

Theme: The sign and seal of Christ’s love for us is his death and resurrection. On the cross He paid the penalty of sin; in His resurrection He guarantees eternal life. To know that love, to live forever in it, is worth whatever risk we may take to possess it.

Introduction: Bold action you have taken? Risked reputation, standing?

-Rosa Parks, 1953

-Spalatin and Luther before the Diet of Worms

Background: We have just witnessed the most dreadful act in the history of the world! Move from the horror of the cross, that dreadful scene - to an exquisite expression of love – an act of love which comes at great risk.

I. An Act of Courage

- A. No “right” to ask it of Pilate
- B. Courage (Mark 15:43 “took courage”)
- C. At great risk!
 - 1. Risk is not with Pilate
 - 2. Had followed in secret. (John 19:38)
 - 3. Defining moment/Act
 - To follow Jesus.
 - Risking all.

NOTE: At some point we must all make the decision – for Jesus says, “...but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven.” (Matthew 10:33; cf. Luke 12:8,9)

- 4. Joseph chooses to follow/believe
 - With Christ in the grave.
 - We have the resurrection before us.

II. An Act of Love

- A. Who would take him down.
 - 1. The women?
 - 2. The secret followers.
- B. The burial of rich man. (Isaiah 53:12; Isaiah 53:9)
- C. Hurriedly

III. In Response to Love!

A. The crucifixion –

1. The sign of God's wrath.
2. The work of God's love. (John 15:13; John 3:16,17; 1 John 4:9,10)

B. It is for love that Christ died. (John 13:1)

C. In love – He was raised from the dead! (John 17:22-26; Ephesians 2:4,5)

IV. Risky Business

A. Love in the world has risks.

B. Love of the Savior has its risks, too.

1. For Jesus?

- It cost him more dearly than we can presently comprehend or imagine.

2. For us?

- When you declare your love for Him - you can get hurt.

3. If you focus on the losses?

- You will miss seeing His power and grace at work.

C. Worth the risk! (Mark 10:29)

D. A true estimate

1. Of our sin. (Luke 7:44-47)

2. Of His love.