

# Buried by a Rich Man

By Rev. Nathan Langerak



**Bible Text:** Matthew 27:57-60  
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Let's call upon our God in congregational prayer.

*Our Father in heaven, we come into thy holy sanctuary, as thou hast drawn us unto thyself with cords of everlasting love. We come into thy sanctuary boldly, in spite of ourselves, in spite of all of our depravity, in spite of the fact that we enter into the doors as those who are defiled with all sin, for thou hast shown thyself unto us, thou hast revealed thyself in the glory of thy truth. Thou hast shown unto us that thou art everlasting life, thou in thyself as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Triune God dwelling in the intimacy of life and fellowship without any dissonance, without any strife or contention. And thou art the God who has shown forth thy glory and thy life in the creation. The creation sings of thy majesty and thy worth. And behold, Father, thy beauty, which thou dost work in thy creation. The colors pop from the slumber of winter, and there is the promise, yea, the appearance of life, fruitful, abundant, and rich life. Life even from death, life from desolation, and life from waste.*

*Father, we worship thee and we come before thee now too as God of the covenant, the covenant that thou hast manifested unto thy people and thy Son Jesus Christ. An everlasting covenant that cannot be broken, that abides as thou art faithful and true, and cannot deny thyself. And even now, today thou dost bear witness of thy faithfulness in thy creation as we have, as some of us have seen. Thou didst set thy bow in the heavens. Thou didst set thy bow in the heavens according to thy covenant faithfulness and thy promise, that in spite of the depravity of man from his youth, and in spite of the fact that man can only beget that which is dead and trespasses and sins, that thou wilt not forget thy covenant. Thou wilt maintain this present world for the sake of thy covenant seed whose head is Christ, and therefore thou wilt continue to give springtime and harvest, cold and heat, winter and summer, day and night. Thou hast shown unto us that thou art faithful and true in all of these things and so, Father, we can come as those who are sinful and disgusting in ourselves, laden with sin, and come into thy sanctuary knowing that thou wilt surely receive us for, even now, we are forever washed in the precious blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, purged from all sin. Guilt is not over us. The sentence of death has been paid and thou dost behold us as beloved, as precious, as delightful.*

*Father, we worship thee as the God of thy church, thou whom who gathers unto thyself out of the whole world from every tongue, tribe, and nation of people, and to thyself*

*elected in Jesus Christ, thou who dost preserve thy church from the beginning and to the end of the world, thou who dost carefully protect thy church, though the gates of hell assault her daily, so that they cannot prevail against her. Father, remember thy church. Remember thy church wherever she is found, over the length and breadth of this world, and give unto thy church the comfort of the gospel, and declare unto them thy truth, and assure their hearts, testify unto thy people that they are sons and daughters of the living God, a God who has triumphed over death, a God who has defeated every foe, a God who will raise the dead. And draw thy people out of the grave, and glorify their bodies and their souls, and fashion them unto their Savior, and be made like unto his body, immortal and incorruptible, and perfect for life with thee.*

*Father, remember this church as we assemble for worship. Remember thy people, thy eternal handiwork, which thou hast prepared as vessels of mercy to show forth thy glory and thy truth in the day of thy judgment, the day where thou art revealed in the minds and before the eyes of the whole world as God and God alone. Remember and care for thy people. Continue to perform the work which thou hast begun in them. Father, we are as thy people very needy. Remember all of our afflictions. Care for all of our woes. Speak unto us who have wounded consciences and who are bruised with turmoils and afflictions and trials of this world. Give unto us the balm of thy word, the soothing, comfortable words of scripture which thy Son, our shepherd himself, can only proclaim.*

*We thank thee for thy care of Kelvin that thou be pleased to return him home to his family today and give him a good recovery from his surgery and restore him to our midst. Father, be with all of thy people whose afflictions are not known to us but are known to thee, and give them all that they stand in need of this Sabbath.*

*Father, remember us in our marriages as those marriages are called to reflect that love that is shared between the head Jesus Christ and the husband who has given himself for his bride, and the adoration of the bride for her husband, Jesus Christ. Let us dwell in love. Strengthen our marriages, and cause us to, as husbands, give ourselves for our wives and attend to them and love them dearly, assure them that we love them, that wives submit themselves unto their husbands and care for those whom thou hast given unto them. Be with those whose marriages whose marriages are disrupted on account of sin and who bear much grief in this life on account of sin. Care for them tenderly. Care for those who dwell in the single life, those whom thou hast given contentment with that life and those who long for a spouse. Father, provide for them according to thy wisdom.*

