

“The Gospel of the Grave Clothes”

John 19:38-40; 20:1-8

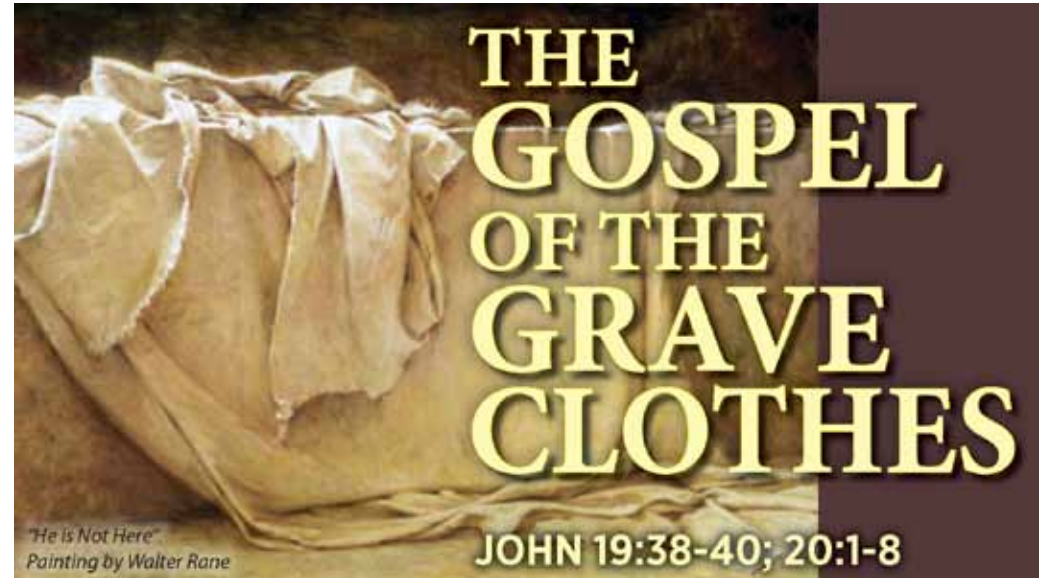
INTRODUCTION: *What are you planning to wear in your casket?*

I. FOLKS DON'T DISCUSS GRAVECLOTHES – BUT JOHN WAS AN EXCEPTION

- A. John tells us God took clothing of death and made it a symbol of life
- B. John would agree with St. Paul:
God can turn tragedy into triumph (Romans 8:28)
- C. The delivery of grave clothes by Joseph & Nicodemus meant hope was gone (John 19:38-40)

II. THROUGH THE RAGS OF DEATH JOHN SAW THE LINENS OF LIFE

- A. He didn't know on that Friday what you & I now know (John 20:9)
- B. That's why what he did on Saturday is so important:
he hung around!
- C. When it's "Saturday" in your life (somewhere between yesterday's tragedy & tomorrow's triumph) what do you do?
- D. Sunday morning brought amazing news:
The **Gospel of the grave clothes!** (John 20:1-8)
 1. Mary jumped to a false conclusion . . .
John jumped up and out ran Peter to the grave
 2. What John & Peter saw there amazed them:
the Gospel of the grave clothes!
 3. To understand what they saw, we must understand Jewish burial practices . . .
 4. Through the rags of death Peter & John saw the linens of life and trappings of triumph!



III. GOD SPECIALIZES IN CLOTHING THE ORDINARY WITH THE ETERNAL

- A. An unused feed trough, some empty wine jugs, a tool for execution . . .
- B. Should we be surprised that He takes the wrappings of death & makes them the picture of life?
- C. Should you be surprised He can do something similar in your life??
- D. Like John, we need only "hang around" (Romans 8:28)
- E. "*In (grave clothes – hospital stays – financial challenges – divorce papers – you name it) God works for the good of those who love Him.*"

CONCLUSION: The movie – *Regarding Henry*:
"Clothes really do 'make the man'"