

SEEING JESUS IN JOHN

WEEK FORTY-SIX: THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS

READING

1 Early on Sunday morning, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and found that the stone had been rolled away from the entrance. 2 She ran and found Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved. She said, “They have taken the Lord’s body out of the tomb, and we don’t know where they have put him!” 3 Peter and the other disciple started out for the tomb. 4 They were both running, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. 5 He stooped and looked in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he didn’t go in. 6 Then Simon Peter arrived and went inside. He also noticed the linen wrappings lying there, 7 while the cloth that had covered Jesus’ head was folded up and lying apart from the other wrappings. 8 Then the disciple who had reached the tomb first also went in, and he saw and believed— 9 for until then they still hadn’t understood the Scriptures that said Jesus must rise from the dead. 10 Then they went home. John 20:1-10 (NLT)

TEACHING

Mary went to the tomb as early as she could. Jesus died just before the start of the Sabbath and she couldn’t go then because any kind of work was forbidden. She also wasn’t going to go after sundown on Saturday night (once the Sabbath ended) as there was no electricity and lighting. We know from Matthew and Luke that she was not alone – Mary and other women woke up early and headed to the tomb. We know from Luke’s account that they brought spices, expecting to complete a proper burial ceremony for Jesus. Once they found the stone rolled away, they ran back to tell the disciples. Most likely the “other disciple” was John, the author of this gospel account. He was faster than Peter, but Peter was the first one to go into the now empty tomb. He saw the grave cloths folded up and lying there. Jesus was alive and he didn’t need them!

In this moment something incredible happened – John sees and believes! He had been around Jesus for over three years. He had heard many powerful teachings and witnessed many miracles and healings. He had even been sent out to do the same. But until he saw the evidence of the resurrected Jesus, he didn’t fully believe. Until that moment he believed Jesus was a great teacher, a miracle worker and a prophet. But once he saw that Jesus had defeated death, there was no more question in his mind. Jesus was the Messiah – the Savior of the world, the Son of God, the Holy One! It’s important that we move beyond seeing Jesus as a good man. We must see him risen and alive – as God!

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RESPONSE

OPENING QUESTION(S):

- When is the last time you had exciting news to share with others? What was it?

TODDLERS/PRE-K:

- In this story, who went to the tomb early in the morning?
- What did Mary and the disciples find when they got to the tomb?

CHILDREN:

- What did Mary see when she arrived at the tomb and what did she do?
- What did Peter and John do when they arrived at the tomb?
- What happened in John's heart when he saw the empty tomb and grave clothes?

TEENAGERS:

- How did Mary, Peter and John each respond differently when they arrived at the tomb?
- What did John finally believe when he saw the empty tomb?
- How does believing in Jesus' victory over death and the grave help us?

ADULTS:

- Do you know the evidence for the resurrection of Jesus from the dead? If not, be sure to read a book like *Evidence That Demands A Verdict* by Josh McDowell.

PRAAYER

God, thank you that Jesus didn't stay dead! Thank you that Jesus defeated Satan, sin, hell, death and the grave. Thank you that the same Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead now dwells in all who believe. Help me to set my eyes on the resurrected Jesus and not on my circumstances or struggles. Let his life and his power be at work in me. Thank you for the hope of our future resurrection – that we will live forever in your presence. In Jesus' name, Amen.

NEXT LEVEL (ADDITIONAL OPTIONAL TEACHING)

The ESV Study Bible notes point out something interesting about this account:

The linen cloths lying there are clear evidence that Jesus' body had not been taken by grave robbers or by his disciples attempting to steal the body or by his enemies, who would not have taken the time to remove these cloths. The Greek text simply says that the cloths were "lying" (keimai, a common word). Though it is sometimes suggested otherwise, nothing in the text indicates that Jesus' body passed through the cloths or that the cloths were lying in the shape of Jesus' body. The NT elsewhere affirms the real physical materiality of Jesus' resurrection body. Most likely Jesus unwrapped these cloths from his body when he awakened from death and left them behind.