

Explore the Bible: April 4

Resurrected • Luke 24:1-12

By Laura Lee Leathers



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Don Francisco is a musician and former member of the rock and roll band, Highway Robbery. His father was a pastor and professor of Old Testament interpretation at Southern Seminary in Louisville, Ky. However, Don chose not to follow Christ. Instead, he lived a life contrary to Scripture.

Then came the day he encountered Jesus. He went from rock 'n roll to being known as a Christian singer and songwriter. Have you ever heard the song, He's Alive? It tells the story of Peter's discovery that the tomb is empty. For that song, Francisco won the Christian Music Association (CMA) Dove Awards for Song of the Year and Songwriter of the Year in 1980.

Perhaps one of the best performances of this song was given by Dolly Parton with the Christ Church Choir at the 1990 CMA Awards. Look it up on the Internet at 1990 – Dolly Parton – He's Alive – YouTube.

April 4 is Resurrection Sunday, the day the world is reminded once again that Jesus' Resurrection separates Christianity from all other religions. It's not a religion, but a personal relationship with our living Lord. The Lifeway commentary sums it up best: "The foundational truths of the Christian gospel

are these: Jesus Christ was born of a virgin, lived a sinless life, was crucified on a cross for our sins, was buried in a tomb guarded by soldiers, and on the third day was raised to life again." His opponents should have been able to produce the lifeless body of Jesus, but they could not.

Return (Luke 24:1-5a). The body of Jesus was removed from the cross before the Sabbath's beginning and placed in a tomb owned by Joseph of Arimathea. The custom of placing spices around the body was delayed until the women (Luke 23:55-56) could return early in the morning on the first day of the week.

The profiles in courage go to the group of women who followed Jesus from Galilee. They were first to the tomb in the early dawn hours before sunrise (see Matt. 28:1; Mark 16:2; John 20:1). Upon their arrival at the tomb, they discovered the stone rolled away. Bewildered, the women stooped down and "they went in." Talk about courage! They didn't find the body of the Lord Jesus.

While they were perplexed about what could have taken place, suddenly two men in dazzling clothes were in their midst. Later they are identified as angels (see Luke 24:23; Matt. 28:2). It was angels who first announced Jesus' birth, and now they give an explanation of what has just transpired.

In response to the divine messengers, the women "were terrified and bowed to the ground." Their response was similar to previous encounters we read about in Luke's Gospel (see 1:12; 2:9). What would have been your thoughts and reaction if you had been there?

Note that the Sabbath Day was from sundown on Friday until Saturday at sunset. The first day of the week would be Sunday, which had no special worship significance until the Resurrection. From this point forward the first day

of our week, Sunday, would become known as “the Lord’s Day.” (see Rev. 1:10 and Acts 20:7).

Remember (Luke 24:5b-7). Perhaps the best way to make a person think about a situation is to ask a question. The men asked, “Why are you looking for the living among the dead?” The usage of this Greek participle refers specifically to Jesus as being alive, the living one. The question also insinuated that the women should have remembered Jesus’ promise (and later the disciples also).

“This initial skepticism on the part of the disciples is actually strong evidence for the truthfulness of the biblical account. The women disciples who later told their story to others humbly admitted they did not remember Jesus’ promise of resurrection at first (LifeWay).”

The angels gave the first authoritative testimony of Jesus’ Resurrection: He has risen! They reminded the women to remember His teachings. Was their failure of memory a failure of faith? Are we any different? We all fail to recognize and trust His promises. How grateful we should be for His mercy, patience, and grace.

Report (Luke 24:8-12). The verb translation of the word, “remember” (v. 8), means the women didn’t forget what Jesus had taught. “They simply had not properly understood His words or believed them (LifeWay).” It took the experience of seeing and the angels’ explanation to realize Jesus had predicted His resurrection.

Luke identifies the three women (v. 10), who went and told the “Eleven and to all the rest (v.9)” all they experienced. However, those who heard the news thought it was nonsense, and they did not believe it. Peter ran to the tomb. He stooped, looked in, saw only the linen cloths, and went away amazed at what had happened.

Perhaps he was singing, “He’s Alive, and I’m forgiven,

heaven's gates are open wide..." He's Alive! We serve a Risen Savior!

Leathers is a member of First Church, Lexington.