*Care for our young people as they stand in the strength of youth, cause them to contend against the works of Satan and the works of this world, to reprove those works of sin and to be thy friend's servants in this world and to show forth the life and the light that is in them. And care for our children and our little infants, those whom thou hast sanctified no less than the adults in Jesus Christ, therefore, those who are received in thy covenant and in thy church. Teach them. Teach them thy ways. Teach them thy marvelous works. Teach them thy love.*

*And to this end too bless our school. Remember, Lord, our consistory and all of the battle that it does. Strengthen them that they be not weary in well-doing, but zealous for thy cause and thy truth in this world, zealous for thy cause and thy truth in the church. Let them labor in love for that truth and in love for thy name and in love for the perfect work that Christ has accomplished and love for him who sits at thy right hand, who has entered his rest, and who henceforth expects that his enemies be made his footstool. Cause them to go forth in knowledge of the victory that is already obtained in him.*

*And Father, let the admonishment of the two brothers stir them up, that they return and take up their labors in the church to the office of elder, so that they may stand on the walls of Zion as those whom thou hast ordained to this position and called to this position and may faithfully cry out and warn thy people over against all the assaults of Satan and show care for thy people in their rule over thy flock and precious blood-bought sheep.*

*Father, we are all of us, terrible sinners who have nothing good in ourselves, who have not one thing to boast in ourselves, not one thing we can claim and hold forth before thy righteous gaze as that which we have done that ought to be received and accepted by thee for righteousness. Humble us all by that truth, and then fill us with our Lord Jesus Christ by the word that he gives today. Father, sanctify the one who speaks to say "Thus saith the Lord," and that those who hear receive the words of their shepherd, who loves his people, and who gives to them the word of life. All these things we pray in his name. Amen.*

We worship the Lord with our offerings this morning, first, for the general fund and, secondly, for benevolence.

Psalter number 426. 426, we sing stanzas one through five and eight. One through five and eight, 426.

"I love the Lord, the fount of life and grace;  
He hears my voice, my cry and supplication,  
Inclines His ear, gives strength and consolation;  
In life, in death, my heart will seek His face.

The cords of death held me in deep despair;  
The pangs of hell, like waves by tempest driven,  
Rolled o'er my soul; by grief and sorrow riven,  
I turned in my distress to God in prayer.

I cried, Deliver Thou my soul, O Lord!  
Jehovah heard. I pledge Him my devotion.  
The Lord is just, His grace wide as the ocean;  
In boundless mercy He fulfills His word.

The Lord preserves the meek most tenderly;  
Brought nigh to death, in Him I found salvation.  
Come, thou my soul, relieved from agitation,  
Turn to thy rest; the Lord has favored thee.

Thou, O Jehovah, in Thy sovereign grace,  
Hast saved my soul from death and woe appalling,  
Dried all my tears, secured my feet from falling.  
Lo, I shall live and walk before Thy face.

Before His saints I'll pay my vows to God;  
E'en in death's vale He keepeth me from evil;  
How dear to God the dying of His people!  
Praise Him, ye saints, and sound His Name abroad."

Our reading from the word of God is found in Matthew 27. We begin at verse 26 and read through the end of the chapter.

26 Then released he Barabbas unto them: and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified. 27 Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the common hall, and gathered unto him the whole band of soldiers. 28 And they stripped him, and put on him a scarlet robe. 29 And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head, and a reed in his right hand: and they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews! 30 And they spit upon him, and took the reed, and smote him on the head. 31 And after that they had mocked him, they took the robe off from him, and put his own raiment on him, and led him away to crucify him. 32 And as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name: him they compelled to bear his cross. 33 And when they were come unto a place called Golgotha, that is to say, a place of a skull, 34 They gave him vinegar to drink mingled with gall: and when he had tasted thereof, he would not drink. 35 And they crucified him, and parted his garments, casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots. 36 And sitting down they watched him there; 37 And set up over his head his accusation written, THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS. 38 Then were there two thieves crucified with him, one on the right hand, and another on the left. 39 And they that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads, 40 And saying, Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself. If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross. 41 Likewise also the chief priests mocking him, with the scribes and elders, said, 42 He saved others; himself he cannot save. If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him. 43 He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God. 44 The thieves also, which were crucified with him, cast the same in his teeth. 45 Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all

