

Who is Jesus? The Gospel of John

March 21st, 2021

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What We Find at the Empty Tomb (John 20:1-18)

1. An Answer for the Mind (vv. 1-9)

2. An Answer for the Soul (vv. 10-11)

For Further Thought and Discussion:

Getting Started:

1. What was helpful to you in this week's sermon? What didn't you understand?
2. According to one historian, the emergence of Christianity represents, "*the single greatest cultural transformation our world has ever seen.*"¹ Why would he say this? How might the empty tomb help to account for this?

¹ Bart Ehrman, *The Triumph of Christianity: How a Forbidden Religion Swept the World*, p. 4.

Going Deeper:

3. Why do John and Peter run to the tomb (vv. 3-4)? When they get there, what do they see (vv. 5-7)? Why would this evidence cause John to “*believe*” (v. 8)? What exactly did John believe? What was still lacking in his belief (see v. 9; see also v. 10)?
4. John makes a number of biblical allusions in this passage. What does Mary see when she looks into the tomb (v. 12)? Why is this significant (see Exodus 25:17-22)? Why would John emphasize that the resurrection took place on the “*first day of the week*” (20:1, 19; see Genesis 1:1ff; John 1:1-3)? Why is it significant that Mary meets Jesus in a garden (see Genesis 2:8-15)? Taken together, what is John trying to convey through these images?
5. Why doesn’t Mary initially recognize Jesus (v. 14; see 21:4; Luke 24:13-35)? When does she realize it’s Jesus (v. 16)? Why is this significant (see John 10:3-4, 27; Isaiah 43:1)?
6. Why does Jesus tell Mary not to cling to him (v. 17)? What is new about the disciples’ relationship with God (v. 17)?

Application:

7. Compare and contrast Mary and John. What is each person searching for? Why does John go home, while Mary remains at the tomb (see vv. 10-11)? What answer is John looking for? What answer is Mary looking for? Whose quest do you identify with more? Why?
8. Jeff listed several lines of evidence for the historicity of the resurrection. Which (if any) did you find particularly compelling? Why?
9. What’s one thing from this sermon that you can apply to your life this week?