

Unit .27

Session .01

Jesus Is Resurrected

Scripture



John 20:1-10

1 On the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark. She saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. **2** So she went running to Simon Peter and to the other disciple, the one Jesus loved, and said to them, “They’ve taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we don’t know where they’ve put him!” **3** At that, Peter and the other disciple went out, heading for the tomb. **4** The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and got to the tomb first. **5** Stooping down, he saw the

linen cloths lying there, but he did not go in. **6** Then, following him, Simon Peter also came. He entered the tomb and saw the linen cloths lying there. **7** The wrapping that had been on his head was not lying with the linen cloths but was folded up in a separate place by itself. **8** The other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, then also went in, saw, and believed. **9** For they did not yet understand the Scripture that he must rise from the dead. **10** Then the disciples returned to the place where they were staying.

Intro Options



Main Point:
**Sin and death
were defeated in
Jesus' resurrection.**

Option 1

We live in a culture that makes it difficult at times to decipher truth from lies. You may have been told coffee would stunt your growth or if you swallowed a lemon seed, a tree would grow in your belly. You may have been told an elf was watching to see if you were naughty or nice or that a rule existed that governed all of humanity stating that you couldn't swim until thirty minutes after eating. Belief always determines behavior, and these examples may have at one point led you to avoid particular foods or to be on your best behavior during the Christmas season.

- **What lie did you believe as a child and how did that belief influence your behavior?**

What we believe about Jesus and His resurrection is the hinge of our faith. If Jesus was resurrected as the Bible says He was, then it should be the guiding truth of our lives, changing the way we interact with God and with each other. In the previous session, we walked through the events surrounding Jesus' crucifixion. In this session, we will discover the empty tomb early in the morning three days after the crucifixion.

Option 2

We've all heard of things like the underdog, the dark horse, the Cinderella story, or a rags-to-riches story. These are the people we don't expect to succeed—to make it out of a tough situation or to achieve whatever it is they set out to do—yet they overcome.

- **What are some of your favorite underdog or Cinderella stories?**
- **Why do you think these stories inspire us?**

In Jesus' story, most of the religious leaders didn't believe Him when He said He was the Messiah, much less believe Him when He said He would rise again on the third day. Going up against death, sin, and abandonment, then winning—that was unthinkable. Even His own disciples scattered and lived in fear when He died. But the story didn't end on the cross. Three days after He was buried, Jesus rose again, having defeated sin and death.

TEACHING PLAN

Read John 20:1-2.



The process of burying Jesus was rushed because of the coming Sabbath. Prohibited by tradition from carrying out work or coming into contact with the dead on this sacred day, those who placed Jesus in the tomb quickly carried out a partial preparation that would have to do until after the day of rest. According to Matthew, the two Marys went to see the tomb, but we know from Mark and Luke that their purpose was not to observe or pay respects. Instead, they intended to further prepare Jesus' body with various spices for burial (Mark 16:1; Luke 23:55–24:1).



The women who saw the stone rolled away from the tomb didn't immediately praise God because they didn't yet know Jesus was risen. They weren't looking for the miraculous. Instead the women believed that there must be some human explanation for Jesus' missing body from the tomb.

Jesus' resurrection inaugurates His kingdom on earth, giving His followers freedom from the oppression of sin and death because His resurrection declares Him victorious. Because Jesus was raised as the firstfruits of the new creation (1 Cor. 15:23), we can trust that we are hidden in Him, also to be raised to reign with Him upon His return.

- **Imagine you were with the women visiting the tomb. How would you have responded to what you saw?**

Read John 20:3-7.



It had been a difficult three days full of uncertainty, grief, and fear. To be associated with Jesus meant potentially to be guilty by association of the same crime, deserving the same fate. Yet, this news brought the disciples out of their homes and to the tomb. For both the women running to the disciples and the disciples running to the tomb, news concerning their beloved Jesus required immediate action. Love motivates, and although they didn't understand the happenings yet, they loved Jesus.

