

Good day to each of you. As we look at the resurrection of Jesus from the dead and see the reactions from those who still thought He was dead, we have a choice to make. Christianity stands or falls with the truth of the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. **Read 1 Cor. 15:12-22.** Let's also read all four Gospels on the empty tomb (**Mt. 28:1-15, Mk. 16:1-8, Lk. 24:1-12, Jn. 20:1-18**). The fact of Jesus' resurrection from the dead transformed the disciples from cowardly men hiding in fear to bold witnesses for Jesus. Jesus' bodily resurrection is the crowning proof that He truly is the Jewish Messiah and Son of God who laid down His life for His own (**10:17-18; 15:13; Rom 1:4**). Why didn't Jesus also appear to unbelievers? Jesus answered this in **Lk. 16:31 read**; just as Jesus' signs didn't convince them, neither would they be convinced if He rose from the dead! In **Jn. 20:1-31** we have: (1) The visit of Peter and John to the tomb (:1-10), (2) Jesus' appearance to Mary Magdalene (:11-18), (3) the 10 apostles (:19-23), (4) the 10 plus Thomas (:24-29), and (5) the apostle John's purpose in writing this Gospel (:30-31).

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So you have Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, Salome, Joanna, and perhaps more arriving at the tomb. Just imagine their thoughts that early morning: The cross had dashed their hopes. The grave had buried their dreams. They came to anoint a dead body. But what they saw was the stone already rolled away from the entrance of the tomb. Imagine a recently dug grave where you saw a body buried. Swindoll: "As you approach the burial site to leave flowers, you see that the dirt has been moved back from the grave, the coffin is lying open beside the hole, and the body is missing."

:2 So she [Mary] ran and came to Simon Peter and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken away the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid Him." Mary, running to Peter and John, was not present when the angels appeared to the other women and announced Jesus' resurrection; the other Gospels tell us about angels appearing to the women at the tomb and Jesus later appearing to them. Mary experienced none of this, and as she ran to Peter and John, she had no thought of resurrection. It was terrible news that Mary Magdalene brought to the two apostles. Robbery of tombs was a common practice during that day. Now not even the body of Jesus was left. Notice, Mary is still calling Jesus the Lord. **:3-4 So Peter and the other disciple went forth, and they were going to the tomb. :4 The two were running together; and the other disciple ran ahead faster than Peter and came to the tomb first.** At first they are pictured as merely walking; then running side by side; finally, still running, but now John is outdistancing Peter. Either John was younger or in better shape!

:5 and stooping and looking in, he [John] saw the linen wrappings lying there; but he did not go in. Stooping, peering intently within, he looked in the tomb and saw the linen wrappings (**19:40**). Any idea of resurrection is completely absent from his mind. By the way, if tomb-robbers had been at work, why would they leave the grave-clothes? Also a guard was there (**Mt. 28:11-15**).

:6-7 And so Simon Peter also came, following him, and entered [went straight into] the tomb; and he saw the linen wrappings lying there, :7 and the face-cloth which had been on His head, not lying with the linen wrappings, but rolled up in a place by itself [a little way apart]. Out of breath, Peter arrived and went straight into the tomb! As he stared at the situation, he too saw the linen wrappings lying there plus the face-cloth which had been on Jesus' head rolled up, separate from the linen wrappings. Remember the wrappings were not a single piece of cloth, but strips of linen wound around and around. Apparently Jesus' resurrection body had just passed through the wrappings. Peter went away, marveling to himself what had happened (**Lk. 24:12**). Jesus, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer is master over Him (**Rom. 6:9**). The grave clothes were left behind and not reused.

:8 So the other disciple who had first come to the tomb then also entered, and he saw and believed. The stone rolled back, the empty tomb, the undisturbed grave clothes, and the neatly rolled up facecloth were enough for John. But what did he believe? Did he believe that Mary was right in claiming someone had taken the body, or was it the dawning of a faith that was to grow? According to **:9 (For as yet they did not understand the Scripture, that He must rise again from the dead)**. What Scripture? Perhaps **Ps. 16:10**, quoted by Peter in **Acts 2:24-28**. As John is writing this in 90 A.D., he is narrating real history (eyewitness details) he's been sharing with others for 60 years.

There was nothing to do but go home. **:10 So the disciples [Peter and John] went away again to their own homes.** Keep in mind, that every time Jesus mentioned His death, He had also added that He would rise again on the third day. To reject Jesus' resurrection is to invent another Jesus because He was declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead. Believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead (**Rom. 1:4, 10:9**). The issue even today is not lack of evidence, but stubborn unbelief. His death completely satisfied the demands of the Father's justice. The fact that He was raised from the dead proved the Father's satisfaction.

