

**A Declaration of Those Things Which Are  
Most Surely Believed Among Us**  
An Expository Study of the Gospel According to Luke  
Chapter 24- **Luke 24:1-12**  
352- Why Do You Seek the Living One  
Among the Dead?- Part 2

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June 18, 2017

**Luke 24:1-12**

**1** But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they came to the tomb bringing the spices which they had prepared.

**2** And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb,

**3** but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus.

**4** While they were perplexed about this, behold, two men suddenly stood near them in dazzling clothing;

**5** and as *the women* were terrified and bowed their faces to the ground, *the men* said to them, "Why do you seek the living One among the dead?"

**6** "He is not here, but He has risen. Remember how He spoke to you while He was still in Galilee,

**7** saying that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again."

**8** And they remembered His words,

**9** and returned from the tomb and reported all these things to the eleven and to all the rest.

**10** Now they were Mary Magdalene and Joanna and Mary the *mother* of James; also the other women with them were telling these things to the apostles.

**11** But these words appeared to them as nonsense, and they would not believe them.

**12** But Peter got up and ran to the tomb; stooping and looking in, he saw the linen wrappings only; and he went away to his home, marveling at what had happened.

## To the Glory of God

Now there are a lot of things we could say about the literal, physical, and bodily Resurrection of Jesus from the dead. For example, we could say that the meaning of the Resurrection is that God is for us. We could say that it proves to us that all of God's Wrath, against all of our sins, has been appeased. The Resurrection tells us that God's Righteousness, that was offended by our sins, has been adjudicated and made right. It confirms that God's Determination to eternally damn those who have belittled and mocked His Glory by their rebellion has been satisfied in, by, and through the sinless Life and vicarious Death of Jesus Christ.

But we could also say that the Resurrection is the unmistakable, public Affirmation by God the Father that He has fully accepted Jesus' Suffering and Death as the final Payment to forever settle the "debt of sin" of all those who will repent and put their trust in Jesus. And we could say that because God has proved that He has accepted all that Jesus said and did, by raising Him from the dead, that God is now determined to close ranks with us. He now purposes to overcome all our sense of abandonment and alienation from Him.

But, we could also say that the Resurrection allows for the final two parts of the Promise of the New Covenant to be realized where Jeremiah prophesied:

### **Jeremiah 31:33b**

**... and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.**

So, the Resurrection now makes God to be our God, and allows us to be His people, and:

### **Jeremiah 31:34b**

**... for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.**

For anyone, who has been blessed by God to know that he is, in fact, nothing more than a wicked sinner, and thus, entitled to nothing more than eternal Damnation, for God to sovereignly declare that He has chosen to forgive your sin by what He alone has done for you, is

truly the greatest News in all the world. And the Resurrection proves that that Great, Good News is true.

The literal, physical, and bodily Resurrection of Jesus Christ is God's sovereign Declaration to the nations and peoples of the world that no human being can work his way to Glory, but that God Himself intends to do the impossible to get us there. The Resurrection is the Promise of God that all who trust Jesus will be the *beneficiaries* of God's Power to lead us into "Paths of Righteousness", and all the way through the "Valley of the Shadow of Death", so that we may lie down in "Green Pastures" and "Dwell in the House of the Lord Forever".

Therefore, believing in your heart that God raised Jesus from the dead is much more than accepting an historical fact. It means being confident that God is now *for* you, that He has closed ranks with you, that He is ongoingly transforming your life, and that He is determined to give you Eternal Joy.

Believing in the Resurrection means trusting in all the Promises of Life and Hope and Righteousness and Joy for which it stands. It means we have reason to be confident of God's Power and Love; it means that we can face the loss of all of this world's goods, *including* our natural and political freedom, and even our very lives, without fear. It means that God will grant us both the Desire and the Power to forgive and love our enemies, to not hate any human being, and to have the testimony that our Treasure is in Heaven and not on the earth.

But there are things that the Resurrection does *not* give us. For example, the Resurrection does *not* give us bodies that will never grow weary or weak or sick. But, it promises that when this body plays out, that God will give us a new one. The Resurrection does *not* mean that we will have more of this world's goods or that we will keep the goods that He has given us. But it promises that what we will have "over there" will be infinitely better than anything we could ever hope to have "down here". The Resurrection does *not* mean that all men will think well of us or that we will not have human enemies or that we will escape suffering. But it promises that when we suffer, we will share in Christ's Glory.

