

# The Real Resurrection

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- [ 0 : 0 0 ]     The reality of the resurrection, the achievement of the resurrection, and the messengers of the resurrection.! The resurrection really did happen.
- Remember the overall purpose John gives for writing his gospel. We'll see it more in a couple of weeks, but you can glance over. It's there at the end of chapter 20, verse 31.
- John writes, But these things are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. So John writes to convince us.
- John writes, Giving the evidence of who Jesus is. And nowhere is that more clearly seen than at the resurrection that we might believe.
- Whether that is for the first time, perhaps, for some of us this morning. Accepting the truth of the resurrection. Or for those of us who are Christians, that we might continue to believe.
- [ 1 : 2 0 ]     That we might continue to have confidence in this solid foundation, this immutable fact. On which our faith is built. The reality of the resurrection.
- So then what is this evidence? How are we shown here, this reality? That this is a true, a real, a historic event. There's various things that we could look at in this passage.
- I'll just mention a few of them. I think one key element, really, is simply the surprise. Or even the disbelief, we might say, of the first witnesses.
- And we see this in Mary in particular. What's Mary's first thoughts on arriving at the tomb and finding the stone rolled away?
- Verse 2. Have a look. You see her words there. They have taken the Lord out of the tomb. And we do not know where they've laid him. Notice how the idea of resurrection doesn't cross her mind.
- [ 2 : 2 3 ]     Mary thinks that the body has been stolen. Which was not an uncommon thing to happen in those days. And then as we trace the rest of the passage through Mary's kind of story here.
- Even when she's seen the two angels. Verse 12. She's still thinking people have taken Jesus' body. Even when she sees Jesus himself. Verse 15.
- She's thinking he's the gardener. Still she's asking if he has taken the body. And where he's laid it. The point is that no one is expecting the resurrection.
- I think it's easy for us perhaps to be a little bit sort of snobbish. And think well you know back then. You know back then they probably believed that kind of thing.
- Or back then it would have been a lot easier to accept. But you know we're so much more enlightened now in the 21st century. But of course they didn't expect this. Even though Jesus had spoken about his death and resurrection.
- [ 3 : 2 2 ]     Where Mary finds the empty tomb. Still she is searching for human explanations. About the location of a body. And I think it's really important that we get that.
- To believe in the resurrection is a big ask. And this is not a normal thing is it? And yet in so many ways that's the whole point.

This is not a normal person. And that's what John has been laying out through his gospel. That Jesus is the Christ. The son of God. And so if you're here this morning and you're not a Christian.

If you're still asking questions. Or when we're speaking with friends who aren't Christians. It's good for us to be really honest. And to recognize. Look belief in the resurrection takes faith.

This is not our day-to-day experience of life and death. This is not what that would lead us to expect. John is showing us that was just the same. For Jesus' first followers as well.

[ 4 : 24 ] And yet he's also showing us that this is what really happened. That this faith that is required. Is based on the evidence that is seen.

Have a look at verse 3. After Mary brings the news. Peter went out with the other disciple toward the tomb. The other disciple is John himself.

Who wrote John's gospel. So we're dealing with an eyewitness account here. The fact there is two men who go to the tomb. That also matches up with the requirement of the time.

That the testimony of two men was required. For something to be counted as reliable evidence. That's what John is seeking to underline. That's what he's giving us here. Reliable evidence.

And so they get to the tomb. And there's this great detail that John adds in. That he got there first. John kind of just casually records for the rest of history. He was faster at running than Peter.

[ 5 : 21 ] It's important to him. But it's also one of those eyewitness details. That show that again. That this is a credible record of what really happened. And once they're there.

What do they find? Verses 6 and 7. They find the linen cloths that would have wrapped Jesus' body. They find the face cloth which would have been on Jesus' head.

Folded. Placed separately. And John obviously kind of makes that point for a reason. There's various ideas about the significance of this. But I think most obviously.

Most undeniably. That the point is that the grave robbers would not be taking the time to unravel the body. And leave these valuable items behind. That the grave clothes.

The spices they contained. In answer to Mary's concern. And to others' suggestion of how the tomb was objectively empty. The point is underscored here.

