

## Resurrection of Jesus – Sunday Morning

### Matthew 28:1-15; Mark 16:1-11; Luke 24:1-12; John 20:1-18

We have enjoyed the harmonization of Jesus' life in our study. As we have looked at each Gospel record when studying an event, we have gained a deeper look at Jesus, His followers, and how the works and words of Christ can be applied to us. Theologians agree, one of the most difficult passages to harmonize is the resurrection account. Here is a quote from the book Harmony of the Gospels edited by Benjamin Davies.

*“More of these apparent difficulties are found in this short portion of the Gospels than in almost all the rest. This has its cause in the circumstance that each writer here records only what appertained to his own particular purpose or experience. Thus many of the minor and connecting facts have not been preserved; and the data are therefore wanting to make out a full and complete harmony of all the accounts, without an occasional resort to something of hypothesis.”*

For the purpose of Ladies Studying Jesus, I have found myself weaving together the hints within Scripture, common sense, and the works of several harmonizations. Remember, these events occurred in quick succession with many happening simultaneously.

The six details we will study in the **Resurrection of Jesus – Sunday Morning** probably happened in less than 2 ½ hours.

#### 1. **Woman Purchase Spices** Only Mark tells us of this purchase.

“And when the sabbath was past (Gk – “Now after the sabbath,”), Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, had bought sweet spices (Gk - fragrant oils), that they might come and anoint him.” Mark 16:1

Jews believed the body would hover at the grave for three days before ascending to God. Family and friends would faithfully visit a grave during that period. As we might bring flowers or decorations to a grave, they would bring perfumes to mask the order of decay.

I found it interesting that the Bible suggests that the ladies purchased the oils on Saturday evening after 6. The sabbath was past and they were free to do this task.

These “sweet spices” actually are fragrant oils that are still popular in the Middle East today! The women hoped to apply these to Jesus head and sprinkle about the body and tomb. Mary of Bethany applied oils like these to Jesus and wiped them with her hair in John 12:3, less than a week before. Jesus referred to it as being for His burial. Matthew 26:10-13

#### 2. **Christ Arose** The Bible **does not** tell us the details of the rising and leaving of Christ from the tomb! Just as we were told **nothing** of the act of the crucifixion, we are told **nothing** of the act of the rising of Jesus! We know He arose before dawn and that the angel rolled away the stone from the tomb solely for the faithful ones to peer into the empty sepulcher. This verse happened before the ladies arrived at the tomb Resurrection Morning! In the Greek, all the verbs in this verse are in the past tense. Only Matthew gives this information.

“And, behold, there was (Gk – “had been” past tense) a great earthquake : for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow: And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men.” Matthew 27:2-4

“earthquake” – The word “great” in the Greek means “violent, sever”. This is the second earthquake associated with Jesus’ death. Most believe it was more localized to the garden area as the angel appeared and rolled the stone away!

“angel” – Jesus did not need the assistance of an angel to get out of the tomb. The angel’s job was to roll back the stone revealing Christ was gone already! **These are the same angel descriptions used throughout the Bible.**

Matthew - “like lightning, and his raiment white as snow:”

Mark – “long white garment;” (royal garments)

Luke – “shining garments” (Gk – flashing like lightning)

John – “in white”

No wonder the first words out of an angel’s mouth is **almost always** “Fear not!” It is because humans are **almost always** overwhelmed by fear when they encountered an angel!

“keepers” – The appearance of an angel signals that something extraordinary is happening! (judgment of God; proclamation; message from God; praise God) These trained Roman soldiers were so traumatized they seemingly fainted becoming unconscious!

Jesus – Jesus is not mentioned! He didn’t need angel assistance to unwrap grave clothes or escape the tomb. He had risen earlier and the only assisting the angels did was to allow men see that He was gone! Jesus’ body went through the rock walls. His glorified body was radically different from the body he was born with. The angels told the ladies, “Come, see the place where the Lord lay.”

*“While the Gospel writers did not record the details of the Resurrection, they did clearly state the accompanying events and the results of the Resurrection.” Pentecost, p. 498*

**3. Guards Report** The detail of the sepulture’s guard and the report back to the Jewish leaders is only found in the book of Matthew.