The Resurrection promises us that whether we live or die, whether we prosper or suffer want, that whether we are delivered or endure persecution, that Jesus is enough. The Resurrection assures us that God is determined to work *unendingly* on our behalf until we are so

radically transformed that we will know and believe and say that Jesus is better than *anything* that *anyone* else can take from us now, and Jesus is better than *anything* that *anyone* else can give to us later.

Now there are several things that Dr. Luke wants us to know in the Passage that Brother Andy just read to us. So, let's try to look over the shoulder of the good doctor as he is moved along by God the Holy Spirit to pen down these inerrant and infallible words so we can get everything he wants to say. And the first thing out of the box is huge. Look again at **Luke 24:1-2**:

**1 But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they came to the tomb bringing the spices which they had prepared.**

**2 And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb,**

Now I have told you earlier that the Jews began each day at evening. And this came from the way that God dealt with Moses in the **Book of Genesis**, where he wrote:

**Genesis 1:5b**

**... And there was evening and there was morning, one day.**

So, the Jew began the "day" at sundown. And the 24- hour period that they called "*yom*", and that we call "*day*", went from sundown to sundown. So, the Sabbath was from sundown Friday until sundown Saturday. Now Jesus died about 3 pm on Friday, just about 2-3 hours before sundown. And so, they were in quite a hurry to get Him down from the Cross (which took some time) and get Him into the tomb of Joseph before the Sabbath began.

So, the large rock was rolled across the entrance of Joseph's tomb, sealing Jesus inside, just *before* the sun set on that particular Friday. And Jesus was dead from that part of Friday before the Sabbath began, and then all during the Sabbath. And now we see that He rose from the dead at some point *after* the Sabbath had ended at sundown on Saturday, which would have been called:

**"the first day of the week"**

... which was Sunday. Now at that time, the Jews didn't name the days of the week like we do. Naming days came much later. But everything flowed out from the Sabbath because the Sabbath was the center of Jewish life. So, the first day after the Sabbath was called "the first day of the week". And after the Resurrection, the Christian Church no longer celebrated the Old Testament Sabbath, but began to meet together on the first day of the week, the day after the Sabbath, to celebrate the Resurrection. And as they gathered together, they took the Lord's Supper, and there was preaching and teaching as we see in **The Acts 20** with Paul.

By the time that the Apostle John was banished to the isle of Patmos near the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> Century, worshipping on the first day of the week had become so prominent that it was called "the Lord's Day", and in **The Revelation 1:10**, John said that he was:

**... in the Spirit on the Lord's day,**

... which the early Church took as an "Apostolic Command" that all believers are to "be in the Spirit" on the Lord's day. And *that* is why we gather together on Sunday and not Saturday. We want to be "in" the Presence of God and "in" the Bible and "in" the company of other believers on the Lord's Day to remember and to celebrate the Resurrection. So, Christians are those who adhere to the infinitely *superior* Revelation of the New Covenant, that was built on "superior" Promises, administered through a "superior" Priesthood, Who offered a "superior" Sacrifice.

Now all of the Gospel writers agree that Jesus rose from the dead after the Sabbath was completed on "the first day of the week". But we have to understand that "the first day of the week" began immediately after the Sabbath was concluded at sundown on Saturday. So, to be consistent, the "first day of the week" began at sundown on Saturday and went until sundown on Sunday. So, technically, Jesus *could* have risen at any point after the Sabbath ended, even Saturday night or early Sunday morning, and it still would have been called "the first day of the week".

Notice that Luke didn't tell us that Jesus rose "early in the morning on Sunday", but that:

**... on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they came to the tomb bringing the spices which they had prepared. And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb,**

... so, by the time it was "early dawn" on Sunday, the tomb was *already* empty. From this, we could conclude that Jesus rose anywhere from immediately after sundown on Saturday up to and including just moments before these women came at "early dawn". Because by the time they got there at early dawn, Jesus was already alive.

