

# Jesus Is Resurrected

## Summary and Goal

In the previous session we walked through the events surrounding Jesus' crucifixion. He was rejected, mocked, and forsaken, willingly giving up His life on the cross to glorify the Father and secure our reconciliation to Him. In this session we will discover the empty tomb early in the morning three days after the crucifixion. This is the truth on which all other truths stand within Christianity. If Jesus was truly resurrected from the dead, then all of His promises and teachings are true. Yet this moment was not met with fanfare and celebration at first but with confusion and doubt until the evidence led those who saw the empty tomb to belief. Although they didn't fully understand, their seeing became belief as God opened their eyes to the truth of the resurrection.

## Session Outline

1. Disbelieving the Resurrection (John 20:1-2)
2. Seeing Evidence of the Resurrection (John 20:3-7)
3. Developing Belief in the Resurrection (John 20:8-10)

*Background Passage: John 20:1-18*

## Session in a Sentence

Jesus' disciples did not anticipate or believe the resurrection had happened at first, but when they saw the evidence, God opened their eyes to give them confident faith.

## 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.

## Missional Application

Because we worship and serve a risen Savior who has raised us to new life, we tell others the good news of Christ's victory over sin and death, calling people to trust in Jesus and receive resurrection life.

# Group Time

## GROUP MEMBER CONTENT

*Group content found in the Daily Discipleship Guide is included in this shaded area throughout the session.*

## Introduction

**EXPLAIN:** Use the content on page 94 in the DDG to discuss some of the things we were told as children and whether or not we believed them.

We live in a culture that makes it difficult to decipher truth from lies at times. As a kid, you may have been told coffee would stunt your growth or swallowing a lemon seed would cause a tree to 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 you couldn't swim until thirty minutes after eating. Doubt and belief always influence behavior. So you either snuck a sip of coffee in doubt or you modified your behavior toward the end of the year in belief.

**INTERACT:** Ask group members the following question.



What did you falsely believe as a child, and what behaviors resulted from it? (be prepared to give an answer of your own to jump-start the conversation)

**SAY:** What we believe about Jesus and His resurrection is the hinge point 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. If the resurrection was a well-implemented plan to deceive people for multiple generations, then we are in far worse shape than we could ever imagine. But our faith is not a blind faith. Jesus' resurrection is attested in Scripture by eyewitness testimonies.

**SUMMARIZE:** In this session we will discover the empty tomb early in the morning three days after the crucifixion. This is the truth on which all other truths stand within Christianity. If Jesus was truly resurrected from the dead, then all of His promises and teachings are true. Yet this moment was not met with fanfare and celebration at first but with confusion and doubt until the evidence led those who saw the empty tomb to belief. Although they didn't fully understand, their seeing became belief as God opened their eyes to the truth of the resurrection.

**Leaders, grow on the go!** Listen to session-by-session training every week on Ministry Grid, Apple Podcasts, Spotify, or LifeWay's Digital Pass: [ministrygrid.com/gospelproject](http://ministrygrid.com/gospelproject) | [gospelproject.com/podcasts](http://gospelproject.com/podcasts).

## Point 1: Disbelieving the Resurrection (John 20:1-2)

**READ** John 20:1-2 (DDG p. 95).

<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> 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!”

**EXPLAIN:** Use the first paragraph in the DDG (p. 95) to emphasize the significance of the empty tomb’s first witness being Mary Magdalene, a woman with a sordid past.

The culture of Jesus’ day considered the testimony of women to be illegitimate when it came to establishing truth, a notable detail for this account.<sup>1</sup> Not only was Mary Magdalene female, she also was known for a sordid past involving demonic possession. If one were to fabricate a fantastic story with the intent to deceive the world, you wouldn’t choose this witness for your record. You would choose a more reliable witness in the eyes of the community. But John delivered His gospel message like a physician delivering a diagnosis: he honestly presented the facts.