“Now when they (*women*) were going, behold, some of the watch (neutral eyewitnesses without an agenda) came into the city, and shewed (told) unto the chief priests all the things (truthfully, frankly, clearly) that were done. And when they were assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel, they gave large money unto the soldiers, Saying, Say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole him away while we slept. And if this come to the governor's ears, we will persuade him, and secure you (keep out of trouble, guard, and protect). So they took the money, and did as they were taught (instructed): and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day.” Matthew 27:11-15

“assembled” – The traumatized soldiers went to those who had commissioned them in their duty to guard a dead man. The soldiers knew that it was possible that a group of the man’s followers might try and take the body. But that was not how they lost the body; it was a very different and dramatic story! Notice the level of concern this news brought to the chief priests! They called the elders and took counsel----in the Greek, the **Sanhedrin** was called in **again!** But it wasn’t to honestly consider the truth of Jesus’ words. It wasn’t to check carefully the Scriptures to see if Jesus could have been the promised Messiah. Amid all the evidence, their stubborn unbelief continued! Luke 16:31 No investigation, only lies and cover-up! Pentecost says, “It is significant that while the disciples disbelieved the report of the Resurrection and sought confirmation of it, the Sanhedrin believed the report and sought an explanation to deny it.” p. 502

“large money” – Lit. – silver The Jewish leadership loved their money! They threw money at problems like men do today. Here they use a “large money” to buy this lie! This was as much a payment for a new assignment, to lie, as it was a bribe!

“Say ye,” – The fact is that if Roman soldiers were **derelict of duty**, it was worthy of death---Acts 12:18-19; 16:27-28 They certainly would not have wanted to spread this story incriminating themselves. It must have been a lot of money! The whole story was really quite hard to believe. How was it that **all** of them were sleeping and if they were sleeping---how would they **know** who stole the body. This story also was out of character for the disciples. They ran from the garden, was no where to be seen at the trials, and only a handful at the cross! They were fishermen and laborers – not fighters. Totally out of character!

“until this day.” – This became the official Jewish explanation not only at the time of the writing of the book of Matthew, but for the next 12 centuries.

**Thought:** Who gave the Apostle Matthew the information so he could pen Matthew 28:2-3? Many believe a soldier did---or perhaps several soldiers! There was no one else there! They felt the earthquake, they saw the angel descend, roll back the door, and then sit on top of it! Only a small number of people saw those angels, a few Galilean women and a group of Roman soldiers who were guarding a dead man’s tomb!

- 4. Woman Come to the Tomb** – Though the ladies seem to come together, or at least meet at the tomb, as soon they realize the sepulcher’s stone was rolled away, Mary Magdalene will leave to tell Peter and John. The other women will proceed to the tomb for a closer look. All four Gospels tell of the women coming to the tomb early in the morning. Only Mary Magdalene is mentioned in John. Theologians believe the differences are due to emphasis on information not a confusion of facts.

“The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene (“and Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, and other women that were with them,” Luke 24:10) early, when it was yet dark (5-5:30 am), unto the sepulcher, (“bringing the spices which they had prepared,” Luke 24:1 “And they said among themselves, Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulcher? And when they looked,” Mark 16:3-4) and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulcher (“for it was very great.” Mark 16:4). John 20:1

On Sunday, the Jewish first day of the week, the women came to the tomb very early to anoint Jesus’ body with oils. The book of John tells us they came “when it was yet dark” while Mark says, “at the rising of the sun.” My daughter and I were talking about the fact that it very likely about 5-5:30 am. She grimaced and asked, “why so early!” I think I understand. When your heart hurts so much you know it’s pointless to try and sleep, when you just want to fulfill a mission of love, and when you just want to get the day going, you get out of bed, even if it’s really early! I wonder if that was what happened!

Realize, these ladies were unaware of the soldiers or the Roman seal at the tomb. That all came to be the day before on the Sabbath, or Saturday. They had not been at the tomb since Friday night. **How they would roll the stone was on their mind.** It is obvious the disciples had no intention to go to the tomb. Naturally, I think they had a couple ideas. Plan A: Try all together to see if they could budge it. Plan B. Look for a gardener or enroll some help from a passerby. But they really couldn’t know if they would even get into the tomb and that must have been a great concern.

“And when they looked” – Gk – “looked up” Their eyes must have been down and when they looked up they saw the stone rolled away.

**These women did not expect a resurrection! They were bringing oils to anoint the body of Jesus; this would be their last act of service to Him!** Who were they? They were a group of faithful, loyal, devoted, believing, following, serving women! They had followed Him for months, some of them for years and here they were continuing to do what they could!

That devotion and faithfulness, though not in complete understanding, will be rewarded!

