

The Tomb Was Not Empty (John 20:1-18)

Sermon Based Discussion (April 24, 2011)

Resurrection Series Part 3

INTRODUCTION & REFLECTION

The idea of resurrection is pretty simple: someone who was once alive has died, and then returns back to life. But the idea of it actually happening is pretty amazing. Yet the Bible tells us of the resurrection of Jesus after he had been dead for several days.

That Jesus rose from the dead should astound us. It's a claim many find unbelievable which others are so sure of its truth. In this session, we'll consider the truth and power of the resurrection of Jesus as recorded in the Bible. We'll also see what different it would make the more we believe and live by it.

INTO THE BIBLE (Read John 20:1-18)

1. Based upon the reaction of Mary and the disciples, what can you tell about their belief in the resurrection?
2. What parts of this story could indicate that John was recording an historical event and not a metaphorical or made up account?
3. What is one similarity or difference between this resurrection story and Lazarus' in John 11? What can we learn from comparing the two?

GOING DEEPER (Sharing/Application)

John and Mary both believed, but at different times and through different means. Jesus left an open tomb for us to find, with his grave clothes remaining. Those were his signs that he had risen. Jesus also encountered Mary in a personal way to help her believe.

4. In what ways are we/you like John, needing a reasonable basis for your belief in Jesus' resurrection?
5. In what ways are we/you like Mary, needing a personal encounter with God to help us believe?

6. What can we learn from how Jesus builds the faith of his followers in this story?

WHAT WILL YOU DO?

Verse 9 states that John believed in the resurrection even though he did not understand Scripture and that Jesus must rise from the dead.

7. What does this tell us about the relationship between belief in the resurrection and understanding it?
8. And why does it matter to our lives if Jesus actually rose from the dead or not? (cf. 1 Corinthians 15:14-19)

CHANGING YOUR MIND

Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, and by which you are being saved... that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures... (1 Corinthians 15:1-2a, 3b-4, ESV)

SERMON/DISCUSSION NOTES