- Jesus had done what no one else could do for Mary Magdalene, casting seven demons from her (Luke 8:2). She responded to her newfound freedom from demonic oppression with love and devotion as she traveled alongside Jesus and the disciples as they shared the good news of the kingdom. Her love continued as she, and the women with her (see John 20:2; Matt. 28:1; Mark 16:1; Luke 24:1,10), brought spices to anoint Jesus’ dead body before the sun rose on the day after the Sabbath.
- The first to see the evidence of the risen “King of the Jews” wasn’t Pilate, the synagogue leaders, the scribes, or even the disciples. Instead, this is an example of how God uses the weak instead of the strong, or the foolish to shame the wise (1 Cor. 1:27). Even in her confusion, Mary Magdalene began the telling of the good news of Jesus’ resurrection as she proclaimed to the disciples that something had happened to Jesus’ body.

**INTERACT:** Ask group members the following question.



In what ways have you seen God use unexpected or unconventional people for the sake of the gospel? (be prepared to give an answer of your own to jump-start the conversation)

---

**EXPLAIN:** Use the second paragraph in the DDG (p. 95) to highlight that Mary, at first, believed there must have been some human explanation for Jesus' missing body. Then use the leader content below to comment on the would-be implications if Jesus had not risen from the dead.

---

Mary saw the stone rolled away from the tomb, but she didn't immediately praise God because she didn't yet believe Jesus was risen. She wasn't looking for a miracle; she was expecting to find the dead body of her Lord with the goal of anointing and honoring Him in death (see Mark 16:1-4; Luke 24:1-3). Instead of immediate faith in Jesus' resurrection, she believed there must have been some human explanation for Jesus' missing body. She had questions and despaired about her assumed answers. Again, not the kind of witness most people would lead with.

---

- If Jesus' body were simply missing, as Mary Magdalene assumed, then Christians should be pitied above all because we are believing a lie and are still in our sins (1 Cor. 15:17-19). If Jesus didn't do what He said He would do—rise from the dead after three days (John 2:19-22)—then He couldn't be who He said He was, which is the Messiah, the Son of God. But He did, and He is!
- Jesus' resurrection inaugurated His kingdom on earth, giving His followers rest 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 too will be raised with Him upon His return, because He also promised this (John 11:25).

*Application:* God lovingly reveals truth to us when we are questioning things, just as Jesus 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 about His crucified and resurrected Son in His Word.

**Commentary:** “Theologically, Christ's resurrection cannot be separated from his crucifixion. For what the crucifixion accomplished, that is, Christ's substitutionary sacrifice for our sin, is sealed and accepted by God's raising Jesus from the dead. Christ's resurrection is also his divine vindication. At the same time, through the resurrection, Satan and the evil world powers behind Christ's crucifixion stand judged and condemned. Moreover, all those who are identified with Christ through faith, Jesus's first followers as well as those of us who have not seen and yet have believed, have, spiritually speaking, already shared in both Jesus's crucifixion and his resurrection.”<sup>2</sup>

---

**INTERACT:** Ask group members the following question.

---



How should we approach questions about Jesus' resurrection, whether those questions are ours or those of others? (with honesty and compassion; with faith in God and His Word to answer sufficiently what needs to be answered; with recognizing that our human understanding is insufficient to grasp spiritual matters; with prayer and humility to submit to our sovereign and omniscient God)

## Point 2: Seeing Evidence of the Resurrection (John 20:3-7)

**READ** John 20:3-7 (DDG p. 96).

<sup>3</sup> At that, Peter and the other disciple went out, heading for the tomb. <sup>4</sup> The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and got to the tomb first. <sup>5</sup> Stooping down, he saw the linen cloths lying there, but he did not go in. <sup>6</sup> Then, following him, Simon Peter also came. He entered the tomb and saw the linen cloths lying there. <sup>7</sup> 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.

**EXPLAIN:** Use the first paragraph in the DDG (p. 96) to highlight how Peter and the other disciple (almost certainly John) demonstrated their love for Jesus in their race to the tomb.

It had been a difficult three days for the disciples, full of uncertainty, grief, and fear. Having been with Jesus around the countryside, in the city of Jerusalem, in the temple, and in the garden of Gethsemane meant they could be guilty by association for the same crime as Jesus, deserving His same fate. Yet the news from Mary Magdalene brought two disciples racing out of their hiding place 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, zealous action. Love motivates, and although they didn't understand the happenings yet, they still loved Jesus.

