existence today. (41:13) Well, guess what? (41:14) It's still in existence today.

(41:15) There are still people who offer this argument. (41:18) I've heard them. (41:19) I've talked to them.

(41:20) Well, it was the disciples that stole the body. (41:24) Well, if you sit down and think about how ridiculous it is to even think of this, there (41:31) is a Roman guard that is posted at the tomb. (41:37) Their lives are at stake.

(41:39) If they don't guard this tomb properly, their lives are at stake. (41:45) You can read the history of Rome and the penalty that was due to someone who fell asleep on (41:55) guard duty. (41:57) So, somehow, the disciples, let's assume that the guards fell asleep, and the disciples (42:05) are now trying to, grunting, trying to move the stone back.

(42:10) The stone is crunching as it begins to roll. (42:15) It's ridiculous to even think that the disciples, who are scared to death, are huddled in the (42:23) upper room, and of course they're afraid. (42:26) They're afraid that Jesus was crucified.

(42:29) They were his followers. (42:30) They could be next. (42:32) All the manuscripts tell us that they were huddled and hiding.

(42:37) There was nothing within the disciples prior to the resurrection to give them the courage (42:42) to even do this. (42:45) The second is like it. (42:48) Well, it wasn't the disciples then, okay? (42:50) It was someone else who stole the body.

(42:52) The third one is like this. (42:53) We've seen that one as well. (42:56) The third one is the body was simply moved to another tomb.

(42:59) So, somebody just moved the body to another tomb. (43:05) But think again how much the chief priests, the elders, Pilate himself, no doubt, was (43:12) anxious to find this body. (43:14) They wanted desperately to do everything they could to find the body to destroy the resurrection (43:25) story that was being now passed around the whole city of Jerusalem.

(43:32) And think again, well, how would somebody move the body? (43:35) How would somebody else steal the body? (43:37) With a Roman guard that is posted there, with the stone sealed, with the Roman seal. (43:42) You do not break a Roman seal. (43:45) And yet, somebody said, well, I think I'll just move this body.

(43:48) This is clutching at straws. (43:50) And the other one that is almost just as, I was going to say ridiculous. (43:56) We wouldn't say that to Mrs. Smith.

(43:58) But among us, we can say this fourth one, well, the women just went to the wrong tomb. (44:05) Okay, so what you're trying to imply by that is that Magdalene, Aunt Mary, (44:12) Joanna, all of these women somehow got the tomb wrong. (44:19) And they went to the wrong tomb.

(44:21) But it wasn't just the women. (44:23) It was Peter that went to the wrong tomb. (44:26) John went to the wrong tomb.

(44:28) And somehow in this wrong tomb, there are grave linen cloths that the body in that tomb has vanished. (44:40) So, and then further on, do you think then the chief priest got it wrong? (44:46) Do you think the guards got it wrong? (44:50) So, or Joseph of Arimathea, and now that's, we're just supposing that he remembered where (44:58) his tomb was. (45:00) And if all of a sudden someone told him that the body he had just finished wrapping up (45:06) of Jesus and spices and was with the body long enough to see it go into rigor mortis (45:15) and laid it in his tomb that all of a sudden now he can't find his own tomb.

(45:20) So, it's clutching at straws. (45:23) The rest of these, the empty tomb is part of a myth. (45:27) Jews didn't really die.

(45:29) It's all a big conspiracy we will deal with later in another apologetic. (45:35) But I want to go back again to this reality and that's the tomb wasn't really empty. (45:42) And that's what's so fascinating.

(45:44) That's why I am so thankful that we have that testimony of Peter and John and what they (45:51) saw when they went in to the tomb. (45:55) Later on, we'll talk about the fact that Peter went back to the tomb, as I think probably (46:01) all of the disciples went to the tomb. (46:03) And it's possibly went to the tomb several times until they'd seen there isn't Jesus.

(46:08) And I think once they'd seen there isn't Jesus and there was no reason for them to (46:12) go back to the tomb, but many other people would have. (46:17) And at some point, who knows who took the grave clothes out. (46:24) But my guess there were many hundreds, maybe thousands of people that saw that evidence (46:29) of a tomb that was empty from the standpoint of the body of Jesus.