Now there are a few things to note about what Dr. Luke says here. First of all, nobody believed. The hypocritical Jewish religious leaders certainly never dreamed that this itinerate Preacher from Galilee would rise from the dead, or they never would have wanted Him dead in the first place. As far as they were concerned, Jesus dying on the Cross was the end of this Man. And their only concern now was to erase His memory from the general population.

And the crowd that mocked Jesus, made up of both Jews and Gentiles, never thought Jesus would live again either. Certainly, the Roman soldiers and authorities who actually carried out the Crucifixion didn't anticipate Jesus living again. Now no Roman worth his salt believed that dead people would rise again. But the Jewish leaders asked that Pilate send a guard to the grave to prevent Jesus' followers from conducting a staged "resurrection". And in Levi's Record, we read:

#### **Matthew 27:62-66**

**62 Now on the next day, the day after the preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered together with Pilate,**

**63 and said, "Sir, we remember that when He was still alive that deceiver said, 'After three days I *am to* rise again.'**

**64 "Therefore, give orders for the grave to be made secure until the third day, otherwise His disciples may come and steal Him away and say to the people, 'He has risen from the dead,' and the last deception will be worse than the first."**

**65 Pilate said to them, "You have a guard; go, make it *as* secure as you know how."**

**66 And they went and made the grave secure, and along with the guard they set a seal on the stone.**

But we also need to know that the disciples didn't believe that Jesus was really going to come out of that tomb alive either. And neither did the 11 remaining Apostles. But, we also need to know that the women that Luke refers to here in verse 1 didn't believe either. These women didn't come early on Sunday morning to greet their risen Savior. They came to "do their duty" and give Jesus a proper Jewish burial because they were prohibited from doing so on Friday evening due to the fact that the Sabbath was so near and they didn't have the time on Friday evening, and they weren't allowed during the Sabbath.

So, we could call what they were doing here a very "decent act" or an "act of propriety", or even an "act of kindness". But we couldn't call it an "act of faith", because it wasn't. They didn't believe what Jesus had promised about rising from the dead, and they no more expected to see Jesus alive that morning than anyone else. These women came to give Jesus a proper Jewish "send-off" into Abraham's Bosom, *not* to be witnesses of one of the greatest miracles in the history of the world.

But what happened to the Roman guards? Well, once again, Levi tells us:

#### **Matthew 28:1-15**

**1 Now after the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first *day* of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to look at the grave.**

**2 And behold, a severe earthquake had occurred, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled away the stone and sat upon it.**

**3 And his appearance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow.**

**4 The guards shook for fear of him and became like dead men.**

**5 The angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid; for I know that you are looking for Jesus who has been crucified.**

**6 "He is not here, for He has risen, just as He said. Come, see the place where He was lying.**

**7 "Go quickly and tell His disciples that He has risen from the dead; and behold, He is going ahead of you into Galilee, there you will see Him; behold, I have told you."**

**8 And they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy and ran to report it to His disciples.**

**9 And behold, Jesus met them and greeted them. And they came up and took hold of His feet and worshiped Him.**

**10** Then Jesus said to them, "**Do not be afraid; go and take word to My brethren to leave for Galilee, and there they will see Me.**"

**11** Now while they were on their way, some of the guard came into the city and reported to the chief priests all that had happened.

**12** And when they had assembled with the elders and consulted together, they gave a large sum of money to the soldiers,

**13** and said, "You are to say, 'His disciples came by night and stole Him away while we were asleep.'

**14** "And if this should come to the governor's ears, we will win him over and keep you out of trouble."

**15** And they took the money and did as they had been instructed; and this story was widely spread among the Jews, *and is to this day.*

But having said that, Dr. Luke makes it a point to mention these women by name, look again at verse 10:

**Now they were Mary Magdalene and Joanna and Mary the *mother* of James; also the other women with them were telling these things to the apostles.**

Now, as you read the other Gospel Records, it *appears* that we may have a contradiction. Luke names several women. But when you read what the Apostle Levi wrote: he says:

**Matthew 28:1**

**Now after the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first *day* of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to look at the grave.**

... while Peter's disciple, John Mark, says:

**Mark 16:1**

**When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the *mother* of James, and Salome, bought spices, so that they might come and anoint Him.**

Yet the Apostle John says:

**John 20:1**

**Now on the first *day* of the week Mary Magdalene came early to the tomb, while it was still dark, and saw the stone *already* taken away from the tomb.**



So, is this a contradiction? Do the Gospel writers *disagree* on who and how many women were there? No. This is *not* an example of why we *cannot* trust the Bible, but one of many examples of why we can. First of all, each of the four Gospel writers confirms that Mary Magdalene was there. And John doesn't say that Mary was alone, only that she was there. So, John was correct and Mary Magdalene was there. But she wasn't alone. Likewise, Luke gives us indication that *several* women beyond the ones he named were there.