**Commentary:** What would have been impossible to prove in court with Mary Magdalene and the women with her was remedied in this situation. "The presence of two male witnesses rendered the evidence admissible under Jewish law (cf. Deut. 17:6; 19:15)." <sup>3</sup>

**Commentary:** "The material [in this Gospel] comes from what most scholars believe was an independent eyewitness of Jesus' Judean ministry (19:35; 21:24)—the 'disciple whom Jesus loved' (13:23; 21:20). Scholars differ on this witness's identity, but he is among Jesus' very closest disciples (13:23), in a role that can virtually rival that of Peter (13:23-25; 20:2-8), suggesting to many scholars that he was a prominent disciple, likely among the Twelve. Thus, although scholars differ on his precise identity ... conservative scholars generally prefer the author whose name was preserved by the second-century church: John ... Scholars today again differ as to which John was in view (though the earliest Christian tradition did not), but the Synoptic Gospels show us that John son of Zebedee was one of Jesus' most intimate disciples. A majority of conservative scholars therefore believe that this John is the author of this Gospel." <sup>4</sup>

---

**INTERACT:** Ask group members the following question.

---

**?** What are some actions the empty tomb ought to motivate believers to take today? (sharing the gospel with boldness and urgency; repentance of sin and renewed faith to resist the lure of temptation; professing faith in Christ and being baptized; pointing people to Jesus as the One deserving all glory, honor, and praise)

---

**EXPLAIN:** Use the second paragraph in the DDG (p. 96) to mention the relevance of Jesus' burial garments being left inside the tomb and why it was unlikely that anyone would steal His body at this point.

---

The seemingly insignificant pieces of fabric Peter and John found in the opened and empty tomb were preaching the good news of the risen Christ. Jesus' body had not been stolen, as Mary had feared. When Lazarus had been raised from the dead, he walked out of his tomb still wearing his burial wrappings, and he needed help to get the wrappings off. But our Savior emerged from the tomb as the firstfruits of a new kind of resurrection. Death and its trappings could not hold Him.

---

- Removing a dead body from a tomb would have been a violation of both Roman practice and Jewish burial integrity.<sup>5</sup> Beyond these prohibitions, however, Jesus' lacerated and pierced dead body had lain in the tomb three days. It would have been extremely uncomfortable to carry His dead body away, and no one would have wanted to do so without the linen wrappings. It would have been stinky, heavy, messy, and considered unclean (Num. 19:11). But the cloths Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus had wrapped around Jesus' body to prepare Him for burial were left inside the tomb (see John 19:38-40) and seemingly with some intention and care to fold the face cloth and place it apart from the other linen strips.
  - Lazarus's resurrection technically was a resuscitation, meaning he was brought back from the dead but he would die again at some point. In other words, he would need his grave clothes again. Jesus, on the other hand, defeated death through His resurrection. He was raised with a resurrection body incapable of dying again, a picture of His eternal victory over the enemies of sin and death. Jesus' resurrection was the first of its kind but certainly not the last. He is the firstfruits of the world and age to come, the beginning of the new heavens and new earth, a picture of the kingdom of God over which He was crowned King through His crucifixion and resurrection (1 Cor. 15:20-23).
- 

**PACK ITEM 12: THE RESURRECTION:** Read the **Billy Graham quote** on this poster and instruct group members to use the scale in their DDG (p. 96) to assess how they are living in light of Jesus' resurrection.

---

How would you describe the way you are living in light of Jesus' resurrection?



Enslaved to Sin and Death

Free from Sin and Death

### Point 3: Developing Belief in the Resurrection (John 20:8-10)

**READ:** Ask a volunteer to read John 20:8-10 (DDG p. 97).

<sup>8</sup> The other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, then also went in, saw, and believed. <sup>9</sup> For they did not yet understand the Scripture that he must rise from the dead. <sup>10</sup> Then the disciples returned to the place where they were staying.

**EXPLAIN:** Use the first paragraph in the DDG (p. 97) to explain why John's belief in Jesus' resurrection without a full understanding of Scripture should encourage us in our own struggle to believe key biblical truths.

John's belief, as described in these verses, should bring us great comfort. He believed the resurrection of Jesus had occurred despite his inability to comprehend it all. There are many truths from Scripture Christians believe that still hold details far beyond our comprehension, and that is okay. This is the essence of faith—"seeing" without seeing. John believed, at first, not because of the weight of prophecy that he had studied or because He saw the risen Jesus but because he saw the empty tomb. Today, we have seen the risen Savior through God's Word, and our faith, if we believe, is a "seeing" faith.