the land unto the ninth hour. 46 And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? 47 Some of them that stood there, when they heard that, said, This man calleth for Elias. 48 And straightway one of them ran, and took a sponge, and filled it with vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave him to drink. 49 The rest said, Let be, let us see whether Elias will come to save him. 50 Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost. 51 And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent; 52 And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, 53 And came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many. 54 Now when the centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God. 55 And many women were there beholding afar off, which followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering unto him: 56 Among which was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of Zebedee's children. 57 When the even was come, there came a rich man of Arimathaea, named Joseph, who also himself was Jesus' disciple: 58 He went to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be delivered. 59 And when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, 60 And laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock: and he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre, and departed. 61 And there was Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary, sitting over against the sepulchre. 62 Now the next day, that followed the day of the preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate, 63 Saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again. 64 Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead: so the last error shall be worse than the first. 65 Pilate said unto them, Ye have a watch: go your way, make it as sure as ye can. 66 So they went, and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch.

Thus ends the reading of the holy and divine scripture.

Our text this morning is verses 57 through 60.

57 When the even was come, there came a rich man of Arimathaea, named Joseph, who also himself was Jesus' disciple: 58 He went to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be delivered. 59 And when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, 60 And laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock: and he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre, and departed.

Beloved in our Lord Jesus Christ, to this point, there was no consideration given to the body of Jesus Christ, to that lifeless frame that now hung on the cross. Much attention had been given to Jesus and what we read, we read of all the abuse that was afflicted on that body of Jesus. Pilate himself had Jesus scourged. The soldiers brought Jesus to the Praetorium, and there they had a mock ceremony of a king and then took a reed and bruised his head, and pressed thorns upon his head, and spit upon him and slapped him, abused him severely. And then he was led to the cross, and there he was placed by man in the midst of two thieves and by that man had a word to say about Jesus. They had a word to say, and that word was, he is among the worst of society. That's what you need to think about this Jesus. He is in the midst of two thieves, two thieves who, according to their deeds, were political insurrectionists and domestic terrorists, and who mugged and who pillaged and tormented the countryside, those who, according to their heritage, were apostates, who knew the truth, who knew of the Messiah, who knew of the forgiveness of sins in the kingdom of God, and who did not care, who rejected every law in this world, except for the law of their own heart. In the midst, Jesus was placed by man whose judgment was a lie, but by God whose judgment is righteous and true, because there on the cross he bore the sins of his people and was due to suffer the punishment for their guilt, and there on that cross Jesus cried out, "Father, forgive them." And God heard, and God plunged Christ and the whole creation down to hell.

So it all was blackness and after those three hours of blackness, he who hung on the cross asked for a drink to muster up just enough strength to cry out, "It is finished." And then to say, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." And then the earth shook with a great earthquake, and there was a chilling silence. I say, up to this point, no one had given any consideration to that now lifeless frame on the cross. What would happen to that body? Indeed, it seemed that a great battle had just taken place, and now that battle had been accomplished, and now a chilling silence distilled over the land and over that scene of Golgotha. But I say the battle had not yet ceased. Though men looked over that scene and saw the wrath of God come down and work in the body and soul of that man on the cross, now there was a chilling silence. A battle, a fierce battle, was still raging, even over that chilling silence and that battle was between God and his truth, and Satan and his lie. Satan always seeks opportunity to rise up over against God's truth and to put that truth down and no less true was that taking place than after Christ had died on the cross for Christ had declared on the cross that it was finished, that all the work that God had given him to do was done, that he had perfected the will and good pleasure of God, and he had been received into the bosom of his Father, and Satan comes and he contends against that truth.

He's going to do that, he supposes, by handling that lifeless frame of Jesus. He's going to take that body and he's going to contradict all that truth that Christ spoke and all that truth that the cross proclaimed and he's going to do that by making Christ's burial with the wicked. Satan has a sign, he's marked out a place for that body of Jesus. He goes, he now goes the way of the criminal. Satan says on the cross, "Look, he dies as a criminal and now he goes the way of a criminal. He goes the way of one who is rejected of God," to contend against God's truth. But God will not suffer his truth to go down to defeat. Christ

will give his Son, the most honorable burial, a burial due for a conquering King, due for one who has made a separation, a perfect separation from sin. He will bury his Son with the rich. We take up that truth then of the text under the theme "Buried by a Rich Man." First, consider that's a significant deed. Secondly, a divine deed. And thirdly, a comforting deed.