[ 6 : 19 ] That it is not a theft of Jesus' body. Instead the unavoidable force of this chapter is that Jesus really did rise again.

Leaving the grave clothes behind. Because he no longer needed them. And never would. And that's where we get then these incredible verses. Verses 8 and 9.

John speaking about himself. Have a look there. It says, Then the other disciple who had reached the tomb first. Also went in. And he saw. And believed.

For as yet they did not understand the scripture. That he must rise from the dead. This testimony here. This eyewitness testimony of John's belief.

It didn't happen. Because he was expecting it. We've seen how resurrection was far from their minds. And notice here. It didn't even happen initially.

[ 7 : 16 ] Through a theological conviction. John says. Verse 9. As yet they didn't understand the scriptures. No. And it happened. Because the evidence was right there.

Before his eyes. And in his gospel. John has shared that evidence. With each one of us. Faith. Again. Faith is not belief.

Despite the evidence. The biblical definition of faith. Is belief in where the evidence points us. And we could talk a lot more about this.

A lot more about this. The evidence. In different forms. You can read a lot more about this. There's great books on this. Lee Strobel. A journalist. A journalist who set out to disprove the resurrection.

And ended up becoming a Christian. Having studied all the evidence. Is perhaps one of the most well-known examples. His book. The Case for Christ. There's many others. As well. But the Christian faith.

[ 8 : 12 ] Is unlike any other. And that it's not just a world view. It's not just an approach to life. Or a way of thinking. But it is grounded in these historical facts.

That people can go back. And look at. And check. And weigh up. These facts. That John. An eyewitness. Lays out for us. In the gospel. And he lays them out for us.

As he says. That we might believe. That Jesus died. That Jesus lived. That Jesus died. And yet Jesus rose again. That the foundation. Of our faith.

And John records this here. To encourage us all. That this is a foundation. We can have real confidence in. So that's the reality. Of the resurrection.

The kind of the earthly. The earthiness. The realness. Of what we're speaking about. When we speak about Jesus. When we speak about the Bible. Something we can be confident in.

[ 9 : 07 ] For ourselves. And to share as well. Let's move on then. To the achievement. Of the resurrection. We've seen it really happened. Here we see that it's really good. And we're looking particularly here.

From verse 17 onwards. Following Mary's recognition. Of Jesus. Her teacher. Her risen Lord. What does Jesus say. To Mary.

Have a look down at verse 17. You see this. Jesus said to her. Do not cling to me. For I have not yet ascended. To the father. But go to my brothers. And say.

I am ascending to my father. And your father. To my God. And your God. And this is a really key. Verse here. It's a bit of a complex verse. Why shouldn't Mary.

Cling to Jesus. What does Jesus mean. That he is ascending. I think really the point is this. That throughout. John's gospel. There's been this repeated.

[ 10 : 03 ] Emphasis. This repeated way of speaking. That Jesus is the one. From the father. Father. And that he has this mission. To fulfill. And in doing that.

He returns. To the father. And this mission. Is none other. Than the very plan. Of salvation. To rescue people. To bring eternal life.

To his people. And so Jesus is going. Jesus is ascending. To the father. In order that he can. Finalize. Complete that mission. In order that he can.

Prepare a place. For his people. As he's promised. Back in chapter 14. A place. To be with God. Forever. And that's why we get.

This great language here. In this verse. I am ascending. To my father. And your father. To my God. And your God. Right through.

[ 10 : 58 ] John. Again. Jesus has spoken. Of God. As his father. That's a huge theme. In the book. Here is the first time. Chapter 20. After the cross.

After the resurrection. He speaks. To his followers. Of God. As their father. That is what Jesus. Has made possible.

That is the achievement. Of the resurrection. That all. That Jesus. Had promised. In terms of a restored. Relationship. With God.

The creator. That we might call him. Father. Father. Not because we. We deserve it. But because of Jesus's work. In our place. Because Jesus on the cross. Takes the penalty.

For our sins. We see here. That wasn't all talk. That is not just. A vague hope. Or wishful thinking. It is now certain.

[ 11 : 53 ] Because the resurrection. Demonstrates. Jesus has completed. His mission. And so ascends. To the father. It is almost a bit like.

