

The Resurrection

The Gospels: part 6

The Story: part 27

April 16, 2017

It's easy to miss something you weren't looking for...

DAY 1: Grief, and death of a dream

1. After the death of Jesus Christ, the disciples went into hiding. They were not only grief-stricken over the sudden and cruel death of Jesus, but they must have wondered if they were next! Even though Jesus had clearly told them, in detail, that He would be arrested, whipped, killed and rise from the dead, they must have either forgotten those words or just seen them, now, as some type of “spiritual” teaching. He was dead.

Mark 16:9 When Jesus rose early on the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had driven seven demons.

¹⁰ *She went and told those who had been with him and who were mourning and weeping.*

¹¹ *When they heard that Jesus was alive and that she had seen him, they did not believe it.*

2. The disciples, at first did not believe Mary's testimony about the resurrection. Would you have believed her message? Why or why not?

3. Jesus later walked to a town called Emmaus with two men, discussing the “strange” events about the past week. They did not recognize the resurrected Jesus.

Mark 16:12 Afterward Jesus appeared in a different form to two of them while they were walking in the country.

4. Jesus gave them an Old Testament lesson including many prophecies, which had their fulfillment in Him! THEN, the men recognized Jesus, ran back to Jerusalem to tell the other disciples.

Mark 16:13 These returned and reported it to the rest; but they did not believe them either.

5. Even after this testimony, the disciples still didn't believe that Jesus had indeed risen from the dead.

Mark 16:14 Later Jesus appeared to the Eleven as they were eating; he rebuked them for their lack of faith and their stubborn refusal to believe those who had seen him after he had risen.

6. It is only after appearing in person to the disciples that they finally believed!

DAY 2: Mary Magdalen at the tomb

1. Early Sunday morning, two women, both named Mary, went to the tomb to, as we say, “pay their respects.” Both women carried armloads of grief. He was gone. Forever.

Matthew 28:1 After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb.

² *There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it.*

³ *His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow.*

⁴ *The guards were so afraid of him that they shook 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 was crucified.*

⁶ *He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay.*

⁷ *Then go quickly and tell his disciples: 'He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him.' Now I have told you."*

2. Go back and underline every detail of this account that is different than what both Marys expected to see.

3. What are the three top things that struck you about the unexpected scene?

4. John adds a detail pertinent to Mary. She sits down in her grief. A man approaches her. Lost in her grief she doesn't recognize him. We aren't told if she even looked up.

5. He asks why she is crying. She blurts out that someone had taken the body. She assumes it's the caretaker of the gardens.

John 20:15 "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him."

6. The “stranger” responds.

John 20:16 Jesus said to her, "Mary." She turned toward him and cried out in Aramaic, "Rabboni!" (which means Teacher).

¹⁷ *Jesus said, "Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet returned to the Father. Go instead to my brothers and tell them, 'I am returning to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'"*

7. She now sees the resurrected Jesus and is overwhelmed with joy. How would you have responded?

DAY 3: the road to Emmaus

1. The disciples, the closest friends Jesus, knew Him better than anybody did. On the day of the resurrection, two of them were walking to Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem. Similar to Mary, they were grief-stricken, confused, dumbfounded, devastated. They were, as we like to say, “verbally processing” the last several days.

Luke 24:15 As they talked and discussed these things with each other, Jesus himself came up and walked along with them; ¹⁶ but they were kept from recognizing him.

2. Why do you think they were “kept from recognizing him?”

3. After they “filled Him in on the details,” Jesus responds directly and forcefully!

Luke 24:25 He said to them, "How foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken!

²⁶ Did not the Christ have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?"

4. Notice the perspective of Jesus on the whole story. From His point of view, the evidence was overwhelming! Prophecies spoken and prophecies fulfilled! The problem was not a lack of evidence. To what problems of human nature does Jesus allude?

Luke 24:27 And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.

5. As we like to say, Jesus “connected the dots” for them.

6. After arriving at their destination, Jesus joins them for a meal.

Luke 24:30 When he was at the table with them, he took bread, gave thanks, broke it and began to give it to them.

³¹ Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him, and he disappeared from their sight.

³² They asked each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?"

7. Prophecies, prophecies fulfilled, the Upper Story of God. Now, they “get it!” It’s true! They ran back to Jerusalem to tell the other the disciples the truth of the resurrection of Jesus.

Luke 24:34 "It is true! The Lord is risen!"

DAY 4: Disciples and Thomas

1. After initially not believing in the testimony given the disciples by Mary and the disciples who walked to Emmaus, Jesus appears to them.

John 20:19 On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!"

²⁰ *After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord.*

²¹ *Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you."*

²² *And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit.*

²³ *If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven."*

2. What strikes you from this appearance of the risen Jesus to the disciples?

3. There is one missing disciple, Thomas.

John 20:24 Now Thomas (called Didymus), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came.

²⁵ *So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord!"*

But he said to them, "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe it."

4. Even after Thomas arrives and hears the disciples' eye-witness testimony, Thomas manages to earn a nickname that has lasted two thousand years, "Doubting Thomas." In what ways do you relate to Thomas?

John 20:26 A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!"

²⁷ *Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe."*

²⁸ *Thomas said to him, "My Lord and my God!"*

²⁹ *Then Jesus told him, "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."*

5. What strikes you about the Lord in this appearance to Thomas?

DAY 5: The Great Commission

1. Jesus is just about ready to leave the land of the lower story, and return to heaven and God, the author of the Upper Story. Everything that needed to be done so that any man or woman, boy or girl could be restored to right relationship with God. It time for the mission hand-off.

Matthew 28:18 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.

2. What things is Jesus saying to the disciples in this verse? What are the implications for being a disciple of Jesus?

3. Jesus then gives them what we call The Great Commission:

Matthew 28:19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.

4. What is their (and our) mission?

5. What is involved in "making disciples"?

6. What is the scope of their mission? How big should they be thinking?

7. Are "disciples" folks who just "believe in Jesus" or are their other identifying markers for "disciples"? What are they?

8. Jesus finishes given the mission with this assurance:

Matthew 28:20 "...And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

9. Why is His promised presence so important to the fulfillment of the mission?

10. Have you embraced The Great Commission as your mission? Do you need someone to help you get going? Who?