

Bible Studies for Life: April 9

Jesus Rose Again to Give Me Life • John 20:1-2, 11-18

By Laura Lee Leathers



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In chapter twenty, “John’s purpose in recording these post-resurrection appearances was to demonstrate that Jesus’ physical and bodily resurrection was the crowing proof that He truly is the Messiah and Son of God who laid down His life for His own” (John: Jesus – the Word, the Messiah, the Son of God, by John MacArthur Bible Studies).

When you study other religions, you soon learn their foundation is built upon a questionable figure and/or false ideologies. Only true biblical Christianity can boast that Jesus rose from the dead through a victorious resurrection.

The tomb in which Jesus was buried was found empty (John 20:1-2 NKJV). Many things can happen in seven days! The Holy Week does from Jesus’ triumphal entry to a sham trial, death on a cross, and burial in a garden tomb. The stone is rolled into place, and guards are posted at the entrance.

Then on the first day of the week, Sunday, Mary Magdalene arrives at the tomb early in the morning. She isn’t alone. Luke tells us that “the certain other women with them” (Luke 24:1-12). Mark writes there is Mary, the mother of James, and Salome.

They arrive early in the morning, while it is still dark and the sun is beginning to rise, to complete the process of anointing Jesus' body with the spices. How did they expect to get inside the tomb? Maybe they hoped someone would be there to roll the stone away. The point is they went, prepared for the ceremonial task.

Imagine their astonishment to find the stone rolled away. John's Gospel doesn't tell us if Mary Magdalene looks inside the tomb until later. Was she afraid? Whatever the reason, she runs to tell Simon Peter and probably John, "the other disciple, whom Jesus loved."

Mary Magdalene and the other women had been in the crowds and near Jesus when He foretold the numerous predictions of His death and resurrection, but who could have imagined such a miracle?

Jesus revealed Himself as alive (John 20:11-16). Peter and the other disciple come to the tomb (vs. 3-10), see it was empty, and return to their homes (notice verse nine). Neither one of these men recognize the truth from Old Testament Scriptures that He will be raised from the dead.

Through her tears, Mary bravely looks into the tomb. She is greeted with another surprise: angelic messengers who ask why she is weeping. She responds, "Because they have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid Him." Mary isn't speaking for the other women or the disciples, only for herself.

As she turns, there Jesus stands. Don't miss His questions: "Why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?" When our hearts are grieving, someone asking questions helps us gain focus, assist in decisions, regarding the next step.

She thinks the man before her is the gardener. The crucified body of Christ no longer holds the battle scars. Instead, it is the body of the resurrected Lord.

She answers His questions with the statement, "Sir, if You have carried Him away, tell me where You have laid Him, and I will take Him away." She still doesn't recognize to whom she's speaking.

When Jesus said her name, "Mary!" she knew immediately it was Jesus, her Rabboni – Teacher.

The message of the resurrected Christ is to be shared with others (John 20:17-18). After the initial shock of realizing that it is Jesus who is standing in front of her. Jesus tells Mary, "Do not cling to me, for I have not yet ascended to My Father."

Then He instructs her to go and tell "my brethren." Mary Magdalene is obedient. What wonderful, amazing news she has to tell the disciples! She has not only seen Jesus, but He has spoken to her. How the excitement must have filled the disciples' hearts when they heard the news that He is risen!

Later, the disciple Thomas would doubt (20:29). Jesus told him, "Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

One day Believers will see their risen Savior face-to-face but until then, we are commanded to share the Good News that we can have eternal life if we repent and believe.

He is Risen indeed! Go tell!

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