If someone came. And told you. Look I am going to. Open a bank account for you. This is probably never going to happen to you. But I am going to. Open a bank account for you. I am going to put. Ten million pounds in it. And in five years.

In five years. You will have access. To all that money. And then that person. Just kind of disappeared off. You never saw them again. I think you would be left hoping. That what they said. Was true.

Left hoping. They were good to their word. You might live in a certain way. Assuming. You had that money to come. Treat yourself to those new trainers. Or whatever it is.

You have been looking at. And yet. And yet. How could you be really sure? How could you be confident. To live now. In the certainty.

[ 12 : 46 ] That you have received. What has been promised. And the answer is. You could be really sure. If that person came back. If that person was able to show you. You know.

The details of the bank transfer. Pass on the account number. Show you the receipts. To prove. It has been done. Then you would have real certainty. Of what was to come.

And that would make all the difference. In the present. And that is what happens. At the resurrection. Jesus comes back. With the receipts.

As it were. His resurrection. From the dead. Is the ultimate proof. That we really will receive. What he has promised. For us.

And that is something. Which is far. Far better. Than any bank account. With any amount of money. In it. We could ever imagine. It is. As we said. Life with God forever. It is a place.

[ 13 : 41 ] It is an eternal. Home. With him. It is an unbreakable. Relationship. With God. As our father. Guaranteed. By what Jesus.

God the son. Has done. In his life. His death. His resurrection. And that is why. Jesus says to Mary. Don't cling to me.

Rather go. And tell. It is because. There is something. Far. Far better. For her. For us. For others. Than even.

This incredible scene. That we have here. In the garden. There is a place. With God. For eternity. That Jesus has prepared. For us. And we can be certain. In that.

It is an amazing thing. This morning. It is a life. Changing thing. To hear. The risen Lord Jesus. Say to us. To everyone here. Who trusts in him.

[ 14 : 36 ] My father. And your father. My God. And your God. And to know. That because of the resurrection. We can have a certain. An eternal hope.

Of life with him. A certain. An eternal knowledge. That that is true. And I was going to say. You know. Perhaps some of us. Really need to. Remember that. This morning. That the truth is.

That all of us. Really need to remember. That this morning. And so perhaps. You're going through. Difficult times. Perhaps you're. In the middle of. Uncertainty.

We've prayed. For people this morning. There will be. Far more people. In this room. In the midst of. Various different struggles. Known or unknown to us. This passage.

Invites us. To have confidence. In the resurrection. And through that. To have confidence. In our eternal home. With our heavenly father.

[ 15 : 32 ]    Guaranteed. Through the work. Of his son. That nothing is able. To take that away. And that is as certain. As the resurrection. Of Christ. Which John gives us. This eyewitness testimony.

Of. In his gospel. And so this resurrection. Passage is here. To bolster. Our faith. That we have a solid. Foundation. And what that.

Foundation. Gives us. What is built. On that foundation. Truly is the best news. In the world. And we can live now. In the certain knowledge. Then of what's to come. Perhaps this morning.

You're here. And you're not yet a Christian. As always. We're delighted. That you're with us. Delighted. You've come along. Maybe you're thinking about things. Maybe you're asking questions. Maybe you've just been. Kind of dragged here.

Unwillingly. However you've ended up here. It's great to be able to show you. That this passage. Is not just about history. It's not just about. Kind of proving. An event. Although it is underlining history.

[ 16 : 29 ]    It is telling us. This is not a fairy tale. But it's also. Saying that the consequences. Of these real life events. Of God. Stepping down.

Into our world. In the person of Jesus Christ. The achievement. Of the resurrection. Means there is something available. To you. Which is far better. Than anything else.

We could ever. Imagine. Something that puts the whole. Of our life here. On earth. The ups. And the downs. Into perspective. And that invitation. Is there to accept Jesus.

Again. Maybe for the very first time. This morning. For someone here. To believe. As the apostle. Believed. In light of. The evidence. Given. That Jesus did.

As he promised. And through faith in him. To enjoy. That certain place. With God. Prepared by Christ. Won at the cross. And assured.