So, what we should take away from this is that while none of the men were there, several women were. And we can say that this was simply the normal duty of women to prepare the body for burial, and that is true. Yet the Gospel writers make it a point to name many of these ladies, which was highly unusual back in the 1<sup>st</sup> Century. And, as we have seen, Dr. Luke was especially mindful of women all through this Gospel Record, and that is significant. Now look again at verses 2-3:

**2 And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb,  
3 but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus.**

Now this tells us that Joseph's tomb was a rather large one where people could physically enter into it. And when these women entered into Joseph's tomb, Jesus was not there. So, at some point *before* these women got there, Jesus had already risen. Now look what Luke wrote in **Luke 24:4-8**:

**4 While they were perplexed about this, behold, two men suddenly stood near them in dazzling clothing;  
5 and as *the women* were terrified and bowed their faces to the ground, *the men* said to them, "Why do you seek the living One among the dead?  
6 "He is not here, but He has risen. Remember how He spoke to you while He was still in Galilee,  
7 saying that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again."  
8 And they remembered His words,**

Now this is the first of a series of very strange events that came immediately after the Resurrection where the Truth of the Old Testament Scriptures and the Promises of Jesus that He made during His Ministry were either hidden or obscured or just flat out forgotten by people who at one time knew them. And when either the angel, or Jesus Himself, went over these things again, their eyes were suddenly opened and they remembered.

All that these two men, who were obviously angels, were telling these women was what Jesus had already spoken. They told these perplexed women:

**5 ... "Why do you seek the living One among the dead?"**

**6 "He is not here, but He has risen. Remember how He spoke to you while He was still in Galilee,**

**7 saying that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again."**

Now this goes back to the biblical Truth concerning Angels. Angels do not have the Authority to create Doctrine or to initiate Truth or to originate anything that is eternal. Angels are sent by God to speak only what God gives them to say. They are *not* "autonomous" beings. They are *not* "self-willed" creatures. They are "Ministering Spirits". The writer of **Hebrews** said that angels are:

**Hebrews 1:14b**

**... all ministering spirits, sent out to render service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation?**

And Jude wrote this about the rebellious angels:

**Jude 6**

**And angels who did not keep their own domain, but abandoned their proper abode, He has kept in eternal bonds under darkness for the judgment of the great day,**

Back in **Luke 10:16**, Jesus said:

**I was watching Satan fall from heaven like lightning.**

... and in **The Revelation 12:3,4,7-12**, in more apocalyptic language, the Apostle John talked about how Satan and a third of all the angels were cast out of Heaven into the earth when they rebelled:

**3 Then another sign appeared in heaven: and behold, a great red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads *were* seven diadems.**

**4 And his tail swept away a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she gave birth he might devour her child.**

**7 And there was war in heaven, Michael and his angels waging war with the dragon. The dragon and his angels waged war,**

**8 and they were not strong enough, and there was no longer a place found for them in heaven.**

**9 And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.**

**10 Then I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, "Now the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, he who accuses them before our God day and night.**

**11 "And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even when faced with death.**

**12 "For this reason, rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them. Woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, knowing that he has *only* a short time."**

So, these angels were cast down to the earth because they rebelled against God. But when you read all the verses in the Bible that contain information about angels, you come away with several interesting facts. For example, angels do not speak for themselves. They do not act on their own accord. They speak only what they have been given to say and they can only do what they have been sent to do. Therefore, when they say something it is a Message *directly* from God. It is the Word of the Lord. And when they do something, it is only what God wills.

So, in *that* sense, we are to mimic the angels. We do not have the Authority to create Doctrine or to initiate Truth or to originate anything

that is eternal. And when we speak we are to speak only God's Word, and when we act we are to do only God's Will.

