



# **ARISE**

## **CURRICULUM**



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## THE RESURRECTION

For the Week of March 15, 2020  
John 20:1-18

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### THE STORY SO FAR

Jesus prayed for his disciples, and for all who would become Christians after them – for their sanctification, unity, love, and for the glory of God. With the help of Judas, the religious leaders arrested Jesus. Jesus went willingly and spoke truthfully under trial, but Peter denied even knowing him. On the orders of Pilate, at the request of the Jewish leaders, and in fulfillment of the Scriptures, Jesus was crucified and buried. His saving work was finished.

### GET STARTED

Have you ever received some news that seemed too good to be true? What was it, and how did you respond?

### THE BIG PICTURE

**Read John 20:30-31**

What does John say is the reason why he has written what he has written?

This is the lens through which we should read the whole of John's Gospel, including his account of the greatest event ever known to man: the resurrection of Jesus Christ.



## EVIDENCE...EVIDENCE...EVIDENCE

### Read John 20:1-18

What are the evidences for the resurrection presented in this passage? List them!

Why is the truth of the resurrection absolutely critical as an indispensable foundation of the Christian faith? Put another way: what if there was no resurrection? What would that mean?

### THEORIES OF JESUS' MISSING BODY

#### ***Fraud Theory* - Someone stole the body**

*Evidence against:* Roman guards were posted, so no one could steal the body. The disciples didn't believe Jesus was going to rise. If Jesus' enemies had taken the body, they would have produced it to show He didn't rise. The disciples wouldn't have died for a fraud.

#### ***Swoon Theory* - Jesus didn't really die; He passed out**

*Evidence against:* Jesus' wounds (hands and feet pierced with nails, side pierced with sword) were so bad he couldn't have raised himself and walked away. Soldiers didn't break his legs because he was already dead; after hanging on the cross, he wouldn't have had enough strength to roll away a rock that weighed two tons and fight the guards to escape.

#### ***Ghost Theory* - The disciples only *thought* they saw Jesus alive**

*Evidence against:* The disciples didn't expect to see Jesus alive. Jesus had a real body after the resurrection being seen by many.

## MARY, PETER, & JOHN

### Mary

According to Mark 16:1, why did Mary and the other women go to Jesus' tomb?

Mary Magdalene was the first witness of the resurrection. All four Gospels agree: Matthew 28:1; Mark 16:1; Luke 24:1, 10; John 20:1. Why is this significant? Why was a woman given the honor of seeing the risen Christ first?

## ANGELS

Angels appeared to Mary in the tomb (verse 12). Angels often appeared in pairs (e.g. Acts 1:10) and are often depicted as clad in white (see Ezekiel 9:2; Revelation 15:6). White indicates purity and holiness, not just of themselves but of the One they serve. They were seated at the head and at the foot, indicating the empty space between where they were sitting.

When Jesus speaks to Mary (verses 14-15), why do you suppose she did not recognize Him? What has been Mary's emotional state prior to recognizing Jesus?

Why does Jesus tell her not to "hold on" to him (verses 16-17)? See Acts 1:9-11 for a hint.

What is the mission he gives her? What is the mission Jesus has given to you? Spend time in your community group and give an update on your progress.

## Peter

**Reread John 20:3-7.** Now read Luke 24:12. Peter sees the strips of linen. What is significant about the placement of the linen cloths and face cloth? Why would Peter surmise that the body was not stolen?

## John ("the other disciple")

**Reread John 20:8-10.** John now believes. It is not from lack of prior notice. Read Matthew 16:21; 17:22-23; and 20:17-19 for examples of Jesus predicting His resurrection. Why would it had been hard for John and the other disciples to believe Jesus would rise from the dead?

## YOU EXPLAIN IT

So you are speaking with a nonbeliever about Jesus. How would you explain that Jesus, who is God, came to rescue people by His life, death, and resurrection?

### FINAL THOUGHT

*“After more than seven hundred hours of studying this subject and thoroughly investigating its foundation, I have come to the conclusion that the resurrection of Jesus Christ is one of the most wicked, vicious, heartless hoaxes ever foisted upon the minds of men, OR it is the most fantastic fact of history.*

*The resurrection of Jesus Christ and Christianity stand or fall together. A student at the University of Uruguay once said to me: “Professor McDowell, why can’t you refute Christianity?” I answered: “For a very simple reason: I am not able to explain away an event in history – the resurrection of Jesus.”*

– Author and speaker Josh McDowell

## PRAYER

Give thanks for the resurrection of our Lord! Here is a sample prayer:

*“Lord, thank You for giving us clear, undeniable, irrefutable proof of the fact that we’re able to worship not in ignorance, not based on tradition or even what the church says, but in spirit and in truth. I pray, now that we’ve been exposed to the facts, that we will reach a verdict in favor of Jesus Christ. Encourage us with the victory of the open tomb and in the living Lord. In the precious name of Jesus we pray, amen.”*

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**JESUS APPEARS TO HIS DISCIPLES**  
**For the Week of March 22, 2020**  
**John 20:19-31**

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**STARTUP**

Take a look at the following formulas:

Doubt + Evidence = Confusion

Trust + Evidence = Confidence

Must trust come before evidence (or anything else)? Why? How does evidence either help or hinder trust?