- **Do you think the disciples were afraid before hearing about the empty tomb? Explain your answer.**

99 Essential Doctrines (p. 80, DDG)

Faith

Biblical faith is the resting, or trusting, in Christ alone for salvation (John 3:16-21). More than being simply a mental agreement of historical facts, genuine faith begins with a recognition and confession of the truth of the gospel (1 John 4:13-16), followed by a receiving of Christ as Lord and Savior of one's life (John 1:10-13). Biblical faith is not blind faith, for it rests on the historical life, death, and resurrection of Christ.

COMMENTARY

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John 20

1. Jesus did what no one else could do for Mary Magdalene, cast seven demons from her (Mark 16:9). She responded to this freedom from demonic oppression with love and devotion as she traveled alongside Jesus and the disciples as they shared the good news (Luke 8:2). Her love continued as she—and the women with her (see v. 2; Matt. 28:1; Mark 16:1; Luke 24:10)—brought spices to anoint Him before the sun rose the day after the Sabbath.

2. “It is remarkable that all four Gospels (cf. Matt. 28:1; Mark 16:2; Luke 24:1) introduce their respective resurrection accounts by specifying the first day of the week, rather than ‘the third day’ after the crucifixion (cf. 1 Cor. 15:3,4), despite Jesus’ passion predictions (Mark 8:31). The reason is disputed, but it may have to do with the desire to present the resurrection of Jesus as the beginning of something new. John says the first approach to the tomb took place while it was still dark, i.e. early on Sunday morning. Mark specifies dawn; Luke says ‘very early in the morning,’ and Matthew uses a complicated construction that probably means much the same... If Mary Magdalene first approached the tomb alone, and then with other women, John’s darkness may suggest that she went before dawn. Whether this is so or not, one is tempted to think that John emphasizes the darkness of the dawn because he is still using light/darkness symbolism [cf. 3:2; 13:30]: the darkness of the hour is the perfect counterpart to the darkness that still shrouds Mary’s understanding.”¹

In Defense (p. 82, DDG)



It is remarkable that women were the first to testify to the reality of the resurrection of Jesus’ resurrection. From a first-century legal perspective, they were unworthy to be witnesses. Indeed, that fact has often been offered as a strong supporting piece of evidence for the historical accuracy of the resurrection. After all, how likely would it be for someone in that culture to create a story based off of the testimony of witnesses who would have been viewed as relatively unreliable?

TEACHING PLAN

Jesus' body had not been stolen, which would be a violation of both Roman law and Jewish burial integrity. Instead, the cloths from Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus that had been wrapped around Jesus' body to prepare Him for burial were inside the tomb (John 19:38-40). Jesus' body had lain there three days, beginning to decay. No one would want to carry His body away without the linen wrappings. It would be stinky, heavy, and considered unclean (Num. 19:11).

These seemingly insignificant pieces of fabric were preaching the good news of the risen Christ to those at the tomb. Nothing like this had been seen before. The grave clothes mentioned in John 11:44 when Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead were different. He needed to be unwrapped, but our Savior emerged from the tomb as the firstfruits of a new kind of resurrection.

- **In what ways was Jesus the firstfruits? What does this mean for all who are in Christ?**

Read John 20:8-10.



John's belief, as described in these verses, should bring us great comfort. He believed the resurrection had occurred, despite his inability to comprehend it all. There are many truths we believe in faith that contain details far beyond our comprehension: the Trinity, creation out of nothing, the new heavens and new earth, and how God has never ceased to exist and has no beginning. Today, we have an advantage in that we have God's total and complete Word, showing us how all of the prophecies point to Jesus. However, John believed not because of the weight of prophecy that he studied, but because he saw an empty tomb.

- **What truths about Christianity do we believe despite our inability to fully understand them? What does it look like to trust Jesus as our risen Lord, even when we cannot see the object of our faith?**

While the disciples had not yet seen Jesus, our salvation was already secure in His resurrection. Jesus' resurrection testifies the truth of all of Scripture, the sufficiency of His atoning death for sin, and our justification before the living God by faith alone in Christ and His work. In His resurrection is the proclamation of the defeat of sin and death. Our faith's value finds its bearing in the resurrection, as we are united with Him in it: "For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins" (1 Cor. 15:16-17).

