



THE ULTIMATE SIGN – RESURRECTION FROM THE DEAD!

BIG IDEA: The resurrection of Jesus changes everything!

DATE: Wednesday, March 25 and Sunday, March 29, 2026

SCRIPTURE: John 20:1-2; 11-18

OPENING QUESTION

What percentage of Americans would you say believe the biblical account of the physical resurrection of Jesus is *completely true*? What percentage would say God is unconcerned with their day-to-day decisions?

SETTING THE STAGE

Just three days earlier, Jesus had experienced excruciating death on the cross, as He voluntarily surrendered His life for the sins of the whole world. For those who witnessed that horrible moment, it was both painful and unfathomable. The long-awaited Messiah, Son of God, was dead.

SCRIPTURE READING

John 20:1-2; 11-18 (CSB)

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. ² 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!”

¹¹ But Mary stood outside the tomb, crying. As she was crying, she stooped to look into the tomb. ¹² She saw two angels in white sitting where Jesus’s body had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet. ¹³ They said to her, “Woman, why are you crying?” “Because they’ve taken away my Lord,” she told them, “and I don’t know where they’ve put him.” ¹⁴ Having said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know it was Jesus. ¹⁵ “Woman,” Jesus said to her, “why are you crying? Who is it that you’re seeking?” Supposing he was the gardener, she replied, “Sir, if you’ve carried him away, tell me where you’ve put him, and I will take him away.” ¹⁶ Jesus said to her, “Mary.” Turning around, she said to him in Aramaic, “*Rabboni!*”—which means “Teacher.”

¹⁷ “Don’t cling to me,” Jesus told her, “since I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and tell them that I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.”

¹⁸ Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, “I have seen the Lord!” And she told them what he had said to her.

DISCUSSION

THE TOMB IS EMPTY

READ John 20:1-2

What do you appreciate about Mary Magdalene in this passage?

What was Mary's first response to the empty tomb? What did she think had happened?

JESUS IS ALIVE!

READ John 20:11-16

What was so significant about Jesus first appearing to women?

How did you respond when you first heard Jesus call *your* name?

How do *you* know that Jesus is alive? How does that impact your everyday life?

SHARE THE MESSAGE

READ John 20:17-18

What do you notice about Mary's response in v. 18? How can we follow her example?

How would you respond if a friend made one of the following claims? Turn to your neighbor and discuss.

- "The disciples taught that Jesus lives in our hearts, but over time, that idea of a *symbolic* resurrection became a belief in a *literal* resurrection."
- "Some of the disciples must have taken Jesus's body during the night. They hid His corpse and then claimed He had risen."
- "Jesus must have fainted or gone unconscious until He was placed in the tomb. Then He woke up and walked out."

What claims have *you* come across for denying the resurrection of Jesus? How do you respond?

What about people who believe in Jesus's resurrection but do not see how it affects their day-to-day life? How would you disciple them?

RESPONSE

The resurrection is both a historical and spiritual reality. It truly happened and Jesus's death on the cross and resurrection from the grave changes everything. It is the foundation of our belief system and makes eternal life possible. Yet many people do not believe it. It is now our turn to echo Mary's message and excitedly share, "The tomb is empty. Jesus is alive!"

READING PLAN

3/29 – Luke 24; 3/30 – Matthew 28; 3/31 – Psalm 16; 4/1 – John 20; 4/2 – Hosea 6; 4/3 – 2 Timothy 1; 4/4 – 1 Corinthians 15; *Memory Verse: Matthew 28:18-20*

NEXT WEEK: No LifeGroups on Wednesday (Night of Worship) and Sunday (Easter)! The following week we start a new 6-week series "Leverage Your Life" – *learn how to leverage your job, skill, and passion where you live, work, and play for the glory of God.*

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