- **Mary Magdalene Leaves**

Then she (Mary) **runneth, and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and saith unto them, they have taken away the LORD out of the sepulcher, and we know not where they have laid him.” John 20:2**

Mary did not proceed to the tomb, but in a panic, her first reaction was to run and tell Peter and John. **She was not running to tell them of Christ’s resurrection but of His body’s disappearance! Only one thing was on her mind, “they have taken away the Lord...and we know not where they have laid him.”**

It seems John and Peter stayed elsewhere from the rest of the disciples. Several books I read suggested that John took Peter in after his denial of Christ to comfort and encourage him. Remember, John also had Mary, Jesus’ mother, in his home. I wonder if Mary Magdalene stayed at John’s home too. It would have been a very sorrowful and broken household. The rest of the women will go to the other disciples later.

- **Woman Enter the Tomb & Angels’ Message** This detail of the resurrection is given in Matthew, Mark, and Luke. John does not speak of the women coming to the tomb. He centers only on Mary Magdalene. But all four Gospels agree the tomb was empty on the first day of the week!

“And they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus. And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold, two men (“a young man sitting on the right side,” Mark 16:5) stood by them in (“long white” Mark 16:5) shining (flashing like lightning) garments: (“and they were affrighted (Gk – utterly amazed, extreme fear, alarmed, startled, dumbfounded).” Mark 16:5) And as they were afraid, and bowed down their faces to the earth, they said unto them, (“be not affrighted,” Mark 16:6) (“Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus (“of Nazareth,” Mark 16:6), which was crucified.” Matt. 28:5) Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here (lit. – “he has left”), but is risen (lit. “He was raised”): (“as he said.” Matt. 28:6) remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee, Saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again. (“Come, see the place where the Lord lay.” Matt. 28:6) And they remembered his words.” Luke 24:3-8 “And go quickly, and tell his disciples (“and Peter” Mark 16:7) that he is risen from the dead; and, behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him: lo, I have told you.” Matt. 28:7

“found not the body”/ “much perplexed” – The women had come looking for the body of Jesus where it was laid late Friday afternoon and found the stone rolled away! They “entered in,” fearlessly, suspecting nothing; no resurrection, no angelic beings, just curious to see what had happened! Mary had left right away to tell Peter and John convinced someone took the body, these women continued and investigated **why** the stone was rolled away; **what** had really happened! The empty tomb did not explain itself; God used angels!

“two men” vs. “young man” – Quote from *Life Application Bible*, p. 1698 “Mark says that one angel met the women at the sepulcher, while Luke mentions two angels. These accounts are not contradictory. Each Gospel writer chose to highlight different details as he explained the same story just as eyewitnesses to a news story each may highlight a different aspect of that event. Mark probably emphasized only the angel who spoke. The unique emphasis of each Gospel shows that the four accounts were written independently. This should give us confidence that all four are true and reliable.”

“Why seek ye the living among the dead?” – **Here we find the Divine Announcement.** It was fear that caused the women to fall to the ground. This is certainly an understandable reaction for those who suddenly find themselves in the company of angelic beings! The angels first sought to calm their fears and then refocus their minds to the fact of Christ’s resurrection! **The women had come looking for a corpse** – “I know that he seek Jesus which was crucified.” And then they say an amazing statement, “Why seek ye the living among the dead?” Jesus was gone, He was risen and left, just as He said! The angels reminded them of the words of Jesus concerning the betrayal, the trials and then the horrific death He would endure. **“and they remembered”** is a wonderful statement but a sad realization that all had forgotten Jesus’ words! The angels wanted the women to be convinced in their own minds, so they invited them to “Come, see the place where the Lord lay.”

“go quickly, and tell his disciples (“and Peter”) – **Here we find the first Great Commission!** When the ladies remembered Christ’s words, the angels told them to go report to the disciples what they knew to be true - ! The disciples had no plans to be there! The Gospel of Mark says, “tell the disciples and Peter.” It is believed by scholars that Peter assisted Mark in the writing of his gospel. I love the fact that Peter wanted the readers to know the angels had included him in this fashion. Though Peter might have felt outside the group of disciples since his denial of Christ at the trials, God very much still included him! How wonderful to remember, God forgives and restores a repentant heart! **Two-fold message to deliver: 1) Christ is risen 2) Meet Him in Galilee**

“lo, I have told you.” – is an interesting ending to the angels’ announcement. It means, “we have accomplished our responsibility; we have completed our errand and given our message” Now it was up to the women to tell the disciples!

**5. Peter and John Race to the Tomb, Mary Follows Behind** In our desire to remain chronological, we have given Mary time to get to Peter and John and they all begin their race back to the tomb.