Now, as soon as these angels quoted what Jesus had told these women earlier, Luke wrote:

**... they remembered His words**

So, as these women heard the Words of Jesus repeated to them, God opened their minds, and they remembered. And that is why we need to keep the Words of Jesus fresh in our minds. We need to read them often and consistently. We should study them and meditate on them and ponder them and talk about them and ask questions about them and memorize them and quote them. And one of the reasons we should do this is so that we can correctly understand what is going on in the world around us.

You see, if you're not careful, you will allow the News Media to dictate two very important things to you:

1. What is important
2. What to think about it

With the advent of the "24- hour news cycle", the producers and writers of news programs highlight what they deem to be important. And that is what the "talking heads" discuss all day long. So, if you're not careful, you will be all agitated about an issue that may not even be relevant to knowing and loving and obeying Jesus Christ, because you're being artificially manipulated by some producer in New York.

Now some of what you see and hear may be very important. But, some of it may not be important at all, even though it is being repeated a thousand times. What Jesus says is always important, it is always relevant, it is always true, and it is always correct. And knowing what Jesus said, and then knowing what Jesus *meant* by what He said, is what will honor God and edify yourself and others.

So, what Jesus said, and what He *meant* by what He said, is absolutely *indispensable* to discerning what to think about what is going on so we may walk this world in white. Knowing God's Word in context is vital if we are to know God's Will and to actually "do" God's Will. Other than that, we're just guessing. And knowing God's Will is

the only thing that matters when it comes to knowing what to think about what is going on, so we may live as though we truly believe.

And whether whoever you listen to is “conservative” or “liberal” is completely irrelevant when it comes to these two issues. Let me remind you, dear friends, that being politically “conservative” or “liberal” is *not* the same thing as being “biblical”. Yet, being “biblical” is the only way we can please God. So, take heed on what you are allowing to feed your soul. And make sure that you remember what Jesus said.

So, whatever good these women were doing, they had forgotten what Jesus said. And forgetting what Jesus said is the worst thing that could happen to anyone. Both Luke and the Apostle John tell us that people who knew the Lord and who were saved didn’t even recognize Jesus after He rose from the dead.

And this illustrates one of my own greatest fears, that I will be so busy studying the Bible that I forget Jesus. That I will be so wrapped up in Church that I forget what Jesus said. And this is why I say things like this: I love Reformed Theology. I think Reformed Theology is the correct exposition of Scripture. But I love the Bible more than I love Reformed Theology, because the Bible is better than Reformed Theology. Now, by saying that, I’m trying not to suggest that Reformed Theology is at odds with Scripture. It isn’t. But, saying it like that helps me keep my own priorities straight.

Likewise, I love the 66 Books of the Bible. I spend the majority of every single day of every single week looking at the Book. But, as much as I love God’s Word, I love Jesus more, because Jesus is better than the Bible. Again, there is absolutely no conflict between the Bible and Jesus. I say it like that to help my own heart and mind set my priorities properly.

And I want to go to Heaven. I want to see those streets of gold and walk through those pearly gates and to be re-united with loved ones who have gone there before me. But, more than any of that, I want to see Jesus. I want to bow before Him and worship Him and adore Him and be close to Him forever, because Jesus is better than Heaven.

So, I’m not trying to fit in with some “Theological Camp”. I’m not trying to please John Macarthur or RC Sproul or Augustine. Look, I am in awe of these men, but I’m trying to please Jesus. I’m trying to love Jesus and to honor Him and to bring Him glory with my life and my words and my actions and the very intent of my heart. So, I do what I

do out of deep and abiding love and awe and admiration and respect for Jesus. And I preach and teach so that you will, too.

We need to remember that the Pharisees were the single most religious people on earth. They read and studied and memorized, and they discussed religious things all day long. And they are the only group of people that Jesus never said anything good about. Jesus condemned these men to their face. They were wrong about everything. So, what is it about me that would prevent me from becoming just like those men? What moral uprightness do I possess that I can avoid making the same mistakes that they made? Unless God would guard my heart and keep my soul, I could end up worse than they. And that is why I fear. That is why I pray. That is why I beg God to help me and keep me and change me and convict me and do in me whatever He sees that I need, lest I become a reproach to God and become reprobate.

