



# Jesus, the Risen Lord

## Lesson 28 John 20:1-31

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### REVIEW

1. In our last lesson, we studied John's account of Jesus' death on the cross. In His crucifixion, we saw numerous Old Testament prophecies fulfilled to perfection, all of which were written hundreds of years before the events of the cross.
2. We also studied the burial of Jesus Christ and its fulfillment of scripture. These events set the stage for the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

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### LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. In this lesson, we will study the miracle of Christ's resurrection, which is the final exclamation point to the Gospel.
2. We will study three post-resurrection appearances of Jesus Christ and finish with a study of John's stated purpose for his gospel account.

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### THE EMPTY TOMB (20:1-10)

#### A. The discovery of the tomb - 20:1

**20:1** "The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre."

#### 1. The time of the discovery

##### a. "The first day of the week"

- i. Sunday
- ii. This day was set aside as a day to meet, worship and remember the resurrection of the Lord - **Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:2**
- iii. Became known as the Lord's Day - **Revelation 1:10**

##### b. "When it was yet dark"

- i. Early morning
- ii. Mark's gospel tells us "they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun"  
**Mark 16:2**

#### 2. The discoverer(s)

##### a. John names Mary Magdalene - 20:1

##### b. Matthew names Mary Magdalene and "the other Mary" (the mother of James) **Matthew 28:1**

##### c. Mark names Mary Magdalene, Mary, the mother of James (the son of Alphaeus) and Salome, the mother of James and John - **Mark 16:1**

##### d. Luke names Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James and "other women that were with them" - **Luke 24:10**

##### e. Why the discrepancies?

- i. Numerous post-resurrection appearances of Christ

- ii. Incomplete understanding at the time of the resurrection. They didn't try to improve upon or embellish the story.
- iii. Each gospel writer included certain details (including people) for a purpose. John chose Mary Magdalene.

**B.** The description of the tomb, "*And seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre*" - 20:1

**C.** The dread of Mary Magdalene - 20:2

**20:2** "Then she runneth, and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and saith unto them, They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him."

1. "*They have taken away the Lord*"
2. "*We know not where they have laid him*"

**D.** The disciples' reaction to Mary's testimony - 20:3-10

**20:3** "Peter therefore went forth, and that other disciple, and came to the sepulchre. **4** So they ran both together: and the other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulchre. **5** And he stooping down, and looking in, saw the linen clothes lying; yet went he not in. **6** Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes lie, **7** And the napkin, that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself. **8** Then went in also that other disciple, which came first to the sepulchre, and he saw, and believed. **9** For as yet they knew not the scripture, that he must rise again from the dead. **10** Then the disciples went away again unto their own home."

1. They "*came to the sepulchre*" - 20:3
  - a. "*They ran both together*" - 20:4
  - b. John outran Peter to the tomb
    - i. John was younger than Peter and was able to outrun him
    - ii. It is possible that Peter remembered his last moments with Christ on the earth **18:24-27; Luke 22:61**
2. John "*went he not in*". Instead, he
  - a. Stooped down
  - b. Looked in
  - c. "*Saw the linen clothes lying*" - 20:5
3. Simon Peter "*went into the sepulchre*" and
  - a. Saw the linen clothes - 20:6
  - b. The napkin which was around His head was "*wrapped together in a place by itself*" **20:7**
    - i. The condition of the cloths was evidence that the body was not stolen
    - ii. It furthermore indicates there was no undue haste in the resurrection
    - iii. Jesus simply passed through the burial cloths during His resurrection
4. John entered the tomb as well - 20:8

5. John “saw, and believed”
  - a. The word “believed is applied...to the faith by which one is persuaded that Jesus was raised from the dead, inasmuch as by the fact God declared him to be his Son and the Messiah.”<sup>1</sup>
  - b. It was at this point he understood the scripture about Messiah’s resurrection - 20:9
6. They returned home - 20:10

## CHRIST’S APPEARANCE TO MARY MAGDALENE (20:11-18)

### A. Mary’s sorrow - 20:11-15

**20:11** “But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping: and as she wept, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre, **12** And seeth two angels in white sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. **13** And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him. **14** And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus. **15** Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away.”

1. She missed the comfort of the angelic messengers - 20:12-13a
2. She was weeping - 20:11
  - a. “Because they have taken away my Lord” - 20:13
    - i. “Lord” means “he to whom a person or thing belongs”<sup>2</sup>
    - ii. Jesus had cast seven demons out of her - Luke 8:2; Mark 16:9
    - iii. She had supported the Lord financially during His ministry - Luke 8:3
  - b. Because she didn’t know where they had taken Him - 20:13
3. She wanted to anoint the Lord’s body - 20:15; Mark 16:1
4. She initially missed the comfort of the Lord’s presence - 20:15

### B. Mary’s sorrow turned to joy - 20:16-18

**20:16** “Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master. **17** Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God. **18** Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the LORD, and that he had spoken these things unto her.”

1. Jesus revealed His identity by calling her by name, “Mary” - 20:16
2. Mary recognized her Lord
3. Mary responded in love
  - a. “Touch me not” means “stop clinging to me”<sup>3</sup>
  - b. The language implies that Mary responded by hugging the Lord

<sup>1</sup> Joseph H. Thayer, *Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1984), 512, ref. 4100.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, ref. 2962, 365.