- **Peter and John** Their trip to the tomb is recorded in Luke and John.

“Peter therefore went forth, and that other disciple, and came to the sepulcher. So they ran both together: and the other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulcher. And he stooping down, and looking in, saw the linen clothes lying; yet went he not in. Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulcher, and seeth the linen clothes lie, And the napkin, that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself. (“(Peter was) wondering in himself at that which was come to pass.” Luke 24:12) Then went in also that other disciple, which came first to the sepulcher, and he saw, and believed. For as yet they knew not the scripture, that he must rise again from the dead. Then the disciples went away again unto their own home.” John 20:3-10

“So they ran both together:” – Most Bible scholars agree the Book of John was written about 85 AD. It is very amusing that **John still remembered over 50 years later and then recorded he beat Peter to the tomb!** But really, John had outrun Peter, but Peter outdared John!

John and the Tomb’s Evidence – John stopped short of the tomb’s entrance. Perhaps he was timid and fearful. The Bible tells us, “he stooping down, and looking in, saw the linen clothes lying; yet went he not in.” The English translation leaves a lot out. The Greek is more descriptive, “he peered in, to see the grave clothes lying as they had been left; but he did not go in.” From verse 7 the phrase “but wrapped together in a place,” most Bible teachers believe the grave wrappings were in the form of a body. I read things like “cocoon shape”, “mummy-like”, “shell”. This is very probable what John and Peter saw.

It wasn’t until Peter had pushed past John and entered the tomb that John also ventured inside. It was then, inside the tomb, did the evidence start to add up to John. In verse 5 the Greek word for “saw” means “to glance in, to look in”, but when John went inside the word in verse 8 “saw” means “seeing with understanding and comprehension”. He had seen Lazarus risen from the dead and how he had struggled with the grave clothes. Jesus had given a quick command to lose him and let him go. And here we have the linen clothes laying undisturbed, the head and face wrap laid off to the side neatly folded. This was not the job of grave robbers, taking what they could from a rich man’s tomb, this wasn’t Jesus haters grabbing the body to only throw it into a garbage dump, this was the work of Jesus, the miracle working Son of God. John goes on and tells the readers that he didn’t understand all the Scriptures at that point, but he does tell us **“he saw, and believed,” the evidence of the grave clothes convinced him!**

Peter and the Tomb’s Evidence – It is certainly not surprising that Peter went right into the tomb but stood there totally perplexed! Both men saw the same thing. The word “seeth” in verse 6 as pertaining to Peter means, “to look carefully, to observe” Both were thinking differently about what they seeing! While John was coming to the conclusion that Jesus had actually risen from the dead, Peter was trying to make sense of the grave clothes. The grave clothes and spices were worth more to thieves than a naked dead body, and neither friends nor enemies would have unwrapped Jesus. There seemed like no hurried actions or struggle had taken place. **Peter seems to have come to no conclusion.** The Bible simply tells us, “Then the disciples went away again unto their own home.” Peter saw the empty tomb and simply went back into Jerusalem to the place he had been staying. **It seems the possibility of Jesus’ resurrection never crossed his mind!**

- **Mary Magdalene** Mary’s time at the tomb and seeing Jesus is recorded in John & mentioned in Mark.

“But Mary stood without at the sepulcher weeping; and as she wept, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulcher, And seeth two angels in white sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my LORD, and I know not where they have laid him. And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away. Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master (Gk – “my great Master”, “my great Teacher”). Jesus saith unto her,

Touch me not ( Gk – “stop clinging to me” ); for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.” John 20:11-17 “And she went and told them that had been with him (“that she had seen the Lord, and that he had spoken these things unto her.” John 20:18), as they mourned and wept. And they, when they had heard that he was alive, and had been seen of her, believed not.” Mark 16:10-11

Mary Magdalene – The beauty and purity of Mary Magdalene’s loyalty and devotion to Christ has been marred by the corruptness of the world. Let’s look at what the Scripture tells us about this faithful follower of Jesus.