Buried by a rich man. Burials for us have a little significance. When we die, we show respect unto the bodies of the dead. And when we die, we pick out for ourselves a nice place, a stone, that has some meaning to us, whether it was where we were raised or near where we died. We choose for ourselves a headstone and we're lowered into the ground. But for the saints of the Old Testament, the burial was a most significant thing. Consider Jacob's request while he was in Egypt to his sons. Jacob said, "I do not want to be buried in Egypt. I don't want to be buried in this place. Take my body back and bury me in the cave of Machpelah with my fathers." And Joseph too, when he was in Egypt, told his brethren, "Do not leave my bones in this place, but make sure they make it to the land of Canaan. We want to be buried there."

Or you had those negative examples like wicked King Jehoram, who did not walk in the ways of Jehoshaphat, his father, but who walked in the rebellious and wicked and abominable ways of Ahab. He who slew all his brethren. He who turned Judah to the service of Baal. He who was defeated by all of the surrounding nations that had once been under the rule of Judah. He was not given an honorable burial. There was no mourning made for his death, and he was not buried with his fathers. Consider all those bodies of the apostates, God's apostate church that he visited in his wrath when he came down upon Jerusalem with the Babylonian host, those bodies of those whom he hated, he scattered over the ground. They didn't even receive a burial. Their bones were scattered all over the land. Their bodies were devoured by birds and by beasts and cast down into valleys.

The significance of the burial even found some importance in New Testament history. For the Roman Catholic Church, who declared John Wycliffe to be a heretic for his insistence that God's people should follow the leading of the scriptures rather than the corrupt clergy, came and dug up his bones that had sat in the ground for 40 years, and they burned him. They said he does not deserve a burial place in the consecrated grounds of the church. They burned his bones and they cast them into the river.

For the Old Testament saint, the burial was a most significant thing. That burial in the time of types and shadows was a testimony of what God had to say about you at your death. The righteous and the wicked, they live together in the world but when they die, they go to very different places. In those whom God loved, in those who God would receive, they were given an honorable burial but those whom God would cast off, cast off of the face of the earth and cast away from himself forever, to them belonged the most ignominious death and that holds true in this place here. What will happen to Christ? What will happen to that body? Will he go the way of the wicked? Those criminals will be taken down. Those criminals will be taken down and their bodies will be brought to a great open grave and they'd be thrown into the grave, where the birds can pluck off their

flesh and the dogs can eat them and corruption can have its unhindered dominion over those bodies. Is that where he's going to go? Will God suffer his Son to go that way? Or will he receive an honorable burial?

It's at this point that the enemies of the Lord Jesus Christ swoop in. They swoop in to contradict, they swoop in to contradict the truth that Christ has declared from the cross. His whole life they contradicted. When he showed them the marvelous works of God, they contradicted those marvelous works and they declared that's the work of Belial. His teachings they contradicted. In the testimony of his whole life as they observed, they contradicted in their courts saying, "This is a lawless man. This is a wicked man. This is a criminal, and he deserves to suffer and to die as a criminal." So they crucified him as a criminal and there on the cross they continue to contradict and to revile him. "He saved others, himself he cannot save. If he be the Son of God and the beloved of God, let God deliver him." All the while contradicting and all they wish to contradict what Christ had said. He expected to be received of his Father. He must be righteous. He must have made a complete separation from sin. And they can do that by handling his body and assigning him a place with the wicked.

Even after this, they come before Pilate, even after Christ is given a burial place and they say, "That deceiver said while he was alive, after three days I will rise again." You have the enemies of the Lord Jesus Christ contradicting and therefore they want to make him a place with the wicked but behind this, behind all this is Satan, Satan who has contended against God's truth for thousands of years, and what God promised in the garden had just been in principle fulfilled on the cross, in principle his head has been crushed but now he's reeling about as a serpent continuing to spit out his venom and to slander God's truth. And he it is who wants to be able to say to all those who beheld what took place at the cross, "It's all a lie. All he spoke was deception. Look how he goes."

And it seems as if all things are in his power. While during Christ's life, Satan had to contend with Christ who could do and Christ who could speak but now the lifeless frame of Christ hangs on the cross under the power of the church and under the power of the state, and things seem to be in his control and he sets into motion his plan. He stirs up in the Jews to go before Pilate and to request that Pilate bring down those bodies from the crosses and be thrown into the pit. And then presently the Roman soldiers will command their slaves to take those bodies, to peel them off the crosses and to cast them away as wicked and perverse men.

