

Episode: Three Gospels Series No. 11

Narrator: Mary Magdalene

Primary Scriptures: Matthew 28, Mark 16, John 20

Story Summary: Jesus comes back to life after being dead; a week following

Location: Kingdom of Judea (Israel)

Time: Circa 30 AD

Suggested Memory Scriptures: Mark 16:6. John 20:18, 20, 29-30

This episode covers approximately the week after Jesus was raised from the dead. When reading the relevant passages from the four Gospels, the exact order of events is a little unclear. One possible ordering of events is: the tomb is visited by women, the stone is rolled away, the tomb is found empty by the women, the tomb is found empty by Peter and John, Jesus appears to Mary Magdalene, Jesus appears to other women, report of the soldiers, Jesus appears to the two disciples on the road to Emmaus who report to the apostles, Jesus appears to the ten apostles, and Jesus appears to Thomas and the rest of the apostles.

Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus buried Jesus on Friday afternoon. They did not have time nor expertise to bury the body properly. Perhaps it was the job of the women to prepare a dead body. In any event, the women were not involved and went home to prepare spices and perfumes. They rested on Saturday in accordance with the Law of Moses. At the first opportunity (dawn on Sunday) Mary Magdalene and other women took spices and perfumes to anoint the body of Jesus. They arrived either as the angels were rolling away the stone in front of the tomb or just after they had done so. When the women looked into the tomb, they found it empty. While they were in a stupor, the angel(s) told them Jesus had come back to life, just as he said he would.

The women ran to tell the eleven apostles, who didn't believe the women. However, Peter and John ran to the tomb and also found it empty. When Peter saw the head cloth was folded by itself, he realized that Jesus' body was not there, but he was not convinced Jesus had risen from the dead.

At some point, Mary Magdalene stood outside the tomb and Jesus appeared to her. He instructed her to tell the apostles to meet him in Galilee. Jesus also appeared to the other women.

That same day, Jesus appeared to two of his disciples walking on the road to Emmaus, a town about seven miles from Jerusalem. They could not recognize him in his resurrected body, but he eventually revealed himself. Importantly, he explained how the scriptures in the Old Testament testified about him. The two ran back to Jerusalem and told the apostles.

That evening Jesus appeared to ten of the apostles without Thomas, breathed on them and gave them the Holy Spirit. A week later he appeared to all eleven of them. So Jesus rose from the dead as he foretold. How would that change things?

Discussion Questions:

1. Who was the first person to find that the tomb of Jesus was empty?
 2. Was the man in white or the two men in gleaming clothes at Jesus' tomb angels?
 3. How would people know that the rumor spread by the soldiers that the disciples of Jesus stole his body was false? (Matthew 27:62-66, 28:11-15)
 4. Why did the two disciples on the road to Emmaus not recognize Jesus?
 5. How did John choose to record what he did instead of other things about the life of Jesus?
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1. Depending on the account, it was either: Mary Magdalene, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary, or several women.
 2. According to Matthew 28:5, yes.
 3. If the soldiers were Roman, they would have been executed for letting someone steal the body while they were asleep. If they were Temple guards, they would have surely been discharged. In either case, they would not have talked about such a humiliating event.
 4. They were kept from recognizing him.
 5. John 20:31 So that his readers may believe Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.

Application Questions:

1. John 20:31 says that John wrote about the things he did so his readers may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing they may have life in his name. Did John convince you that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God? If not, is there anything else he could have said that would convince you?
2. You probably don't have the personal experience of watching someone come back from the dead. Do you find the Gospel accounts of Jesus' resurrection convincing? What did Jesus tell Thomas about this? (John 20:29)
3. What did Mary Magdalene do to receive the blessing of being the first to see the resurrected Jesus? (had been faithful a long time, continued to act in faith even when all seemed lost) Have you ever been faithful to Jesus when all hope seemed lost? What characteristics will aid you in keeping your faith through hard times?

Application Questions for Teens:

1. When they arrived at the tomb, Peter and John saw it was empty, but did not consider Jesus resurrected because they did not understand how the Old Testament Scriptures had said he would. Are there things in your life you cannot understand because of limitations in your scriptural understanding?
2. It is scientifically impossible for someone to come back from the dead in the manner Jesus reputedly did. Does that keep you from believing Jesus actually did so?