1. First mentioned in Luke 8:2-3 as a woman who had been healed by Jesus after being possessed by seven demons.
2. The same passage also tells us that she was part of a group of women who travelled with Jesus and His band of followers. It tells they, “ministered unto him of their substance.” This means of their time and money.
3. Throughout the centuries, there has been confusion that she might have been the “woman in the city, which was a sinner,” from Luke 7 that washed Jesus’ feet with her hair. There is no evidence that this is true and therefore no reason we should add anything more to her life than being possessed of seven demons. Also, modern godless thought had her married to Jesus. This is a lie of Satan looking to make Jesus equal to any man instead of being the God-man sent from heaven to die for sins.
4. **She becomes a key character at the cross, burial, and resurrection events.** Mary stood at the foot of the cross with two other women and John. Later, she followed Christ’s body to the tomb with another friend and to the tomb early on Sunday morning to anoint the body of Jesus.
5. **Most Bible teachers believe she was the first to see Christ after His resurrection.** After that incident, we never read of Mary again.
6. **Studying her personality from what we read, we see eagerness to help, childlike faith, impulsiveness, emotional tendency, thankfulness, devoted, and loving. Nice list!**

Conversation with the Angels – This would be Mary’s second trip to the tomb that morning. It seems she came with the women before it was light, then ran to tell Peter and John after she saw the tomb open, and now returning with them, though not in the foot race with the two men! After Peter and John went into the tomb and saw the grave clothes the Bible says in John 20:10, “Then the disciples went away again unto their own home.” Verse 11 begins, “But Mary stood without at the sepulcher weeping:” The men left but sweet, broken-hearted Mary stayed to mourn the Lord she loved.

Mary was single-minded and blinded by her grief. Nothing was swaying her from sorrow. Not even the appearance of heavenly beings! Notice the lack of emotion when suddenly she is face to face with two angels! We are told in the Greek the harden Roman soldiers “did shake,” the same word used when describing the “great earthquake” and then they lost consciousness. **Her friends had seen the angels earlier and their reaction was described as terrified, frightened, utterly amazed, extreme fear, alarmed, startled, dumbfounded. How did Mary react? She carried on a conversation!** This really caught me by surprise as I was studying. I shared it with my college age daughter, and with clarity and a causal attitude said, “yeah, I suppose after being processed with seven demons two angels were much easier to relate with.” I hadn’t thought of that. Mary would have truly known fear when dealing with the evil demons. These angels did not bring her fear for they meant her no harm and she knew it!

The angels could bypass the normal, “Fear not.” And instead they asked Mary, “Why weepest thou?” Her answer to the angels echoed the same thought she had carried since she first saw the stone rolled away. “Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him” Still no thought of resurrection, no thought except a missing body!

It was at this point Mary must have sensed someone was behind her because the Bible tells us, “she turned herself back.” The angels had no opportunity to answer, their Creator took over the conversation with Mary!

Conversation with Christ – **AND** - Mary looks into the face of Christ. But John 20:14 says, “and knew not that it was Jesus.” Why? Some believe that tears and sadness kept her from seeing the face of Christ, but much like the two on the way to Emmaus, I think God simply blinded her eyes. Jesus’ followers did not expect a resurrection! Instead, all three of them will unknowingly have a conversation with Christ that will lead to the realization of His resurrection.

“Woman, why weepest thou? Whom seekest thou?” – Notice the similarity between the angels’ and Jesus’ words. Both say, “Woman, why weepest thou?” but Jesus will add, “whom seekest thou?” In her thinking the man talking with her was the gardener, one who would tend and have authority in that garden. Mary respectfully asks Him if He had taken the body and if so tell her where it was and she would take it. The fact is Jews would not have appreciated the fact that a condemned criminal was buried close to their property. It was ingrained in Mary’s thinking that some Jesus-hater took the body from this respectable tomb and hauled it away. This is the third time she has expressed this thought.

“Mary” – But all it took was her name spoken by her Lord. “I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.” “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:” (John 10:14, 27) “The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.” Ps. 34:18 Sweet, impulsive Mary threw herself at her Lord and must have gripped Him strong for the Greek language tells us Christ’s next phrase was, “Stop clinging to me.” Oh, how Mary rejoiced to not only find Jesus but to find Him alive. Certainly not what she expected. **Again, she is not afraid of the supernatural, when Jesus will show Himself to the rest of the women and later that day the disciples, He will quickly need to tell them not to fear. Her first reaction was not fear, but joy!**

“Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father.” –There is debate on the meaning of Christ’s next phrase, Why does he tell her not to touch Him while inviting Thomas to handle Him? Most see it as Jesus setting new boundaries that His work on the cross and resurrection produced. The days of warm intimate fellowship was over, the earthly bond of Teacher and follower was over; now, it was Savior and follower. Plus, as He had explained in the Upper Room, the workings of a new greater fellowship. “Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you. But if I depart, I will send him unto you.” (John 16:7) This time of Jesus being with them in this form will be short lived, “I am not yet ascended to my Father:” These forty days will be different from the incarnate days. His ministry at this time will be for reassurance, consolation, and preparation; helping to bring their minds into focus concerning His work of providing salvation and their work to tell the world! Then He would return to His Father. Jesus had foretold them of this in the Upper Room also, “I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father.” (John 16:28) With Mary, Jesus’ words are centering not on resurrection but on ascension!