- The disciples seem to have overlooked Jesus' statement that Jonah's three-day interment in the fish in the Old Testament was a prophetic sign of His three-day interment in the grave (Jonah 1:17; Matt. 12:39-40). The prophecy of the Suffering Servant also speaks of the Servant being cut off from the land of the living and buried with the wicked only to have His days prolonged in vindication and reward (Isa. 53:7-12).
- We may not understand how all that the Scriptures say is true, yet we can still commit by faith to believe it and trust in the God who gave it to us—faith does not equate to comprehensive knowledge. Conversely, we may know a multitude of facts about Jesus but still be far from Him—mere intellectual knowledge does not equate to saving faith.

**FILL IN THE BLANKS:** Provide group members with the answers for the call-out in their DDG (p. 97).

**Faith:** Biblical faith is the **resting**, or trusting, in Christ alone for salvation. More than being simply a mental agreement of historical facts, genuine faith begins with a recognition and **confession** of the truth of the gospel, followed by a **receiving** of Christ as Lord and Savior of one's life. Biblical faith is not blind faith, for it rests on the **historical** life, death, and resurrection of Christ.

---

**Essential Doctrine “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.

---

**EXPLAIN:** Use the second paragraph in the DDG (p. 97) to speak to how Jesus’ resurrection solidifies the truthfulness of Scripture and secures our salvation. Note that sin and death have “*already*” been defeated in Jesus’ resurrection, but this victory is “*not yet*” fully expressed and won’t be until Jesus returns.

---

Though the disciples had not yet seen Jesus, our salvation was already secure because Jesus is alive. Jesus’ resurrection testifies to the validity of Jesus’ teachings, 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 alone. In Jesus’ resurrection, the proclamation goes forth that sin and death have been defeated, and one day, Jesus will return and raise up His followers to be with Him forever.



### Voices from Church History

“A marvellous and mighty paradox has thus occurred, for the death which they thought to inflict on Him as dishonour and disgrace has become the glorious monument to death’s defeat.”<sup>6</sup>

—Athanasius (c. 293-373)

- 
- Jesus’ defeat of sin and death in His resurrection has the characteristics of “already” and also “not yet,” meaning the victory has been won but it will be fully expressed upon Jesus’ return. Sin and death have “*already*” lost their hold over believers in Christ, but sin and death still hold influence in the world and continue to plague believers, so the full effects of the resurrection are “*not yet*” being felt, but they will be.
  - Because Jesus said He would rise again on the third day and then did it (John 2:19-22; see also Mark 8:31; 9:31; 10:33-34), Jesus’ resurrection confirms the truth of His words that He will return and raise His followers up from the dead to be with Him forever (John 11:25; 14:1-6). On that day, with full assurance and in reality, Jesus’ followers will be able to shout that sin and death have lost and are no more (1 Cor. 15:51-57), but until that day, we wait for the coming resurrection in hope.
- 

**INTERACT:** Ask group members the following question.

---



How should faith in the resurrection of Jesus Christ impact our everyday lives? (we should live as if our salvation is already secure in Jesus, so we are not trying to earn our salvation but living in gratitude because of it; we should live each day with abundant hope that no matter what happens, God is for us and Jesus will raise us up on the last day; we should go through our day believing we have the best good news to share with people who are struggling and suffering under the curse of sin)

# My Mission

**EXPLAIN:** “For every one of God’s promises is ‘Yes’ in him. Therefore, through him we also say ‘Amen’ to the glory of God” (2 Cor. 1:20). The tomb is empty! All of God’s promises are true. Through our union with Him by faith, 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. This 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 in Him. We serve a risen King! He is alive!

**READ** the following missional application statement in the DDG (p. 98), and encourage group members to choose at least one of the options below as a way to respond to the truth of God’s Word.

Because we worship and serve a risen Savior who has raised us to new life, we tell others the good news of Christ’s victory over sin and death, calling people to trust in Jesus and receive resurrection life.