So, *whatever* you do, whatever politics you engage in, whatever acts you carry out, however much “Church stuff” you engage in, don’t forget Who Jesus is or what Jesus said. And repeat what Jesus said to yourself and to others, often, so none of us will forget. Now look at what Dr. Luke wrote in verses 9-10:

**9 and returned from the tomb and reported all these things to the eleven and to all the rest.**

**10 Now they were Mary Magdalene and Joanna and Mary the *mother* of James; also the other women with them were telling these things to the apostles.**

Now the “**eleven**” refers to the remaining twelve men that Jesus personally chose to be the Apostles, the men who were specifically authorized by Jesus Himself to take Jesus’ Message to the people, and who were given the Divine Power to perform signs, wonders, miracles, and various gifts of the Holy Spirit to give Divine Credibility to the Words they spoke. Of course, Judas was the twelfth man, and by this time, he has already committed suicide and is already in his own place in hell.

So, Luke tells us that the women whom the angels spoke to have come back from the tomb and they reported to the remaining eleven Apostles that Jesus is alive. And verse 11 tells us what spiritual condition the eleven were in at this time as Luke says:

**But these words appeared to them as nonsense, and they would not believe them.**

Now there is no doubt in my mind that the women were very excited and were talking real fast, because that is exactly how I would have acted. But even assuming this, Luke doesn't say that it was because they were women or because they were excited that their words seemed to the eleven as nonsense; it was because they didn't believe what they were saying.

The eleven were saying, *"What is wrong with these women?"* But they're listening to them because they're all saying the same thing. And their stories are identical. And they all say they had the same experience. And it's not like there was all kinds of time for these women to get together and make up a story like this. This had just happened to them moments ago.

And keep in mind that these women didn't believe at first either. So, this was not some attempt at misleading the eleven to believe something that these women really felt passionate about. No, this was a fresh traumatic experience, and their stories were all consistent.

Now remember that these eleven men had been with Jesus for at least three years. And they had seen breathtaking miracles and heard the world's only perfect Teaching from the world's only perfect Teacher. They had been personally chosen to be the representatives of Jesus and they had forsaken all to follow Him. And yet, at this moment, three days after Jesus died, these men still did not believe. They did not believe that Jesus had risen from the dead. And the excited statements by these women that they had just spoken to two angels who had told them that Jesus was alive appeared to these chosen men as "nonsense".

But evidently something was happening in Peter. God was evidently at work in the man who had denied Jesus three times just three days earlier. And Luke gives us insight in verse 12 of the great difference between Peter and Judas:

**But Peter got up and ran to the tomb; stooping and looking in, he saw the linen wrappings only; and he went away to his home, marveling at what had happened.**

Now, exactly when did Peter go to the tomb? As you piece the four Gospel records together, you can see that Peter went before Mary Magdalene came back. And it was also before the full testimony of all these women. So, Luke's comment in verse 12 is out of sequence. To get all this clear, we need to read from **John 20:1-10**:

- 1 Now on the first *day* of the week Mary Magdalene came early to the tomb, while it was still dark, and saw the stone *already* taken away from the tomb.**
- 2 So she ran and came to Simon Peter and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken away the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid Him."**
- 3 So Peter and the other disciple went forth, and they were going to the tomb.**
- 4 The two were running together; and the other disciple ran ahead faster than Peter and came to the tomb first;**
- 5 and stooping and looking in, he saw the linen wrappings lying *there*; but he did not go in.**
- 6 And so Simon Peter also came, following him, and entered the tomb; and he saw the linen wrappings lying *there*,**
- 7 and the face-cloth which had been on His head, not lying with the linen wrappings, but rolled up in a place by itself.**
- 8 So the other disciple who had first come to the tomb then also entered, and he saw and believed.**
- 9 For as yet they did not understand the Scripture, that He must rise again from the dead.**
- 10 So the disciples went away again to their own homes.**

Now look at how John ends this Passage:

**So the disciples went away again to their own homes.**

... it is very similar to the way that Luke ends his account with Peter:

**and he went away to his home, marveling at what had happened.**

So, why did John and Luke say it this way? Why did everybody just go home? Because neither the disciples nor Peter knew what to do next. What would you have done? What is supposed to be the next



step? What should they say? This has never happened before and there was nothing to guide them. And so, what we will see next week is that Jesus Himself is going to appear to these men several times giving them instructions on what they were to do next. But, right now, everybody is in shock, and so they just go home.