- **In what ways is our faith dependent upon the resurrection? In what ways is the resurrection important in your everyday life?**

COMMENTARY

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John 20

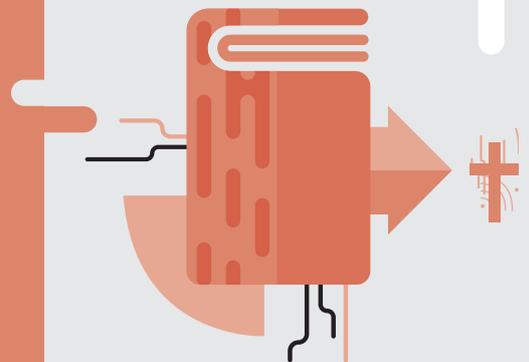
3-7. “Lazarus would need those grave clothes when he died again, but Jesus had defeated death.”² Jesus had been raised in a resurrection body incapable of dying, a picture of His forever defeat of death. Jesus’ resurrection would be the first of its kind, but certainly not the last. He is the firstfruits of the world to come, the beginning of the new heaven and earth, a picture of the “already and not yet” kingdom of God, over which He was crowned as King through His crucifixion and resurrection (1 Cor. 15:20-23).

8. “The character of the perceiving of the revelation in the tomb is emphasized by the different Greek words employed in our text. In John 20:5 the word “saw” simply means to see something—that is all John did when he looked through the portal of the grave. In John 20:6 the word “seeth” means to look a something closely, to investigate it—that was Peter investigating. In John 20:8 the word “saw” means to see with perception—that was John who now comprehended what the grave clothes meant, namely, the resurrection of Christ.”³

9. “What Scripture might John have had in mind when he wrote verse 9? Quite possibly Isaiah 53:10-12 or even Psalm 16:10. What did he actually believe if he did not understand the biblical background of resurrection? Perhaps the best option in the text is to conclude that John believed Jesus was alive but could not figure out why or what would happen next. That fits well with the great surprise of the disciples at post-resurrection appearances.”⁴

(p. 81, DDG) Christ Connection

On Easter Sunday, God vindicated His Son’s perfect sacrifice by raising Him from the dead and beginning the new creation He had long promised to His people. Through faith, we are united to Christ and share in the promise of being resurrected in His likeness. Sin’s curse has been removed, death has been defeated, and we are assured of everlasting life with God.



Our Mission

God's Story has always been designed to connect with our story. It is because of His Story that our stories make sense, have meaning, and carry on into eternity. Use the questions below to help think through how His Story connects with your own. Suggested answers to these questions can be found on the right-hand side of the page for leaders.

Head



Based on this account, how should a Christian approach death?

What are some ways Christians can offer hope to those who fear death?

Heart



How does the message of Jesus' resurrection offer hope to those who have none?

What are the easiest things in life for you to get excited about and want to share with others? What are some of the most difficult? Why should the historical resurrection of Jesus be one of the things we get excited to share with others?

Hands



How does the resurrection compel you to display and share the gospel in your school/neighborhood?

Would your neighbors say that your life is marked first and foremost by the resurrection of Jesus Christ? Why or why not?

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Head

For most people, the thought of death can be a paralyzing fear. Death represents the great unknown, and is chilling in its finality. With all of our advances in medical technology, death is the one thing we cannot avoid. But the one thing that man cannot defeat, Jesus Christ triumphed over. And for Christians, His victory is our victory. Through our union with Him, Christ has made us victorious over death with His promise to resurrect us upon His return, having removed sin's curse over us. He has reconciled us to God through our union with Him in His life, death, and resurrection.



Heart

God lovingly reveals truth to us when we are questioning things, just as He would do for Mary Magdalene later in John 20:11-18 when she would see Him. Although we won't see Jesus face to face until He returns or we are with Him in heaven, we do not trust blindly. Scripture reveals God to us and He displays His truth in His Word.



Hands

The resurrection is the good news that we must not keep to ourselves. Jesus offers new life both now and forever to those who trust Him. May we not grow weary in telling the story of Jesus' work on the cross and the freedom found in His resurrection for those who trust Him.