“but go to my brethren,” – **Jesus did not tell Mary to go to the disciples and tell them of His resurrection! No! She did not have this message! I’m sure that was part of her message, but the directive from Jesus was to remind them of the soon ascension!** In my study several authors said this was the **first time Jesus called the disciples “brethren.”** This surprised me so I checked it out! They were right! Relationship status was new! In Matthew 12:46-50, Jesus describes who are His brethren. “For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.” When He speaks to the women as well, He will also use this same name for the disciples, “brethren”! Don’t miss this, we are all still disciples of Christ, but we are also His brethren!

“I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.” – See how Jesus is sweetly informing and teaching at the same time! What a privilege for Mary to be the first to see the resurrected Christ! We are one with Christ! God is our God and Father along with Christ! We are the children of God! (Gal. 3:26; Rom. 8:16-17)

Conversation with the Disciples – This is the second time Mary has run to tell disciples news. After her and the women had seen the stone rolled away from the tomb, she had run to tell Peter and John. Now she has seen Jesus and has a message directly from Him! **When Mary rushed into the room where the disciples were staying, Mark 16:10 says they “mourned and wept.” This tells us the attitude and action of the disciples.** Their great sorrow had absolutely immobilized them! But the Bible tells us, “And she went and told them that had been with him (“that she had seen the Lord, and that he had spoken these things unto her.” But Mark 16:11 goes on to tell us, “And they, when they had heard that he was alive, and had been seen of her, believed not.” I am sure over the months and perhaps years, Mary had gained the respect of these men, but it wasn’t enough for them to believe her. In their mind, Jesus was dead, and the resurrection was not a possibility! With Jesus’ death their hopes had vanished, and they were dwelling in the depths of despair!

**This the last we hear of Mary Magdalene.** She is not found in the Book of Acts. Mary was a key woman at the cross, burial, and on Resurrection Sunday morning, but then disappears off the pages of Scripture. God honored her faithfulness and devotion and she is an example for all of us!

- 6. Woman See Christ** Matthew is the only Gospel writer that tells us of the women talking with Jesus. Both Mark and Luke tell us the women will come and report to the disciples, but it seems from those accounts, they were only telling of the angels at the tomb. Again, this is not a confusion on the part of the Gospel writers, but an emphasis of facts necessary for their purposes within their narrative. We can be certain; the women spoke with a risen Christ! Below is a weaving of Gospel accounts taken from the time they left the tomb until speaking with the disciples.

**“And they went out quickly, and fled from the sepulcher; for they trembled and were amazed (“with fear and great joy” Matthew 28:8): neither said they anything to any man: for they were afraid (“and did run to bring his disciples word.” Matthew 28:8).” Mark 16:8 “And as they went to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail ( rejoice grace greetings ). And they came and held him by the feet, and worshipped him. Then said Jesus unto them, Be not afraid: go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me.” Matthew 28:9-10 “And they returned from the sepulcher, and told all these things unto the eleven, and to all the rest.” Luke 24:9 “And their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not.” Luke 24:11**

Women’s Emotions and Task – We see again the same emotions – fear, perplexity, trembling, amazement, but now something new! **“Great Joy” and that was before they met Jesus!** Why “great joy”? Because they believed the angels! Jesus was alive! The Bible tells us “neither said they anything to any man: for they were afraid.” **They were focused on getting to the disciples and reporting only to them!** After they spoke with Jesus, they went from fear to even greater joy that climaxed into worship! How wonderful!

Conversation with Christ – Jesus met them and said, “All hail” which was really a Jewish greeting of a pleasant nature. I saw translations that varied from “Hello” to “Rejoice”. The ladies immediately knew it was Jesus and “held him by the feet and worshipped him.” Remember they had already been told by the angels that Jesus was risen! How they must have been so happy to see Him! **They did need Jesus to tell them not to be afraid, but then Jesus repeated the same message that the angels had just told them! “go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me.”** But while the angels simply refer to the disciples, **Jesus will call the disciples “brethren” as He did with Mary Magdalene.** Things had changed! Jesus had told the disciples in the Upper Room to go to Galilee and He would meet them there. This has continued to be the center of these early conversations with Jesus and His followers.