Read 20:11-18. This is an account of a meeting between Jesus and Mary. The women had left, Peter and John had gone home. Mary had come back. **:11-12 But Mary was standing outside the tomb weeping [loud expression of grief, wailing] and so, as she wept, she stooped and looked into the tomb.** Keep in mind, Mary Magdalene was not a prominent figure in the gospel accounts. Before the crucifixion she had appeared only as a name in the list of women who traveled with Jesus and the apostles (**Lk. 8:2**); Jesus had cast seven demons out of her. Can you imagine her appreciation! Jesus had appeared to the other women (**Mt. 28:9**) and now He appeared to Mary. Mary's sense of grief and loss may have driven her back to the tomb. She

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:13 And they said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping?” She said to them, “Because they have taken away my Lord, and I do not know (3609a) where they have laid Him.” Mary’s despair stemmed from not knowing where the Lord’s body was. Mary still speaks of Jesus as her Lord, but she’s still convinced He’s dead. **:14 When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, and did not know (3609a) that it was Jesus** [without realizing that it was Jesus]. Jesus’ resurrection body was more glorious than before and certainly did not match her vivid memories of Him, especially the battered, bruised, bloody corpse she had seen on the cross. The couple on the Emmaus road were kept from recognizing Him (Lk. 24:16); the disciples in the boat on the lake of Tiberias did not recognize the man on the shore (Jn. 21:4). In this instance, it is possible that Mary was blinded by tears. On the one hand, Jesus’ resurrection body could be touched and handled and appear in a locked room (20:19,27; Lk. 24:39); Jesus not only cooked fish (21:9) but ate it (Lk. 24:41-43). On the other hand, it still bore the marks of the wounds inflicted on Jesus’ pre-death body (Jn. 20:20,25,27).

:15 Jesus said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking [who are you looking for]?” Supposing Him to be the gardener [caretaker], she said to Him, “Sir, if you have carried Him away, tell me where you have laid Him, and I will take Him away.” She probably thought that a gardener would be the only one there that early in the morning. She had not been looking for Him but for His corpse. She had been looking for a body, not a person. She simply wanted to ensure that Jesus’ body had a proper burial.

:16 Jesus said to her, “Mary!” She turned and said to Him in Hebrew [Jewish Aramaic], “Rabboni!” [a strengthened form of Rabbi, which means Teacher]. The Good Shepherd calls His own by name, for He knows them and they know Him (10:3,14): **“Mary!”** And in a flash, all of her doubt, confusion, and sorrow vanished. Mary instantly recognized His voice, like recognizing a voice on the phone. His sheep follow Him because they know His voice.

:17 Jesus said to her, “Stop clinging to Me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to My brethren [fellow believers] and say to them, ‘I ascend to My Father & your[!] Father, and My God & your[!] God.’” Mary must have prostrated herself before Jesus and gripped His feet, as the other women had done (see Mt. 28:9). Mary clutches Him in some way. Swindoll: “She embraced Him and held on as though letting go would cause her to lose Him again.” Jesus was certainly not untouchable (20:27). **“Touch Me and see; for a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have (Lk. 24:39).”** Mary’s grief is banished and in joy she clings to Him. Mary’s mistaken notion that the former mode of fellowship was going to be resumed. Mary’s new responsibility was to testify to others of His risen presence. “Mary’s physical clinging would have to give way to another kind of bond, a relationship of

faith.” **Brethren:** By the cross this new relationship with Him was made possible. From ‘slaves’ to ‘friends’ to ‘brethren’. Disciples have been called slaves and friends (15:15), but not brethren until here. Brethren belong to one and the same family. Jesus is not ashamed to call them brethren (Heb. 2:11), and has become the firstborn among many brethren (Rom. 8:29). Also see Rom. 8:14-17a; Gal. 3:26; Eph. 1:5. Also notice: **“My, your”**—the same relationship with the Father and God as Jesus shared (remember Jn. 17:20-26). He is Son by nature; they/we are children by birth and sons by adoption.

“I am ascending” is part of the message Mary was to convey. Jesus must depart to prepare a place for them (14:2), to send the promised Paraclete (14:16-17, 16:7), and ultimately to return to take them to be with Him (14:3). 40 days later He ascended (Acts 1:3-11). After He went to the Father, He sent the Holy Spirit (the Helper) so that they would not feel abandoned. I am ascending (it is about to happen; it is certain to happen; hence present tense).

