

The Empty Tomb to the Great Commission
Celebrating the Resurrection of Jesus

Introduction: Priming the pump for tonight's discussion.

- Let's begin with our own observations. Was there a moment where God spoke to you, showed you something new, or reminded you of a familiar truth through the message this week?

Exploration: Questions to guide our group discussion.

1. It is fascinating that even though Jesus had spoken many times about rising from the dead on the third day (John 2:19-21, Mark 8:31, Mark 9:31, Mark 10:34), that the women who came to the tomb brought spices with which to anoint the body of Jesus for burial. When they arrived, they found the stone rolled away, the angel declaring the resurrection of the Lord, and there was no need for the spices of burial after all. Sometimes we come to Jesus with a human expectation of how we'll find him, but we're surprised by divine encounters where He reminds us that He is God. In what ways did His resurrection challenge the limitations that they put on the Lord and surprise them? How does this remind us of His divine power and challenge our limitations and human thinking today?
2. The resurrection has been called the linchpin doctrine of the Christian faith...without it, Christianity falls apart. The resurrection demonstrated the divinity of Christ...that He is the Lord, able to lay down His life and to take it up again. In his death, Jesus paid for our sins in full. According to the Bible, what was the result of the resurrection? Why is believing in a bodily resurrection so important to the Christian faith? (Hint: Romans 4:25, John 14:19, John 16:7, 1 Corinthians 15:12-19)
3. Often, Christians wonder about the kind of body that Jesus had in the resurrection. Several accounts suggest that, while He was familiar to His followers, that His appearance was different enough in the resurrection that He wasn't immediately recognized. When the Lord comes to rapture the church, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 says that the dead in Christ will be raised to meet their souls in the air, and 1 Corinthians 15 describes those bodies as different from the ones that were buried in corruption, sin, and death. We'll be us, but different! Looking carefully at 1 Corinthians 15:35-58, what sort of body was Jesus raised with...and what sort of body should Believers expect to inhabit in the resurrection? Compare the two.

Additional Scriptures for Deeper Study:

- Mark 8:31, 9:31, 10:34
- 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18
- Luke 16:19-31

Application: How can I apply this to my life this week?

- This week, we've been heavier in Biblical exploration. What specific truths from God's word would He have you to internalize from our study tonight? Can you share this with the group?
- As we've talked about the resurrection body, what excitement has God put into your heart to know that one day Believers will have heaven prepared glorified bodies ready to inhabit eternity?