Reaction of the Disciples – The women must have hurried to the disciples with this message. Notice it was not just to the “eleven,” but the Bible says, “and to all the rest.” We often forget there was a larger group of

faithful followers outside the called out twelve. But again, we read the same reaction from the men. Luke makes it almost painful, “And their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not.” Other words, **their report was nonsense in the ears of the disciples. The first unbelievers of the resurrection were the disciples. Even though Jesus had told them over and over again!**

### **Believer’s Application:**

1. They forgot! How about us?! – They forgot! They did not remember! The Gospels record 4 different incidents that Jesus told His followers He would die of crucifixion and rise again.

Look at:

- After the disciples confirmation of Christ the Son of God: **Matt. 16:21**; Mark 8:31; Luke 9:22
- After healing of Demonic: **Matt. 17:22-23**; **Mark 9:31**; Luke 9:44-45
- On the way to Jerusalem for Passover: **Matt. 20:17-19**; Mark 10:32-34; Luke 18:31-34
- While in Jerusalem during Passover: Matt. 26:1-2

Didn’t they hear; didn’t they understand; did they think Jesus was speaking in some symbolic language? What was their problem! Actually, the Bible gives us insight to their hearts at the time Jesus told them these things. I’m afraid we all tend to have these problems when God reveals His Words to us!

1. **Their thinking was “worldly-minded”** – Jesus told Peter in Matthew 16:21-22, “for thou savorest not things that be of God, but those that be of men.” Peter was thinking “worldly”. I’m afraid I am like him too often! My mind is not set on things above! I don’t think on things that are important to the heart of God! When my heart and mind are so full of this world and the workings of this life, I miss what is important to God and soon forget what I heard! Let’s look at Col. 3:1-17.
2. **They didn’t understand and were fearful to ask** – Mark 9:31-32 In our study of Jesus we’ve seen the disciples both asking Him questions seeking to understand His Words, but more often they would walk away afraid to ask. Let this be a lesson to us! When we are unsure of God’s mind on an issue or the truth behind a Bible passage, we must seek for the answer. We must study, pray, and seek Him. Matthew 11:28-29; 2 Timothy 2:15-19
3. **They refused to consider it** – Luke 9:44 James and John ask for positions in the Kingdom right after a prophecy of Jesus’ death! (Matt. 20:17-21) Was their mind so filled with their agenda and desires that they won’t allow truth to penetrate? They lived in a kind of denial to what Jesus was saying, because their plan for Jesus, as Messiah, was set in their minds---defeat the Romans, establish a Jewish Kingdom, rule the world. But I see a self-serving agenda maker in myself! I will quickly deflect the truth of a Bible passage I read, a Biblical principle I study, a pulpit message I hear, to the need of someone else instead of applying it to myself. I don’t take the truths of God’s word and make it applicable to me! So I ignore, put aside, tuck away, refuse to consider, and simply forget God’s truths! How tragic! Let’s look at 2 Timothy 3:16-17
4. **The truth brought too much pain** – Matthew 17:22-23 Sometimes the truth does hurt! Surgery is painful but sometimes it is necessary for good health. The same is true for our spiritual health! What Jesus was saying to the disciples had to have been confusing and painful to consider. But the truths of the Word of God is often sharp and piercing. We must be committed to subject ourselves to the preaching and studying of God’s Word to maintain a healthy and active, useful spiritual life that can bring God glory! Heb. 4:12

**Remembering sparks belief!** John 2:19-22; 12:14-16; 14:26 Be committed to be a faithful hearer and doer of the Bible. James 1:18-25

How to spark your memory!

1. Pray for an open heart before God, free from the clutter of the world, personal agendas, stubbornness, or fear. **Pray that you remember!**

2. Journal commitments and decisions you make to God. **Reread and remember!**

3. Stay engaged when hearing the word of God. Take notes for later review. (You did while a student in a classroom so you would not forget information!) **Be a student now so you remember!**

2. **The Resurrection and the believer!** – We must not underestimate the importance of the resurrection! Jesus life is book-ended with two very important events. He began His earthly life with the Virgin Birth, this established His God-Man status, worthy of providing the sinless sacrifice for our sins. Then He ended His life with the resurrection from the dead.

Let's look at several important facts of the resurrection.