- **What will you do today because you believe in the resurrection of Jesus Christ for your eternal life?**
- **What can your group and your church do to infuse a greater sense of resurrection faith into your church culture?**
- **How will you support your proclamation of Jesus’ death and resurrection with actions consistent with resurrection faith?**

## Voices from the Church

“The message of Easter is that God’s new world has been unveiled in Jesus Christ and that you’re now invited to belong to it ... Christian holiness consists not of trying as hard as we can to be good but of learning to live in the new world created by Easter.”<sup>7</sup>

–N. T. Wright

**CLOSE IN PRAYER:** Father, You have shown Your Son to be the rightful King by raising Him from the dead. Thank You for defeating sin and death through Jesus’ death, resurrection, and ascension. With the same Holy Spirit who raised Jesus, empower us to invite our neighbors to join the new creation work You have done for us in Christ as we point them to the certainty of our resurrection hope in Jesus. Amen.

**INSTRUCT:** As your group departs, encourage group members to read and respond to the **Daily Study** devotions in their DDG (pp. 99-101), which build and expand upon the group study. Also advocate for small groups or families to use **Encourage One Another** (p. 102) for mutual accountability and fellowship grounded upon the foundation of God’s Word.

# Daily Discipleship

Throughout the week following the session, use the ideas below to remind and encourage your group members to live as disciples of Jesus Christ. The **Daily Study** devotions in the DDG (pp. 99-101) will help group members get into God's Word and study it for themselves. **Encourage One Another** (p. 102) will help group members and families fellowship with one another with purpose.

## Daily Study

Brief daily devotions in the DDG (pp. 99-101) will help group members take initiative in their own discipleship.

- Make sure all group members have access to a Bible to read. Have some Bibles available to give to guests who may need one, or offer to get one and arrange a time to meet to give it and show how to navigate it for the devotions.
- Share the following idea from the devotion for **Day 4** as a part of point 3 in the session: **The Holy Spirit illuminates Scripture for us, helping us to understand its teaching. We won't understand perfectly until we see Jesus face to face, but we, like John, may believe despite what our minds cannot fully comprehend.**



Consider leading by example and reading the daily devotions yourself with your own DDG. Based on your study, use brief messages throughout the week (group text, email, social media) to encourage your group to keep up with their daily time in God's Word and to live it out. Here are a couple of examples you can use:

- **Day 1:** “**This is the substance of the Christian faith: Death could not hold our Savior in the grave; He has risen victorious.**”
- **Day 5:** “**Although we don't see Jesus in His resurrected body, we see Him through Scripture and the work of the Spirit to open our eyes to His work.**”



Visit [www.GospelProject.com/Blog](http://www.GospelProject.com/Blog) for additional content and resources you can use to help group members gain more insight into their daily studies. Send group members a link or a portion of a blog post or other content that you believe will be helpful and encouraging for their time in God's Word.

## Encourage One Another

This brief plan for fellowship and accountability in the group member's DDG (p. 102) will help groups of 2-4 people to meet sometime during the week to reflect on the session and to share how God is working and they are responding. It could also be used for family discipleship with students and children who are using *The Gospel Project* in their groups.

- **Encourage group members to ask one another about people in their lives whom they need to tell about Jesus' resurrection and why it matters.**
- See yourself as a member of the group who also needs encouragement in the faith, and participate in such a group this week.

# Additional Commentary

## Point 1: Disbelieving the Resurrection (John 20:1-2)

“John devotes more space to the resurrection account than any of the other Gospel writers. In this chapter, **Peter** and John (‘the one Jesus loved’) are juxtaposed. Both of them ran to **the tomb** and found it empty, but only the beloved disciple **saw, and believed** (vv. 3-10). The rest of the chapter spotlights the interaction between **Mary** and Jesus (vv. 11-18) and between **the disciples** and Jesus (vv. 19-29). **The first day of the week** would have been the day after the Sabbath, beginning at sundown on Saturday and ending at sundown on Sunday (v. 1). The visit from the women occurred **early** on Sunday morning. John mentioned only **Mary Magdalene**, but others are noted in the Synoptic Gospels (v. 1; Matt. 28:1; Mark 16:1; Luke 24:10). **The other disciple** (John 20:3) seems to be the Apostle John, who spoke of himself humbly in this way.”<sup>8</sup>