Satan has a word. Satan has a word here upon the burial of the Lord Jesus Christ and that word is, "All that he did, in all that he said, in all that you just witnessed, it's a lie." But God will not suffer his truth to go down into defeat. And how can Christ himself go the way of the wicked, he it is who has made an end of sin? He can suffer shame and contempt no more as one who is reproached and reviled and despised by God. He has suffered all that death is. That's how you have to understand the cross. Everything that death is, he has suffered already. Everything that death is as the wages for sin on that cross, he endured all of the tears that death is, all of the fearful rejection and isolation that death is. On that cross, he endured all the agony of his body and soul as one who is

accursed. He abided under the living word of God's curse and that wrath of God filled his body. All that death is, he suffered on the cross and he did that for your sins.

You came here to church as a sinner, did you not? For all of your gross sins, all that you have done and all that you will ever do, what you deserve is all that death is, all of its terribleness, all of its shame, all of its humiliation, all of its agony, and he suffered all that in your place on the cross. All that death is. And then when he had finished suffering all that death is on that cross, he also brought his physical existence to an end and he submitted himself to the grave. He did that. He did that because God's truth is this: you who are a sinner, dust thou art, and to dust thou shalt return and therefore those who end this life in death enter necessarily the corruption of the grave and he gave of himself.

Look at, even now, even now upon the burial of his lifeless body, he's willingly obeying God's will. Even now, his submission into the corruption and the horrors of the grave, he willingly submits himself to. God proclaimed, "To dust thou shalt return," and he says, "Righteous and true art thou, O God. Perfect is thy judgment in all of thy works." And he, out of love for his God, in love for God's truth, he gives himself over to the burial. You understand he can do that, even now, because of who he is. He is, in his person, the Son of God, in whose divine nature was never separated from his human nature. So even now he can commit his body to the burial, willingly, out of love for God, fulfilling all righteousness, even now. Having put an end to sin, having suffered all that death is in fulfilling all righteousness, I say he cannot suffer shame and contempt and be rejected and cast off by God.

It's impossible and that's impossible according to God's word. It's impossible according to what God says in Isaiah 53:9, speaking of the work that God's righteous servant did, verse 9, "And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth." The meaning of that verse is obscured a little bit in our translation. It would seem that he who made his grave with the wicked, that the subject of that making his grave would be the righteous servant of Jehovah, but that's not the case. "He" is very general. It's a pronoun that has no direct antecedent and you have to understand there that that "he" is every wicked man who's contradicting the truth of God, the truth of God in Christ, Christ during Christ's whole life. That "he" there is Satan himself who reproaches all that God has done and decreed and works out. Wicked man, Satan, they make Christ's grave wicked. They say he needs to go as one who is despised and rejected and contemptible to God, needs to go the way of the criminal, and therefore they mark out and assign Christ the place.

And over against that, he was with the rich in his death. He does not deserve as one who has borne away death in the sentence of death and fulfilled all righteousness to have that dishonorable, contemptible death of a criminal. He deserves the death of a rich man. He deserves an honorable burial and that, according to Isaiah 53, because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. Negatively, he had done no wicked thing. He spoke no lie. Positively, he had spoke with unclouded sincerity and truth and had loved God until the very end. Because of his righteousness, though Satan and the whole world assign him a contemptible death, his grave will be with the rich.

God will preserve his truth. God will preserve his truth and what he shows forth that day at Golgotha and therefore, suddenly bursting upon the scene is Joseph of Arimathea to give the Lord Jesus Christ a burial fit for a rich man. That Joseph of Arimathea is a man we know very little about. He simply comes upon the scene when Christ is buried and he simply disappears from the scene after Christ is buried. He arises to the occasion, so to speak, to give the Lord Jesus Christ an honorable burial. Scripture says he is from Arimathea. We know that's a town, but we don't even know where that is. Scripture says he's a rich man, and when it says that he's rich, it means that he had a large amount of wealth, much more than the common man, but we don't even know how he accumulated his wealth. Scripture says that he was a member of the council, which meant that he's a member of the Sanhedrin and he did not participate in the unimaginable wickedness of condemning the Lord Jesus Christ. But the point is he was rich, and he was powerful, and certainly all men in Jerusalem knew his name but he's a mystery man to us. He simply comes on the scene.