[ 17 : 23 ]    Through his. His glorious. Resurrection. Resurrection. And so that is the. The achievement. Of the resurrection. Again. Really. To give us that confidence. In what the gospel offers.

That it is good. That it is the best. And that moves us then. On to the next. Our final point. This morning. The messengers. Of the resurrection. And we're looking here. At verses 19.

Onwards. As Jesus comes. And meets. With his disciples. Again. Do just notice first. Where they were. Verse 19. They were locked away. For fear of the Jews.

This was not a bunch of people. Kind of eagerly. Expecting a resurrection. Expecting to see Jesus again. They were afraid. They thought it all gone wrong. That it was all over.

But Jesus. Shows in verse 20. His hands and his side. The marks of the cross. Again. They see this is a real. Resurrection. Here is the evidence.

[ 18 : 18 ]    For them to believe. And again. Then listen to what Jesus says to them. He says it twice. Peace. Be with you. And in some ways. This was a kind of a standard greeting.

But I think it's. It's deliberately meaning. More than that here. It's that reminder. Of what the. The resurrection has achieved. That God has made peace. With God. For them.

They have this relationship. With God. And so we see. Again. The reality of the resurrection. The achievement of the resurrection. But this passage. Finishes. With Jesus.

Giving his followers. A task to do. Jesus has completed. His mission. And he sends out the disciples. To fulfill. Their mission.

Reading from verse 21. Jesus said to them. Again. Peace. Be with you. As the father has sent me. Even so. I am sending you. And when he said this.

[ 19 : 13 ] He breathed on them. And said to them. Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any. They are forgiven them. If you withhold forgiveness from any.

It is withheld. The disciples then. Are sent out. To continue. The work. Of Jesus. As the father has sent me. Even so.

Or in the same way. I am sending you. Jesus says. And now we've seen. How Jesus had. That unique work. Of dying for our sins.

That unique role. Of being the Passover lamb. Who takes away. The sins of the world. We've seen that in previous weeks. That his work. Is completed. On the cross. Those great words.

It is finished. He cried. That James was speaking about. Last week. Jesus' sacrifice. Is a once for all sacrifice. And we've seen this morning.

[ 20 : 09 ] How the success. Of Jesus' work. Is confirmed. By the resurrection. So. So how do the disciples. Continue to do that work. Well they continue.

To do the work. Of Jesus. By pointing. To Jesus. They're to go out. In the power. Of the Holy Spirit. And declare. The message.

Of forgiveness. Which is given. Completed. In the gospel. Of Jesus Christ. That there is no more. To be done. Christ has done it. Now when it speaks.

Then about the disciples. Forgiving. Or withholding forgiveness. Jesus isn't saying. That it's down to them. Or that they get to choose. Who is. Or isn't. Forgiving. It means. That as they hold out.

That gospel offer. That those who accept it. Are forgiven. That those who reject it. Reject. That forgiveness. And we see the disciples.

[ 21 : 02 ] Doing just this. As the church grows. Through. Through the book. Of Acts. And this commission. Of Jesus. Then continues. For his followers. Today. And this is for us.

In this room. That in the power. Of the Holy Spirit. We might go out. And point to Jesus. That people might find. The forgiveness. And the eternal life.

In him. That we all need. That as the father. Sent him. So Jesus. Sends us. Incredibly.

You know. Average. Normal. Flawed. Weak people. As we sit here. In this room. But Jesus. Sends us. To bear witness. To the greatest. News. In the universe.

And again. That theme. Of confidence. Runs throughout. This passage. A big. Part of this passage. Is to give us. The confidence. To do that. You know. Think. You're told to go out.

[ 21 : 58 ] And tell people. All people. An announcement. What are the things. You're going to want to know. Before you do that. I think there are two things. You want to know. Well is it true. And is it good.

You know. If you're sent out. With the message. Of you know. Free donuts. You know. Are they really free donuts. Or are people going to turn up. And be wildly disappointed. You know. Are the donuts good. Or are they not worth.

People's efforts. Is it true. And is it good. When we know. That the answer. To both those questions. Is yes. Then that's when. We're able to go out.

With full conviction. And spread that news. In this passage. We see that the gospel. Really is true. It's proven. It is historical fact.

