



LESSON 24

Jesus rises from the dead

MARK 16:1-8



Jesus is alive.



“Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has risen; he is not here. See the place where they laid him” (Mark 16:6).

Supporting Truths

1. The empty tomb shows Jesus is alive.
2. The empty tomb shows God’s awesome power at work in the real world.
3. The empty tomb causes fear and trembling.
4. The empty tomb shows Jesus conquered death and gives life.
5. The empty tomb shows God accepted Jesus’ sacrifice.

Objectives

1. Recite Mark 16:6.
2. List the details of time, people, and place that show this really happened.
3. List several words to describe the women’s fear.
4. Explain the hope Jesus’ resurrection gave especially to Peter.
5. Discuss how the resurrection confirms Jesus’ payment for sin (Acts 17:31).

STUDY THE BIBLE LESSON

Jesus rises from the dead • Mark 16:1–8



Lesson Summary

All of Jesus' followers thought it was over. Perhaps they would see Him again in the next world, but not in this one. The women came to pour perfume over His corpse in the tomb. But it was empty. The stone was rolled aside and there was no body. Instead, an angel announced that He had risen and would meet them just as promised. The women rushed out, overcome with fear at the incredible truth: Jesus is alive.

Spotlight on the Gospel

Jesus' death and resurrection must go together. If Jesus died but did not come back to life, then His death would be useless. But because He did come back to life, we know that His sacrifice was pleasing to God and fully paid the price for sin. He also conquered death, and He has life in Himself. To receive this life, we must come to Him in faith and obedience, trembling in awe before the great and powerful Son of God.

LAST WEEK



Jesus endures the cross

Mark 15:16–47

THIS WEEK



God forgives David

Mark 16:1–8

NEXT WEEK



Jesus returns to heaven

Acts 1:1–11

THE PASSION WEEK OF JESUS

THE GOSPEL SPREADS IN JERUSALEM

Lesson Commentary

Jesus is alive.

Jesus was dead. He had been beaten (Mark 14:65), flogged (15:15), beaten again (15:19), crucified (15:24), and stabbed with a spear (John 19:34). Finally, His dead body was wrapped tight and secured inside a tomb (Mark 15:46). Jesus was dead, and dead people do not just *come back to life*. Or do they? We know Jesus did *rise from the dead*, but the women who first went to the tomb did not know that yet. We must join with these women and read the story the way they experienced it. When we do, we will see how awe-inspiring and fearful the *resurrection* really is.

The women expected an occupied tomb (16:1–3)

The women did not expect Jesus to rise from the dead. If they had, they would not have come to anoint a dead body, nor would they have worried about the stone (16:1–3). They were concerned about the large stone because it had to be rolled up out of a depression in the rock to get it out of the way. This shows they expected everything to be the way it was left. They did not know about the guards or the seal (Matt 27:62–66), and they definitely did not expect a resurrection. The disciples didn't expect it either, since even after hearing news of resurrection, they did not believe it (Luke 24:11). The only ones who remembered that Jesus said He would rise on the third day were His enemies, and even they only expected some kind of trick (Matt 27:63–64).

Expecting to find a dead body, the women came to honor Jesus one more time. On Saturday night, after the Sabbath ended, they went and prepared spices (Luke 23:56). Since they intended to anoint Jesus, these spices were made into liquid perfume to pour over the body. This was to keep down the stench of rotting flesh. Nicodemus had already wrapped a large amount of dry spices with Jesus (John 19:39), but these devoted women wanted one last chance to honor Him.

After preparing the perfume, they woke up very early on Sunday, before dawn, and came to the tomb just as the sun was rising. The timing is important, since Jesus prophesied that He would rise on the third day (Mark 8:31). For Jews, “the second day” was tomorrow, and “the third day” was the day after tomorrow. Since Jesus was buried on Friday night and rose on Sunday morning, He rose on the third day just as He said. The details about time also show that this miracle really happened. This is not a myth. To celebrate this real event, Christians gather to worship on Sunday.

THINK ABOUT IT

The resurrection is a true story of God breaking into human history.



The women found an empty tomb (16:4–8)

Imagine their surprise when they found the tomb open (16:4)! Was this the wrong tomb? It couldn't be, because they had paid special attention to the place where Jesus was buried (15:47). They ducked down through the small door, but once inside they could stand up straight. Tombs like this one were family tombs, usually about 6 or 7 feet tall. There would be a bench carved in the stone where the dead body would lay for a year. After it decomposed, family members would put the bones in a bone box so that the bench could be used again later for the next corpse.

But instead of a stinking corpse, the women saw a brilliant angel, with white clothes dazzling like lightning (Matt 28:3). Angels are powerful heavenly warriors, so as usual, he had to tell them not to be afraid (Mark 16:6; Dan 10:12; Luke 1:13). He confirmed that this was the right place, but then He delivered unimaginable news: Jesus had risen from the dead. He showed them the empty stone bench. The tomb was clearly empty. Even the religious leaders could not dispute that. They had to make up a story about the body being stolen, because it was obvious to everyone that there was no body (Matt 28:11–15).