Now in my remaining time, I want to briefly give you five Truths about the Resurrection that I hope will give you a deeper understanding of this glorious Reality:

### **1) Jesus had a Bodily Resurrection.**

When Jesus was raised from the dead, He didn't leave His Body behind. In fact, after His Resurrection His scars remained (**John 20:27**), He ate fish (**John 20:12**), He Bodily ascended to Heaven (**The Acts 1:9**), and will Bodily come again (**1Thessalonians 4:16**). The Son of God will always have a Bodily existence.

And the fact that Jesus still has a Body testifies to the dignity that God has given the human body, both the ones that we have now and the ones we will have after our resurrection. Matthew Lee Anderson, the founder of *Mere Orthodoxy* writes:

“The resurrection of the body means that to be human with God is to be with him not as disembodied souls, but as people with noses, faces, arms, and legs that are similar to those we currently have” (*Earthen Vessels*, 60–61).

### **2) Jesus had a Justifying Resurrection.**

Perhaps the clearest instance of Paul connecting Jesus's Resurrection with his own Justification is obscured in most English translations.

Paul writes in **1 Timothy 3:16**:

**By common confession, great is the mystery of godliness: He who was revealed in the flesh, Was vindicated in the Spirit, Seen by angels, Proclaimed among the nations, Believed on in the world, Taken up in glory.**

The word that is translated here as “vindicated” is typically translated “declared righteous” or “justified” elsewhere in the New Testament.

But if Jesus was perfect, how could He be “justified”, since Justification implies guilt (see **Romans 4:5**)? The answer lies in Jesus’s Death and Resurrection. Richard Gaffin, the professor of Systematic Theology at Westminster Theological Seminary, explains,

“As long as [Jesus] remained in a state of death, the righteous character of his work, the efficacy of his obedience unto death remained in question, in fact, was implicitly denied. Consequently, the eradication of death in his resurrection is nothing less than the removal of the verdict of condemnation and the effective affirmation of his righteousness” (*Resurrection and Redemption*, 121–122).

### **3) Jesus had a Trinitarian Resurrection.**

The pattern in the New Testament is to speak of God the Father as the One Who does the raising, Jesus as the One Who is being raised, and the Spirit as the means by which the Father raised Jesus. This pattern is seen in **Romans 8:11**:

**But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.**

Here we see not only that God the Father raises Jesus through the Holy Spirit, but our own Resurrection will be parallel to the Resurrection of Jesus in that God the Father will raise us through the Spirit.

### **4) Jesus had a First-fruits Resurrection of ours to come.**

Paul describes Jesus’s Resurrection as “the first-fruits of those who have fallen asleep” (**1 Corinthians 15:20**). The term “first-fruits” is an agricultural metaphor that points to the initial quality of the harvest. Gaffin explains:

“Paul is saying here, the resurrection of Christ and of believers cannot be separated. Why? Because, to extend the metaphor as Paul surely intends, Christ’s resurrection is the ‘first-fruits’ of the resurrection ‘harvest’ that includes the resurrection of believers. This thought is reinforced in verse 23: ‘Each in his own order: Christ the first-fruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ’” (*By Faith, Not By Sight*, 68).

## 5) In Jesus, Believers are already Spiritually Resurrected.

The Resurrection is not only a future event for believers. Those who believe in Christ have already been raised to life with him. Paul writes:

### Colossians 3:1

**Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.**

Gaffin explains:

“[B]elievers will never be more resurrected than they already are. God has done a work in each believer, a work of nothing less than resurrection proportions, that will not be undone” (*By Faith, Not by Sight*, 76).

The Resurrection is an “already, but not yet” Reality for the true Christian because of our union with Christ. Jesus’ Resurrection means that those who have faith in Him have been raised from the dead because they are *in Christ*, and yet we still await the full experience of the Resurrection to come (**Romans 8:22-23**).

And all of this, plus much more, is why we need to speak often about the Resurrection, trust in the Truth of it, hope in the Promises that it makes, and defend it against all who would deny it or even minimize it.

Amen. Let’s pray.

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The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. Be watchful and quicken your pace. Soli Deo Gloria. For the Glory of God alone.