Scripture also describes him in a parallel account as a secret disciple. He was a fearful man, and that's not shocking. Consider all the wealth that he had. Consider all the power that he had. He had much to lose. He heard secretly the teachings of Jesus Christ, and he searched for the kingdom of God but up to this point, it was all hidden. Up to this point, he lived in unbelief. Even he cowered in fear while matters about the Lord Jesus Christ were still undecided, even before official action had been taken against him. He cowered in fear and hid as a secret disciple but now when all the hearts of men are made manifest and all the abominable wickedness against Christ is declared by their crucifixion, now boldly he storms into the courts of Pilate and to beg for the body of Jesus. And you know why he has to beg? Because Pilate knew what the leaders of the Jews wanted to do with that body, and he knew how they hated him, and he knew how they would treat him with contempt to the very end.

So Joseph begs boldly in public display before the whole world. He willingly enters into suffer the reproach and the shame of that crucifixion and of the Lord Jesus Christ and what is that? That is faith. If you want to know what faith is, look what happens here. Unbelief cowers in fear. Unbelief hides. Unbelief is a secret disciple, but not faith. Faith is bold. Faith storms the courts of kings and princes and rulers. Faith counts it all joy to suffer the shame and the reproach of the Lord Jesus Christ. Faith which is God's act, man here cowers in fear. God himself stirs up a man through faith to cause that man to rise to the occasion to give his Son a proper burial. Faith which is God's operation. What you need to see here with the appearance of Joseph of Arimathea is God working, God contending against the lie of Satan, God putting that lie down to defeat, God giving his Son a burial fit for a rich man.

So then Joseph departs from Pilate's courts. He goes out and buys some linen. He approaches Golgotha. He takes down the cross, pulls out the nails from Christ's flesh, pollutes himself with a dead body, carries that body to his own tomb, acquires a vast amount of rich spices, wraps Jesus up in the linen and those spices and lays Jesus down in the tomb with a napkin over his face. God, God gave his Son a burial, a rich burial. A burial for the truth according to the truth that he had fulfilled all righteousness and had spoken no lie and had all that he had done, all that he had done was in love for God and

in love for his people. God triumphs. God triumphs that day and that is for the comfort of God's people.

Joseph, when he brought the Lord Jesus Christ into a tomb, laid him into his own tomb, Christ was laid into another's tomb. Indeed Christ in his whole life had nothing to call his own and certainly not a grave because all that he did was as the head of a covenant and as the mediator of his people. All that he did was not for himself but for his people and even now in his burial he's not buried in his own tomb but he's buried in another's tomb. He's buried in the place of another for he's buried with another. He's buried as the head of his people so that what God says about the burial of Jesus Christ here, he says about all of God's people's burials. No matter what men do to you, no matter what, no matter how men desecrate your body and hold it in contempt, this is what God says, your burial is a burial of a rich man and you deserve an honor with a burial because you're buried with the Lord Jesus Christ. He was buried in another's tomb and scripture makes a point of saying too it was a new tomb. New, of course, because it had not, another body had not been laid in that tomb but new because of what that tomb represented. All the other tombs up to this point were old. All those who were laid in those tombs suffered the power of corruption but this tomb is new. This tomb is the tomb of one who has perfectly ceased from sin, who has borne away all the will of God's wrath for sin. It is the tomb of one who expected to be received from his Father because he was righteous and therefore it was the tomb of one who could not see the power of corruption, who could not suffer that power of death because he had defeated death in all of its entirety upon the cross.

So that body was placed in the grave and did not see corruption and then on the morning of the first day of the week it broke forth from the bands of death with immortal life, and those who are baptized into the death of the Lord Jesus Christ are also buried with him by baptism into his death. And if we have been fashioned into him in his death, we shall certainly live with him with immortal life, life above death.

That is the truth of Jesus' burial. His burial was not made with the wicked. He did not go the way of a contemptible criminal but he went the way of one who was loved and favored by God. An honorable burial he received and that was the word of God against the word of Satan. And that is the word of God that overcomes all of the lies that rise up against us week after week. That is the word of God that triumphs over a guilty conscience. That is the word of God that triumphs over any fear of death. God's word is always victorious and when we are buried with him, we are buried with the rich and the death of God's people are precious in his sight. Amen.

*Our Father in heaven, we thank you for thy word that even in this aspect of the Lord's pilgrimage in this earth, that thou dost triumph over every evil and thou dost give unto thy people sure consolation and hope. And he it is who has, having ceased from all sin, entered into his rest and we are those who by faith enter into that perfect work with him. Father, minister that rest unto our souls this morning and this coming week and cause us to live out of the new life, the immortal life that he has obtained. Graciously pardon all of our sins. In Jesus' name. Amen.*