



# Christian Report

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## The Plot that Failed



*“On the next day, which followed the Day of Preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees gathered together to Pilate, saying, “Sir, we remember, while He was still alive, how that deceiver said, ‘After three days I will rise.’ Therefore command that the tomb be made secure until the third day, lest His disciples come by night and steal Him away, and say to the people, ‘He has risen from the dead.’ So the last deception will be worse than the first.” (Matthew 27:62-64)*

It’s *Saturday*, the day after the crucifixion of Jesus. The chief priests and Pharisees, who probably didn’t actually believe in the resurrection, did remember that Jesus had said while He was alive that he would rise again on the third day. They did however seem to be afraid that if His disciples stole His body and claimed

that Jesus had risen from the dead, it would be harmful to them and their place in society. To protect their status in Jewish society they determined to do everything in their power to see that nothing happened. And so they went to Pilate, who was in charge of Jesus’ execution and burial, and reminded him of Jesus’ teaching and ask that the tomb of Jesus Christ be sealed and soldiers be posted as a guard.

Pilate granted their request. He said, *“Take a guard. Go, make the tomb as secure as you know how.”* And that’s what they did. They went and made the tomb secure by putting a seal on the stone and posting a guard.

Maybe Pilate was somewhat amused. After all, if Christ was only a man, it certainly wasn’t necessary to guard Him. He was dead. On the other hand, if He was God as He claimed to be (and perhaps about which Pilate himself had some intimation because of the trial), then all the guards and all the seals in the world would never keep Him down.



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The tomb had been sealed shut and the guards are at their posts. Then comes *Sunday* morning, just before dawn.



The Bible tells us what happened next:

*“Now after the Sabbath, toward the dawn of the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat on it. His countenance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow. And the guards shook for fear of him, and became like dead men.” (Matthew 28:1-4)*

The scribes and Pharisees had hatched plot that would ensure the continuity of their religious authority over the Jewish people. Were they afraid that Jesus might do something, just as He had claimed he would do, either raise Himself from the dead or some miracle take place? That would be absolutely devastating, and of course that is exactly what He did.

They had posted a guard and sealed the tomb. But the Jesus who was more than a man, the Jesus who had said of Himself, *“I am the resurrection and the life,”* simply broke their seal,

scattered their guards, and rose triumphant on that first Easter morning.

As we sing in that great Easter hymn:

*Vainly they watch his bed—Jesus my Savior;  
Vainly they seal the dead—Jesus my Lord.  
Up from the grave he arose,  
With a mighty triumph o’er His foes.  
He arose a victor from the dark domain,  
And he lives forever with his saints to reign.  
**He arose! He arose! Hallelujah! Christ arose!***

*Some content adapted from a James Montgomery Boice devotional “Plans Against the Third Day”*



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## Reflect

Where are you standing guard over something God is asking you to surrender?

What fears or uncertainties feel “secured” and unmovable in your life?

How does Christ’s victory over death give you courage for the battles you face today?

What does the empty tomb reveal about the authority of Jesus?

The stone was sealed—but God moved it. Where do you need to trust Him to do the same?

## A Resurrection Day Reflection

When Jesus was crucified, a sign was placed above His head—simple, stark, and unavoidable.

**“Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews.”**  
(John 19:19)

*It was meant to explain Rome’s charge.  
It was meant to mock a defeated man.*

But in God’s providence, it became a proclamation.

That sign declared who Jesus truly was—even as He hung in suffering.

## A King Identified in Three Languages

The Gospel of John tells us the inscription was written in Hebrew, Latin, and Greek—the dominant languages of faith, government, and culture in the ancient world. In effect, the message was broadcast to everyone present:

*This man is a King.*

Pilate ordered it. The religious leaders protested it. But Pilate refused to change it, saying, “What I have written, I have written.”

In a moment of unintended truth, a Roman governor publicly affirmed the kingship of Christ.

## Authority That Looks Like Sacrifice

For those who serve—or have served—in uniform, the idea of authority carries weight. Rank matters. Command matters. Allegiance matters.

Yet here, at the cross, Jesus reveals a different kind of authority.

He did not rule from a throne of power. He did not command legions to rescue Him. He did not defend Himself. Instead, He obeyed—to the point of death.

The cross was not a failure of leadership. It was the highest expression of obedience and mission focus the world has ever seen. Jesus fulfilled His mission completely.

## The Irony of the Accusation

The words above the cross were intended as an accusation. But God transformed them into truth.



*When Pilate ordered the inscription “Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews” to be placed above the cross (John 19:19–22), it was written in Hebrew, Latin, and Greek for all to see. What was intended as a charge of mockery became, in God’s providence, a public declaration of truth.*

*In the biblical narrative, moments like this often carry a deeper irony: human authorities speak more than they understand. Though Pilate did not intend to proclaim a theological reality, God used his words to bear witness to it.*

*Some have reflected on how the Hebrew rendering of the inscription invites deeper contemplation, pointing beyond the immediate scene to the identity of Jesus. While the text does not explicitly make this connection, it reminds us that even in suffering, the cross proclaimed who Christ truly is.*

*The crucified Jesus is not only King—He is the fulfillment of all that God has revealed. Even at the cross, God was making Himself known.*



Jesus was a King. Not crowned by men, but appointed by the Father. Not ruling by force, but by love. Not defeated by death, but victorious over it.

What Rome meant to shame Him, God used to reveal Him.

### Resurrection Changes Everything

Resurrection Day tells us that the sign above the cross was not the end of the story.

*The tomb was empty.*

*The King had risen.*

*The mission was accomplished.*

*The cross proved His obedience.*

*The resurrection proved His authority.*

For followers of Christ—especially those accustomed to serving under authority—this truth reshapes everything. Our allegiance is no longer to fear, death, or even earthly power, but to the risen King who gave His life and took it up again.

### The Sign Still Confronts Us

That sign still asks a question of every person who encounters it:

### Who is Jesus to you?

*A historical figure?*

*A moral teacher?*

*Or the risen King worthy of your allegiance?*

The resurrection leaves no neutral ground. Jesus does not merely invite admiration—He invites loyalty.

### Allegiance to the Risen King

For CMF, Resurrection Day is not only a celebration—it's a call.

We follow a King who:

*Understands sacrifice*

*Honors obedience*

*Leads through service*

*Triumphs through resurrection*

And we serve Him not out of compulsion, but conviction.

The sign above the cross declared His kingship. The empty tomb confirmed it forever.

**Jesus of Nazareth lives.**

**And the King still reigns.**



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