Are you aware of an instance when someone came to faith in Jesus Christ primarily due to the evidence for Him? Explain.

How would you respond if you were witnessing to a skeptic who demanded evidence before belief?

**INVESTIGATE**

**Read John 20:19-31.** Answer the "just the facts" questions:

Where does this occur?

Where were the disciples? Why?

How does Jesus appear to them? What was unusual about this?



What does Jesus say to the disciples? Why would Jesus chose this greeting? He could have chosen any greeting.

Thomas was not with the other disciples when Jesus first appeared to them. Is it surprising that Thomas doubted? Why or why not?

How did Jesus mildly rebuke Thomas when He appeared again eight days later? What was Jesus' point?

What is the purpose of the book of John?

## THE MEANING OF THE RESURRECTION

The bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead is unique, yet it ushers in a new era.

**Read Romans 8:29; 1 Corinthians 15:20-23; Colossians 1:18**

What do these verses tell us about the meaning of the resurrection? How does this excite you, and give you confidence about what will happen to you when you die?

## JESUS' APPEARANCES AFTER HIS RESURRECTION

For forty days after His resurrection, Jesus made a number of appearances besides the one recorded in this chapter. Look up each passage to help in your understanding of how Jesus was highly visible after His resurrection.

<u>Place</u>	<u>People</u>	<u>Scripture</u>
Empty tomb	Mary, mother of James	Matthew 28:9-10
Jerusalem	Simon Peter	Luke 24:34
On Emmaus road	Cleopas and other disciple	Luke 24:13-32
Sea of Galilee	Seven disciples	John 21:1-24
Mountain in Galilee	Eleven disciples	Matthew 28:16-20
Galilee	More than five hundred	1 Corinthians 15:6
Unknown	Brother James	1 Corinthians 15:7
Mount of Olives	Eleven disciples and others	Acts 1:4-12

What general observations and comments do you have after viewing the many occurrences of Jesus' appearances? What were the responses to His appearances from those He appeared to?

## **RESPONDING TO THE RISEN LORD**

John shares four different faith responses to the resurrection of Jesus Christ: Peter and John (verses 1-10); Mary Magdalene (verses 11-18); disciples (verses 19-23); and Thomas (verses 24-29). In each encounter the subjects considered evidence and then chose whether to believe. Answer the following:

Some believed with indirect evidence. What was the indirect evidence that caused Peter and John to believe?

Some believed with direct evidence. Although Mary had direct evidence, she was doubtful. Why? What caused her to believe?

Some were slow to believe with direct evidence. Why would the disciples and Thomas initially respond to the Lord's presence with fear and/or doubt? What caused them to believe?

Some believed without evidence, either direct or indirect. How did you personally accept Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior? Did you need direct and/or indirect evidence? Why or why not?

## **STOP DOUBTING AND BELIEVE**

"Stop doubting and believe." Are there areas of your life where you need to hear that challenge?

## **PRAY**

Worship Jesus as your Lord and Savior

Thank God for John's resurrection account, and for giving us the Scriptures so that we may believe and have life.

Pray for God's help to stop doubting and believe.

Ask for the Holy Spirit's help to share the message of the risen Jesus with specific people you know.

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**JESUS APPEARS TO SEVEN DISCIPLES**  
**For the Week of March 29, 2020**  
**John 21:1-14**

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**OVERVIEW**

Chapter 20 began with the empty tomb and the life-changing news of Jesus' resurrection! Jesus is alive and appears to his disciples and commissions them for ministry. Chapter 21 concludes with Jesus' third resurrection appearance to his disciples and a call to ministry, but first breakfast.

**START**

Read John 21:1-14

**GONE FISHIN'**

Describe the setting in John 21:3.

Why were the disciples back in Galilee? (See Matt. 28:16)

Why didn't the disciples recognize Jesus at first?

What do verses 4-6 tell us about who Jesus is?