<sup>3</sup> A.T. Robertson, *Robertson’s Word Pictures of the New Testament*, Vol. 5 (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1932), 312.

4. Jesus instructed Mary - 20:17
  - a. Regarding His ascension
    - i. *"I am not yet ascended to my Father"*
      - a) His state was temporary
      - b) Perhaps Mary clung to the Lord to prevent a separation that would affect her fellowship with Him
    - ii. *"I ascend unto my Father"* (future)
  - b. To tell the disciples
5. Mary obeyed the Lord - 20:18

## CHRIST'S APPEARANCE TO THE DISCIPLES (20:19-29)

### A. The first appearance (Thomas absent) - 20:19-25

#### 1. The setting - 20:19

**20:19** "Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you."

a. *"The same day at evening, being the first day of the week"*

b. The disciples were most likely assembled in a house

c. The *"doors were shut ... for fear of the Jews"*

#### 2. The calming presence of Christ

a. Jesus *"came"* where they were

b. He *"stood in the midst"*

c. He said unto them, *"Peace be unto you"*

d. He showed them *"his hands and his side"* - 20:20

**20:20** "And when he had so said, he shewed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the LORD."

#### 3. The disciples' joy - 20:20

a. The disciples were *"glad when they saw the Lord"*, which means "filled with joy"<sup>4</sup>

b. Fulfillment of Jesus' words in John 16:20-22

#### 4. Jesus commissions His church - 20:21-23

**20:21** "Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. **22** And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: **23** Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained."

a. The peace of Christ - 20:21

b. The purpose of the church, *"As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you"*

c. The presence of the Spirit - 20:22

i. The disciples received the Spirit on the day of Jesus' resurrection, not on the day of Pentecost

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 313.

ii. Fulfillment of Jesus' promise - 16:7

d. The power of the church - 20:23

i. Jesus made a promise to build His church. At this point, the church is future, *"I will build my church"*. - **Matthew 16:18-19**

ii. He also made a promise to give His church authority, including discipline within the church - **Matthew 18:15-20**

iii. When Jesus uses the same language to give his authority to the church in John 20:23, it is present tense, *"Whose soever sins ye remit"*

5. Thomas' doubt - 20:24-25

**20:24** "But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. **25** The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the LORD. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe."

a. Thomas was absent when the Lord appeared

b. He would not believe the testimony of the other disciples (showed that the disciples knew the Lord was dead)

c. Thomas' criteria for believing

i. Sight, *"Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails"*

ii. Touch, *"Except I ... put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side"*

B. The second appearance (Thomas present) - 20:26-29

1. The setting - 20:26

**20:26** "And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you."

a. Eight days later, which was Monday

b. The disciples were assembled, *"And Thomas with them"*

c. The doors were shut, but this time John does not refer to the fear of the Jews

2. The assuring presence of Christ - 20:26

a. Jesus came to them

b. Jesus stood in their midst

c. Jesus said to them, *"Peace be unto you"*

3. The convincing words of Christ - 20:27

**20:27** "Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing."

a. Touch, *"Reach hither thy finger ... and reach hither thy hand"*

b. Sight, *"Behold my hands"*

c. The preeminence of Christ is seen in that He knew Thomas' criteria for faith because Jesus was physically absent at the time that Thomas enunciated his position

4. Thomas' confession - 20:28

20:28 "And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God."

- a. "My Lord" is the same word that Mary Magdalene used in verse 13
- b. "My God" is "theos," which means "God"<sup>5</sup>
- c. Here Thomas affirmed
  - i. His belief in the resurrection of Christ
  - ii. His belief in the deity of Christ
  - iii. His belief in the supreme authority of Christ
  - iv. His belief in Jesus as the Son of God
- d. This is the greatest confession a person can make

5. Christ's approval of Thomas' confession - 20:29a

20:29a "Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed:"

6. Christ's pronouncement of blessing - 20:29b

20:29b "blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."

- a. Jesus approved of Thomas' confession and commends him for it
- b. "Blessed" means "happy, or worthy of divine approbation. The word has here the force of the comparative degree, signifying that they would be in some respects more blessed than Thomas. They would evince [manifest] higher faith."<sup>6</sup> - 1 Peter 1:7-9

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## THE PURPOSE OF THE GOSPEL OF JOHN (20:30-31)

20:30 "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: 31 But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name."

A. "That ye might believe" - 20:31

1. "Jesus is the Christ"
2. "The Son of God"
  - a. John's Gospel was not all-inclusive of the life of Christ - 20:30
  - b. Jesus performed other miracles
  - c. "But these are written, that ye might believe" - 20:31

B. "That believing ye might have life through his name"

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## LIFE LESSONS

1. Rejoice in the victory of the resurrection! - 1 Corinthians 15:20-22
2. Believe and have life through His name.

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<sup>5</sup> Thayer, ref. 2316, 287.

<sup>6</sup> Albert Barnes, *Notes on the New Testament*, Luke and John (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 2005), 379.