(46:36) But it wasn't empty from the standpoint of those grave clothes were there. (46:41) Later on,

we'll talk about the custom. (46:46) The scripture says, as was the custom, they wrapped the body with linen strips.

(46:52) So use the linen strips, usually use it with 75 pounds of spices and aloes. (46:59) It makes a very sticky substance. (47:02) And that's what they use to wrap the body with the linen cloths.

(47:05) They stick as they wrap them around the body. (47:10) And then the cloth without the spices, they whirl around the head. (47:16) There's the same phrases used when Lazarus, remember, comes out of the tomb.

(47:20) He's bound. (47:22) He's whirled with linen strips and his head is whirled with the same cloth. (47:29) The same words are used there because that would make sense.

(47:33) That was the custom of how you wrapped a dead body in the Jewish culture. (47:39) So to me, the tomb being empty is an incredible concrete evidence for us. (47:49) But the evidence that the tomb contained the grave cloths is just as remarkable (47:58) and just as convincing that the rest of the story, as we'll see next time, (48:04) when we then talk about the appearances of the risen Lord Jesus, (48:12) the direct evidence we have of his appearance, (48:17) he who was once crucified, he who was dead, he who was buried, is now alive.

(48:25) And the evidence of the empty tomb supports the fact (48:28) that he, in fact, had risen from the dead, just as he had said. (48:34) So again, all of this, reminding ourselves all over this, (48:37) is not for us to somehow to learn how to beat somebody in an argument, (48:44) to somehow put somebody down. (48:48) But this is what we're trying to learn in order for us, as we love our neighbor, (48:54) as we begin to have that sacrificial, steadfast sacrificial zeal (49:00) that seeks the true good of those who live near us, (49:03) to build that relationship with them.

(49:05) And as we build that relationship, and it becomes a trusted relationship, (49:10) that Mrs. Smith will begin to then ask questions. (49:17) If she's caught up in this issue, then you will be able to answer her. (49:28) Okay, Mark, I'm going to stop sharing, and I will turn this back over to you.

(49:35) All right, thank you, Dr. Tackett. (49:37) I'm looking for whose background noise, it might be on there, (49:41) but I'm not seeing it right now. (49:43) But please, if you do have your audio turned on, please turn that off.

(49:49) We are coming, we're right up to the end here. (49:51) Thank you, everyone, for being here, taking time out of your busy schedule (49:56) to be with Dr. Tackett and all of us. (49:59) We will be sending out the recording link, (50:02) so you should get that by tomorrow morning sometime.

(50:07) Also, we'll be sending with that the slides, so those will be a PDF format. (50:14) And if you have any questions, please just reach out to me. (50:18) And I have gotten some questions regarding the engagement project.

(50:24) There'll be a link there for you to check that out. (50:26) Thank you again so much for being with us today. (50:29) We look forward to next month's presentation as well.

(50:34) You'll see a link to register for that. (50:36) But thanks, everyone. (50:37) Dr. Tackett, do you want to close our time in prayer? (50:40) I will do that.

(50:42) Thank you again, all of you, for being here tonight. (50:47) I pray that I wish we had time

that we could just simply discuss (50:51) with as many people as we have here that's possible to do. (50:55) But I would encourage you to do that among yourselves, (50:59) to have those discussions.

(51:02) So I thank you for being here and pray that the Lord is going to bless (51:07) what we've done here tonight. (51:08) So, Father, thank you for being so kind to us, (51:12) for allowing us the opportunity to discuss these things. (51:16) Pray, Father, for those who have been encouraged by this, (51:22) that you would help them as they begin to engage with their neighbors, (51:27) answer their questions, and to do it with justice and respect.

(51:32) Thank you again for your word that's delivered to us, (51:37) that gives us this opportunity. (51:40) And we pray this in Jesus' name. (51:42) Amen.

(51:44) All right. (51:44) Thank you, Dr. Tackett. (51:45) Thank you all for your patience there with the background noise.

(51:49) We will look forward to seeing you next month. (51:51) God's ears. Bye-bye. (51:52)