

The Body of Jesus is Gone!

John 20.1-10

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the centerpiece of Christianity. Today we overview the events that surrounded the resurrection, focus in on the first scene John records, then discover why the resurrection is so vital to our faith. The key question: How do you ‘see’ the resurrection?

You Are There! A Harmony of Gospel resurrection accountsAn Event that Makes All the Difference Forever! (1 Cor. 15)*Where we’d be without the resurrection**Where we are with the resurrection*How do YOU ‘see’ the resurrection?

1. Much ‘ink has been spilled’ by scholars trying to harmonize the four Gospel accounts of the events surrounding the resurrection of Christ. Now you can be the scholar! Read Matthew 28, Mark 16, Luke 24, and John 20-21. As we would expect with different writers, no two narratives are the same. How would you harmonize them?
2. John’s opening resurrection event involves just three people: Mary Magdalene, Peter, and “the other disciple, whom Jesus loved” (this refers to John himself). As John captures this scene, we can see the personalities of each of these characters. Imagine Mary Magdalene inconsolably (see Jn. 20.11 too) rousing Peter and John and telling them that Jesus’ body was gone: Can you sense her grief – not only was Jesus horribly put to death, now someone has stolen His body! Imagine John racing faster than Peter to the tomb, then just looking in introspectively, instead of entering (Why?). Imagine what’s going through Peter’s mind (he who had denied Jesus three times a few days earlier!) as he comes to the tomb, and impulsively goes inside. Try to grasp the mixture of confusion, anger, doubts, anguish, and beyond all this, the hope-beyond-hope and wonder of this scene.
3. There’s a subtle repetition in John 20.1-10 involving Peter and John. In most English Bibles, you’ll see it in verses 5, 6, and 8 – the words “he saw” occur. In v5, John looked into the tomb and ‘saw’ the linen cloths Jesus’ body had been wrapped in. In verses 6-7, Peter entered the tomb and ‘saw’ the linen wrappings, and the piece of cloth that had been on His head lying by itself, folded up! In v8, John entered the tomb and ‘saw’ the wrappings, and believed. Notably, John uses a different Greek word in each instance. What do you think the word “saw” meant in each instance? Is there a progression here?
4. On that resurrection day, the women at the tomb, and the disciples, could hardly have imagined the significance of Jesus rising from the dead, but we have Paul’s clear exposition in 1 Corinthians 15. Read that chapter, focusing especially on verses 12-26 and 50-58. What is faith in Christ without the resurrection? What is our faith (and hope) because of it?