The same God who is the Father of Jesus is also the Father of Jesus’ followers! Jesus is the eternal Son of the Father; Mary, as well as all the disciples, had become members of God’s family by receiving Him. This relationship is of a new kind, different from that of Jesus and His disciples in the days of His flesh. For the first time, of **“your Father and God.”** Through His resurrection and departure, the Father of Jesus had become the Father of those who belong to Him. For this reason, He also says, “Go off to My brethren.” This will be completed when the Spirit was given. Those who belong to Jesus will be made sons and daughters of God. This happened at Pentecost. Amazing!

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The good news of Easter is not only can we know Him as our God, but also Jesus and the Father can be close to us all the time, through every situation. Because He lives, I can face tomorrow. Because He lives, all fear is gone. Because I know who holds the future, that life is worth the living just because He lives. What a Father! What a Jesus! We can know both personally: as our Father, our God, our living Lord, our Savior. Good news indeed! Joel

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NOTES

“The stone was rolled away not to let Jesus out, but to let the disciples in!”

You will not abandon my soul to Sheol; neither will you allow Your Holy One to undergo decay (**Ps. 16:10, Acts 2:25-28, 13:35**).

‘See’ is a key word in this chapter (:1,5,6,8,11,14,18).

The themes of seeing and believing reach their climax in :29.

The resurrection proved He was vindicated by His Father (**1 Cor. 15:13-19**).

Here are the Bible’s accounts of Jesus’ appearances. The empty tomb (**Mt. 28:1-8, Mk. 16:1-8, Lk. 24:1-12, Jn. 20:1-10**), to other women (**Mt. 28:9-10**), to Mary Magdalene (**Mk. 16:9-11, Jn. 20:11-8**), to two people going to Emmaus (**Mk. 16:12-3, Lk. 24:13-35**), to Peter (**Lk. 24:34, 1 Cor. 15:5**), to the 10 disciples in the upper room (**Lk. 24:36-49, Jn. 20:19-25**), to the 11 disciples in the upper room (**Mk. 16:14, Jn. 20:26-29, 1 Cor. 15:5**), to 7 disciples fishing (**Jn. 21:1-14**), to the 11 disciples on a mountain (**Mt. 28:16-20, Mk. 16:15-18**), to more than 500 (**1 Cor. 15:6**), to James (**1 Cor. 15:7**), to the disciples at His ascension (**Lk. 24:44-53, Acts 1:3-9**), to Paul (**Acts 9:1-19, 22:3-16, 26:9-18, 1 Cor. 9:1, 15:8**).

We have Mary experiencing grief, the disciples fear, and Thomas doubt. The risen Jesus appears to each of them in the midst of their condition; He again meets them where they are.

:2 **Mk. 16:5** reports a young man dressed in white; **Lk. 24:4** describes two men dressed in dazzling clothing. **Mt. 28:2-3** says that an angel with the appearance of lightning and wearing a garment as white as snow rolled back the stone.

:2 It would take His showing Himself alive to them by many convincing proofs for them to believe (**Acts 1:3**).

:11 **INTRO 1 Tim. 4:1** describes “skeptics representing doctrine of demons who have denied the resurrection.” The skeptics try to explain it away with “The swoon theory.” The Roman soldiers knew when a person was dead. Or “The hallucination theory.” Yet Jesus appeared to various individuals and groups on at least 10 different occasions, including more than 500 people at once (**1 Cor. 15:6**). The disciples were not expecting Christ to rise from the dead (**20:9, Lk. 24:9-11**). If either the Romans or the Jews had the body, why didn’t they produce it? In addition, the risen Christ later appeared to Saul of Tarsus on the road to Damascus (**Acts 9:1-9**). All of the Lord’s post-resurrection appearances were to believers (except Paul and maybe James, Jesus’ earthly brother), His normal method of reaching the lost is through the witness of His Church in the power of His Spirit (**Mt. 28:19-20, Acts 1:8**). Nor would such miracles have convinced unbelievers anyway. (**12:37, Lk. 16:31**).

:17 “I’ll make them the Father’s children and My brothers and sisters,” establishing the proper relationship which would exist from now on.

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John 20:1-18

Read 20:1-10.

:1 Now on the first *day* of the week Mary Magdalene came early to the tomb, while it was still dark, and saw the stone *already* taken away [rolled away] from the tomb.