What does Jesus want to teach the disciples by giving them a huge catch? Why 153 fish? (Read Luke 5:4-10 for the other instance of this) What can we learn from this?

What was Peter's reaction to realizing that Jesus was the stranger on the shore?

What do you learn about Peter in verses 7-9?

**Read John 21:9 and John 18:8**

When was the last time Peter was standing around a charcoal fire? Why do you think this significance was not lost on him?

Does it surprise you that Jesus' third resurrection appearance is over breakfast? Explain your thoughts.

If there were any lingering doubts left in the minds of any of the disciples that it was Jesus, what does he do?

How do we see Jesus' humility in Chapter 21? Think back over the ministry of Jesus recorded in John. What examples of his humility come to mind right away?

## **GETTING PERSONAL**

What do you understand differently about humility after reading through John?

How will growing in humility impact your family? Your ministry? Your workplace?

In John 21:12, Peter and John didn't have to ask if it was the Lord. They knew it was Him. Do you know Him personally such that He will respond and say the same thing about you? Are you connecting with Him and meeting Him for "breakfast" daily?

## **PRAYER**

Pray for ways to stay connected to the Lord each day in His Word. Pray for His grace to stay humble and think of others more highly than yourself. Pray for others to receive His invitation to "come have breakfast."



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**JESUS RESTORES PETER**  
**For the Week of April 5, 2020**  
**John 21:15-25**

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**WRAPPING UP**

Throughout this study of the book John, we read the teachings of Jesus as he reveals his identity as the Son of God. In the first part of John we read how Jesus was sent by God to rescue a dark world.

There is growing conflict between the Jewish leaders as the book continues. Jesus leaves his disciples with final words in the Upper Room discourse. The tension rises and finally there is Jesus' betrayal, arrest, suffering, crucifixion, resurrection and his appearances to the disciples. Then Jesus sends his disciples out to be the light in the dark world!

**READ JOHN 21:15-25**

**ASK YOURSELF**

How has reading the book of John prepared you to be a light in the dark world?

How has reading the book of John exposed sin (hypocrisy, judgment, etc.) in certain areas of your life?

Are there questions you still have unanswered after spending time in this study?



## **NOW ABOUT THAT ONE TIME, (WAIT, I MEAN THREE TIMES)...YOU DENIED ME?**

So what about the time Peter denied Jesus times? (Reread John 18:15-18, 25-27)  
We expect Jesus to bring it up, but what happens instead? (John 21:15-19)

Who are His sheep? And what is He asking Peter to do?

What does this teach us about God's mercy and grace?

How does Jesus restoring Peter enable him to live out the name the Master had given him, "Rock," (Matt. 16:18) amid all the stumbles and falls and even the ones to come in the future? In what ways does his full restoration impact his ministry going forward? (Acts 2:14-41, Acts 3:1-10, Acts 4:1-21) What other examples can you point out from Scripture?

### **GETTING PERSONAL**

As we look at the life of Peter, we see the outspoken disciple willing to step in with the sword in the garden, yet denies Christ under pressure and flees. How does this compare to your life? Do you have something from your past that you still let haunt your conscience? What do you learn from Peter's reinstatement from Jesus?

Is your understanding of the Gospel deeper now that you have gone through this study? In what ways?

*"In the stories of extravagant grace given to us by Jesus, there are no loopholes disqualifying us from God's love."*

– Phillip Yancey

What do you understand about God's grace that you may not have understood before? Is there a particular passage that God used to help you understand it?

What is one thing you understand more clearly about discipleship through Jesus' example with the disciples? How will you apply this in your own life?

**Read John 21:23.** "until I come..." What does this mean?

**Read John 21:24.** Where else did John say it this way? (Read 19:35) What point was he trying to make?

**Reread John 21:25.** Since Jesus did so much more in His life, why do you think John didn't record more? What do you wish he would have recorded?

How does the last verse in John give you hope?

## **MAKE IT COUNT**

We also learn in John that Jesus is “the Lamb of God who came to take away the sins of the world” (John 1:29). He is the good shepherd that would lay down His life for His sheep (John 10:11). We learn because of Jesus’ sacrificial death on the cross we are forgiven of our sins and reconciled to God and now He sends us out into the world.

Take some time to pray through what the Holy Spirit has taught you through John. Write down one or two truths that you want to see yourself live out as a result of your time in John. Share one with the group.

*“The mighty works of God come to a climax in John 21:25. It is not possible to record fully the magnitude and extent of who Jesus is and what he has accomplished.”*

## **PRAY**

Thank God for his grace and mercy in your life. Praise Him for what He is teaching you through the book of John. Pray for God to send you out as light into the world.