1. Proves that Jesus is God's Son – John 10:17-18; Acts 2: 32-38; Rom. 1:4
2. Fulfills the prophecies of the Old Testament Scriptures – Ps. 16:10
3. Assures our future resurrection – I Thess. 4:13-18 Without the resurrection of Christ, we have no hope for our own resurrection.
4. Assures a future judgment is scheduled – Acts 17:29-32
5. Basis for Christ's heavenly priesthood – Heb. 7:22-25
6. Gives us power for Christian living – Rom. 6:4; Gal. 2:20
7. Proves the sacrifice for sin had been accepted – Rom 4:24-25 Salvation was completed!
8. We became brethren with Christ! – Hebrews 2:14-18

3. **Women – They heard too!** – In Luke 24:6 the angels are speaking to the women inside the tomb, "He is not here, but is risen: remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee," Please realize, these dear women had heard the teaching of Jesus along with the men! This is a great fact and one that is as pertinent today as it was at Jesus' time! The devil has his same tactics through the ages, if they work, why change? Prejudice, supremacy, bigotry, bias, discrimination of all kinds have been a part of mankind since sin was introduced in the garden. At the time of Christ, no women were allowed to study the scriptures. A clique of the Jewish rabbis went like this, "It is of more value to burn the Law than to delivered it to a woman." But that was and is not the heart of God, at the same time Jesus was chastising the disciples for pushing away children from His presence, He was lovely teaching women. Christ and the disciples didn't enjoy a lovely meal prepared by the women followers, and then dismiss them to do the dishes while Jesus taught and preached to the men. No, matter of fact, we have the wonderful story and insight into the heart of God when Jesus gently rebuked Martha when Mary sat at Jesus feet and "heard his word." Luke 10:39 Jesus said, "Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her." God desires us, as women, to be students of His Word! Have the principle of Ps. 119:10-11 close to your soul, "With my whole heart have I sought thee: O let me not wander from thy commandments. Thy word have I hid in mine heart. That I might not sin against thee."

God wants you to be a student of His word! He has called us as women to also sit at His feet and glean the “good part, which shall not be taken away...” Be committed and obey the call to study God’s word!

*“Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth no to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” 2 Timothy 2:15*

#### 4. Proofs of the Resurrection:

1. Gospel Records – Four Gospel books written by different men, in different places, at different times telling of the same event! Jesus rose from the dead!
2. Change in the Disciples – Something changed them from fearful and defeated to bold and confident, to the point of martyrdom. The resurrection was the basis for the early messages in Acts and the Epistles.
3. Establishment of a new form of worship. The church filled with both Jews and Gentile worshipping as one. A new day of worship. The New Testament is added to the Scriptures.

#### 5. Fear and Unbelief Paralyzes!

Both the angels and Jesus gave basically the same message to the woman that Resurrection morning, “go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me.” In other words, “Get out from under the table you are hiding under and go to Galilee!” This was not a new directive! Jesus had given them this same instruction in the Upper Room a few days before, “All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered. But after that I am risen, I will go before you into Galilee.” Yet fear and unbelief had paralyzed them from obeying this command of Jesus. But I certainly have seen this in my life and the life of others. Fear and unbelief can paralyze us from obeying God!

- When the disciples saw Jesus walking on the water the Bible tells us they “were afraid”. When they understood it was Christ, Peter’s fear and unbelief vanished and he took a walk on the water too. In Matthew 14:30 the story continues, “But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried saying, Lord, save me.” Peter sank when **fear** took over his heart. Fear and unbelief paralyzed his soul and Peter went down like a rock! That happens to all of us. Fear and unbelief sink us!
- Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus let fear paralyze them for months, perhaps years as they were part of the Religious and Political Leadership of Israel. It took the death of Christ on the cross for both of them to express to others what they already believed! Until then, fear had paralyzed them!

But in contrast, faith and courage moves in obeying God’s commands.

- Abraham left Ur of Chaldees in faith!
- Esther didn’t let fear keep her from approaching the king for her people!
- Elijah took on the prophets of Baal in full belief that God would defeat them!

We too can obey the written commands of God when we are full of faith and courage! This is a Bible principle.

Ps. 56:3; Isaiah 41:10; John 14:27; Phil. 4:6-7; 2 Tim. 1:7-8; Heb. 11:6

The disciples didn’t believe the women as they told them Jesus had risen from the death. The Bible tells us “their words seemed to them as idle tales,”. Fear and unbelief was paralyzing them but when Jesus meet them

later that Resurrection Sunday night, the first detail of conversation was that very sin! “Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen.” (Mark 16:14)

Remember, fear and unbelief paralyzes us from obeying God. Be an obedient follower of Jesus walking in faithful and courage!