:2 So she ran and came to Simon Peter and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and said to them, “They have taken away the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid Him.”

:3 So Peter and the other disciple went forth, and they were going to the tomb.

:4 The two were running together; and the other disciple ran ahead faster than Peter and came to the tomb first;

:5 and stooping and looking in, he saw the linen wrappings lying *there*; but he did not go in.

:6 And so Simon Peter also came, following him, and entered [went straight into] the tomb; and he saw the linen wrappings lying *there*,

:7 and the face-cloth which had been on His head, not lying with the linen wrappings, but rolled up in a place by itself [a little way apart].

:8 So [Then] the other disciple who had first come to the tomb then also entered, and he saw and believed.

:9 For as yet they did not understand the Scripture, that He must rise again from the dead.

:10 So the disciples went away again to their own homes.

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:11 But Mary was standing outside the tomb weeping; and so, as she wept, she stooped and looked into the tomb;

:12 and she saw two angels in white sitting, one at the head and one at the feet, where the body of Jesus had been lying.

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:15 Jesus said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking [who are you looking for]?” Supposing Him to be the gardener, she said to Him, “Sir, if you have carried Him away, tell me where you have laid Him, and I will take Him away.”

:16 Jesus said to her, “Mary!” She turned and said to Him in Hebrew [Jewish Aramaic], “Rabboni!” (which means, Teacher).

:17 Jesus said to her, “Stop clinging to Me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to My brethren and say to them, ‘I ascend to My Father and your Father, and My God and your God.’”

:18 Mary Magdalene came, announcing to the disciples, “I have seen the Lord,” and *that* He had said these things to her.

[Jhn 20:1-31 NLT] 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. 11 Mary was standing outside the tomb crying, and as she wept, she stooped and looked in. 12 She saw two white-robed angels, one sitting at the head and the other at the foot of the place where the body of Jesus had been lying. 13 "Dear woman, why are you crying?" the angels asked her. "Because they have taken away my Lord," she replied, "and I don't know where they have put him." 14 She turned to leave and saw someone standing there. It was Jesus, but she didn't recognize him. 15 "Dear woman, why are you crying?" Jesus asked her. "Who are you looking for?" She thought he was the gardener. "Sir," she said, "if you have taken him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will go and get him." 16 "Mary!" Jesus said. She turned to him and cried out, "Rabboni!" (which is Hebrew for "Teacher"). 17 "Don't cling to me," Jesus said, "for I haven't yet ascended to the Father. But go find my brothers and tell them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'" 18 Mary Magdalene found the disciples and told them, "I have seen the Lord!" Then she gave them his message.

JBP But on the first day of the week, Mary of Magdala arrived at the tomb, very early in the morning, while it was still dark, and noticed that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. At this she ran, found Simon Peter and the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and told them, “They have taken the Lord out of the tomb and we don’t know where they have put him.” Peter and the other disciple set off at once for the tomb, the two of them running together. The other disciple ran faster than Peter and was the first to arrive at the tomb. He stooped and looked inside and noticed the linen cloths lying there but did not go in himself. Hard on his heels came Simon Peter and went straight into the tomb. He noticed that the linen cloths were lying there, and that the handkerchief, which had been round Jesus’s head, was not lying with the linen cloths but was rolled up by itself, a little way apart. Then the other disciple, who was the first to arrive at the tomb, came inside as well, saw what had happened and believed. (They did not yet understand the scripture which said that he must rise from the dead.) So the disciples went back again to their homes. But Mary stood just outside the tomb, and she was crying. And as she cried, she looked into the tomb and saw two angels in white who sat, one at the head and the other at the foot of the place where the body of Jesus had lain. The angels spoke to her, “Why are you crying?” they asked. “Because they have taken away my Lord, and I don’t know where they have put him!” she said. 14 Then she turned and noticed Jesus standing there, without realizing that it was Jesus. 15 “Why are you crying?” said Jesus to her. “Who are you looking for?” She, supposing that he was the gardener, said, “Oh, sir, if you have carried him away, please tell me where you have put him and I will take him away.” 16 Jesus said to her, “Mary!” At this she turned right round and said to him, in Hebrew, “Master!” 17 “No!” said Jesus, “do not hold me now. I have not yet gone up to the Father. Go and tell my brothers that I am going up to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.” 18 And Mary of Magdala went off to the disciples, with the news, “I have seen the Lord!”, and she told them what he had said to her.