Because Jesus. Really rose. From the dead. We see that it's really good. Because the resurrection. Shows. Jesus has restored. That relationship. Between us.

- [ 22 : 53 ] And God. Has provided that eternal place. With him. Which he promised. That there is eternal life. And that is. There is nothing better than that. And so.
- We're really called. To go. And to share that good news. With others. As the messengers. Of the resurrection. Pointing to Jesus. And all that he has done. The forgiveness he provides.
- And we have the. The gift of the Holy Spirit. Promised. To help us. With that. And it's been great. To think about that. This morning. That might be. To the other side of the world.
- It's been brilliant. Having Martin. And Jennifer. And the guys. With us. This morning. And hearing from them. About what they're doing. It's a brilliant example. Of this passage. And we shouldn't assume.
- That thinking of this. In a kind of a foreign context. Is just something for other people. Or for people not like us. One of the reasons. I think it's been such an encouragement.
- [ 23 : 49 ] For us. Learning from. And supporting. Martin and Jennifer. Is that they are. So like. So many of us. It's a bit more Glaswegian. But on the whole. They're quite similar.
- To us. But it's great. To see that. People who are. Taking the message of this. Seriously. And putting that in action. We shouldn't. Kind of rule ourselves. Out of that. As all of us.
- Are a sent. People. And yet. It's also. True to say. And it's also. Important. To remember as well. That the people. We are sent to. Might be right on our doorstep. It might also be.
- The people. On our street. That we are called. To witness to. The people in our family. People much closer to home. That God has. Has prepared.
- Us for. That we might invite them. To a service here at church. That we might. Read a book of the bible. With them. Perhaps John's gospel. Even. That we might share. Jesus with them.
- [ 24 : 44 ] The point is. We're all called. To be messengers. Of the resurrection. Sent. By. Jesus himself. And so we're brought together.
- As God's people. The church. To worship him. To care for one another. To encourage each other. In our faith. A hundred percent. Those things are. Are non-negotiable. But we also need to make sure.
- That we never lose sight. Of this fact. That we are. A sent people. The church. Has a mission. Of making. Jesus known. Of offering. Forgiveness. Through him.
- That is a mission. That only the church. Is able to do. That is a message. That cannot be. Found. Or fulfilled. Anywhere else. And yet we carry out.
- That mission. With great confidence. Because Jesus. Is alive. Because he has restored. Our relationship. With God. As our heavenly father. And we want our friends. Our town.
- [ 25 : 39 ] Our world. To know. That that good. And certain news. Of eternal hope. That we are entrusted with. That is found in Christ. And that is demonstrated.
- To be true. In the glory. Of his resurrection. Let's pray together. Heavenly father.
- Father. We thank you. For Jesus. We thank you. That he came. Sent from you. We thank you. That he completed. His mission.
- Of taking the penalty. For our sin. That we might have peace. That we might have. A perfectly. Restored. Relationship. With you. That we might call you.
- Our father. And our God. That we might look forward. To that perfect place. Prepared for us. Lord. We pray that you'd give us. Real confidence. In the gospel.
- [ 26 : 36 ] Of Jesus Christ. Because you have given us. The evidence. We thank you. For John's gospel. This eyewitness account. Of the resurrection. Confirming. The truth.

Of Jesus's word. Of who he was. And all he. Achieved for us. We pray that this would give us. The assurance. In good times. And in hard times. Of.

Of the fact that we are yours. And that nothing can take us. From your hands. And we pray also. That this would give us. The confidence. To go. As we've just been speaking.

Sent out by you. With the news. Of forgiveness in Jesus. And we thank you. That we're able to do that. With full confidence. And commitment. Because it is. Really true.

And it is really good. And so we ask that you would. Help us to be eager. To share that. We pray as individuals. And as a church. That we would recognize. The opportunities.

[ 27 : 29 ] That we have. And through the strength. Of your spirit. We would be bold. To simply speak of you. To share what we believe. To hold out the evidence.

That leads to that faith. To do all of that. With gentleness and respect. And yet with confidence. And with urgency as well. And we pray all of this.

So that you might have the glory. Now. And in all things. And we pray this in Jesus. Precious name. The name of the risen. Lord Jesus. Now and forever. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.