---

“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.”<sup>9</sup>

## Point 2: Seeing Evidence of the Resurrection (John 20:3-7)

“The beloved disciple was the first to reach the tomb (20:3-4). He did not enter it, but he did observe *the strips of linen lying there* (20:5). Peter, however, stepped into the tomb. He too noted the strips of linen, but he also observed that the cloth that had covered Jesus’ head was still lying in its place, just as it would have been when laid over the face of the dead man (20:6-7). There was no evidence of haste or disturbance. Jesus’ resurrected body had simply passed through the grave clothes, just as it later did through closed doors (20:19,26). We are not told what Peter was thinking—all we know is that he and the other disciple *went back to where they were staying* (20:10). However, we are told that the beloved disciple *saw and believed* (20:8). What was it that he believed? After all, the very next sentence says that the disciples in general had not yet grasped what Scripture taught about the necessity of Jesus’ resurrection (20:9).”<sup>10</sup>

“The tomb where Jesus was buried is described as a hewn rock tomb (Mark 15:46; Matt. 27:60) which had never been used previously (Matt. 27:60; John 19:41). The entrance was sealed with a rolling stone (Mark 15:46; Matt. 27:60). The body of Jesus was wrapped in linen cloths filled with spices and ointments (John 19:39-40). Mark implies that the women were coming to the tomb on Sunday morning to complete the burial so hastily conducted before the beginning of Sabbath (Mark 15:47–16:2).”<sup>11</sup>

### Point 3: Developing Belief in the Resurrection (John 20:8-10)

“When these men (I mean Peter and John, the writer of this book, for he gives himself the name of the other disciple) heard this news from the woman’s mouth, they ran with all the speed they could and hurried to the sepulcher. They saw the marvel with their own eyes, being in themselves competent to testify to the event, for they were two in number as the Law enjoined. As yet they did not meet Christ risen from the dead, but they infer his resurrection from the bundle of linen clothes, and from that time on they believed that he had burst the bonds of death, as holy Scripture had long ago proclaimed that he would do. When, therefore, they looked at the issues of events in the light of the prophecies that turned out true, their faith was from that time forward rooted on a firm foundation.”<sup>12</sup>

---

“Peter and John’s slowness to accept the reality and significance of Jesus’ resurrection shouldn’t surprise us. Like them, we too need the Holy Spirit to help us understand what the Scriptures (the whole Bible) reveal about the person and work of Jesus. After John ‘saw and believed’ (John 20:8), he and Peter went back to their homes to share the good news with their families. At Jesus’ dedication as an infant, Simeon told Mary, Jesus’ mother, that a sword would pierce her soul (Luke 2:35). Now, after Christ’s resurrection, John got to tell her that Jesus had pierced death’s soul and destroyed it (cf. 1 Cor. 15:26; Rev. 20:14).”<sup>13</sup>

### References

1. Andreas J. Köstenberger, *Encountering John: The Gospel in Historical, Literary, and Theological Perspective* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2013), 171 [Wordsearch].
2. Andreas J. Köstenberger, *Encountering John*, 173 [Wordsearch].
3. Andreas J. Köstenberger, “John,” in *ESV Study Bible* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2008), 2070, n. 20:8-9.
4. Craig S. Keener, ed., “The Gospel of John,” in *NIV Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2016), 1802-1803.
5. Gerald L. Borchert, *John 12–21*, vol. 25<sup>B</sup> in *The New American Commentary* (Nashville, TN: B&H, 2004), 320 [Wordsearch].
6. St. Athanasius, *On the Incarnation*, trans. and ed. A Religious of C.S.M.V. (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1993), 54.
7. N. T. Wright, *Surprised by Hope* (New York: HarperOne, 2008), 252-53.
8. Tamra Hernandez, “John,” in *The Study Bible for Women* (Nashville, TN: B&H, 2014), 1402, n. 20:1-22.
9. D. A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John*, in *The Pillar New Testament Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2008), 635 [Wordsearch].
10. Pratap C. Gine and Jacob Cherian, “John,” in *South Asia Bible Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2015), 1444-45.
11. Joel Drinkard, “First-Century Tombs in Judah,” *Biblical Illustrator* (Spring 1994): 20.
12. Cyril of Alexandria, *Commentary on the Gospel of John 12, John 11–21*, ed. Joel C. Elowsky, vol. IVb in *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture: New Testament* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2014), 341.
13. Scotty Smith, “John,” in *Gospel Transformation Bible* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2013), 1444, n. 20:1-10.