



A LENTEN STUDY OF JESUS' LAST WEEK
IN JERUSALEM

HE IS NOT HERE

Biblical Passages: Luke 24:1-12,36-49

Whenever unbelievable events happen in our world, the major news networks compete to provide the best coverage possible. Fox News Alerts and CNN Headline News, as well as others, send journalists and videographers to the location to document events as they occur and to interview eyewitnesses. Discuss: Why are these efforts to document unbelievable events important? When the news is catastrophic, such as the collapse of the Twin Towers in New York City, many people will remember exactly what they were doing when the networks broke the news to the world. People in the first century also recorded the unbelievable events of their time. The miracle of Jesus' resurrection is so important to the Christian faith that eyewitness coverage of the event is recorded in each of the four gospels.

Read Luke 24:1-12, 36-49. Early on Sunday morning, the women who had been with Jesus in Galilee returned to Jesus' tomb to complete the burial customs of their day. But when they arrived at the tomb, they discovered the stone rolled away and Jesus' body was gone. Two angels appeared and questioned them about why they were looking for Jesus in a place for the dead. The women raced to tell the disciples that someone had stolen Jesus' body, and Peter ran to the tomb. When Peter realized Jesus had risen from the dead, he went home, marveling over what had happened . . . Jesus was no longer there!

Just as multiple eyewitnesses to an unbelievable event today will offer varying details of the event, the gospel writers recorded varying details surrounding the moment when Jesus' followers realized He had risen from the dead. As we compile their testimonies, the most important thing to remember is that the prophets of the Old Testament had predicted the Messiah would rise from the dead, and that Jesus had repeatedly told His disciples that He would suffer death and then be raised to life. Those who witnessed the empty tomb and subsequently met with Jesus after His resurrection were forever changed. They never ceased to tell others that they served a risen Lord. And when we are convinced that Jesus is who He claims to be—the Messiah who came to pay the penalty for our sin so that we might live forever with Him—then we will also boldly share with others that our Savior lives.

CONNECTION QUESTIONS

1. How does Jesus' resurrection prove that He is the Messiah who conquered sin and death?
2. Why does this miraculous event form the foundation of the Christian faith?
3. What would it take for each of us to believe that Jesus arose from the dead to offer salvation and eternal life to all who believe in Him?
4. How does the empowerment of the Holy Spirit enable us to give testimony to what we've witnessed?
5. Why should we boldly tell others what we know to be true about Jesus?