STUDY THE BIBLE LESSON



Jesus rises from the dead • Mark 16:1-8



THINK ABOUT IT

"He has risen; he is not here. See the place where they laid him" (Mark 16:6).

But if the tomb was clearly empty, why did God send an angel to speak to them at all? The

angel was there for three reasons. First, he gently rebuked the women for expecting to find a corpse (Luke 24:5). They should have remembered and believed what Jesus had promised (Mark 8:31; 9:31; 10:34). Second, the angel came to explain. Although the empty tomb was a historical fact, the reality of what happened went beyond human experience. Nothing like it has ever happened before or since. So just as an angel announced the miraculous meaning of Jesus' birth, so an angel announced the miracle of His resurrection. God broke into human history, so He sent this heavenly messenger to reveal what humans would not otherwise understand.

Third, the angel gave these women a mission (16:7). He especially mentioned Peter because Peter needed some encouragement. He needed to know that just as Jesus rightly predicted his denial, so He also rightly predicted new life and restoration (14:27-28). The women obeyed, although they were so stunned they spoke to no one along the way (16:8; Matt 28:8).

The first witnesses to the resurrection were women. But in Jewish culture, women's testimony did not count. If the early church made up the resurrection story,

they would never have said women were the first witnesses! The only explanation is that the gospels tell the story this way because it really happened this way. It also shows how women are honored in Scripture. The task of preaching the gospel and leading the church was for the apostles, but these faithful women received the good news first.

But if it was good news, why were they so terrified (Mark 16:8)? And why would the whole book end

with their fear? While some versions include eleven more verses in the book of Mark, the earliest and best manuscripts show that these verses were added later to make the ending feel less abrupt. But Mark purposefully ended the story with the same amazement and fear that people always felt toward Jesus (1:22, 27; 2:12; 4:41; 5:15, 33, 42; 6:51; 9:6, 15, 32; 10:24, 32; 11:18; 12:17; 15:5). It is like the time when Jesus calmed the storm: instead of being relieved, the disciples were more afraid than before (4:41)! This is how people feel when they have encountered God.

When the women saw the empty tomb and heard the angels' message, they realized they were in the middle of the most remarkable act of God in history. They were so overwhelmed their bodies literally shook. That's how they felt, that's how Mark felt, and that is the emotion that you are to feel too, if you truly grasp what happened that day. When God raised Jesus from the dead, He showed He is real, powerful, and intimately involved in our world. It is not just about us. He is here, and He is so great, holy, awesome, and powerful that we feel as if we would simply be swallowed up. It takes our breath away, and we tremble.

Yet along with fear there can be great joy. Jesus' resurrection proves that God accepted His sacrifice as the perfect payment for sin (Acts 17:31). Because Jesus conquered death, He is the resurrection and the life, and He is able to give new, eternal life to all who put their hope in Him (John 11:25). Without the resurrection, Jesus' death would be useless, and our faith would be worthless (1 Cor 15:3, 12-20). But because He came back to life, we also will one day rise again with new, real, living bodies just like His (1 Cor 15:35-58). At that time we will live fully in the powerful presence of God forever.



THINK ABOUT IT

Even the disciples did not believe the women (Luke 24:11).

THINK ABOUT IT
Do you tremble before God?



Lesson Outline

Jesus is alive.

AGES 3–5 LESSON OUTLINE



1. Dead people do not come back to life (16:1–3).
2. But Jesus came back to life (16:4–7).
3. So fear God, go, and tell others (16:8).

AGES 6–11 LESSON OUTLINE



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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The women expected an occupied tomb (16:1–3). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They went to bring spices (16:1). • It was early Sunday morning (16:2). • They were worried about rolling the stone away (16:3). | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. The women found an empty tomb (16:4–8). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The stone was rolled away (16:4). • The women went into the tomb (16:5). • An angel said Jesus had risen from the dead (16:6–7). • The women were very afraid (16:8). |
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TEACH THE BIBLE LESSON

Jesus rises from the dead • Mark 16:1–8



Lesson Questions

Use these questions to teach or to review this week's lesson.



Ages 3–5 Lesson Questions

1. **When did the women go to the tomb?**
On Sunday, the first day of the week, the day after the Sabbath.
2. **Was Jesus' body in the tomb?**
No.
3. **What did the angel say about Jesus?**
He is alive, He is not here.
4. **What did the women feel when they heard that?**
They were very afraid, trembling with fear.



Ages 6–11 Lesson Questions

1. **Why did the women go to Jesus' tomb?**
They went to anoint His corpse with perfume.
2. **What were the women worried about as they were on their way?**
They wondered how they would move the stone.
3. **So did the women expect Jesus to be alive?**
No.
4. **Who did the women see in the tomb?**
An angel, looking like a young man dressed in shining white.
5. **What did the angel tell them to do?**
He told them to go and tell the other disciples, especially Peter.
6. **Why did the angel mention Peter specifically?**
To encourage Peter. Because Jesus was alive, his sin of denying Jesus could be forgiven, and Peter could be restored to Jesus.
7. **How does Mark's gospel end?**
With the words "for they were afraid."
8. **Why were the women so afraid?**
They realized that what had happened was more powerful than anything they had ever imagined.

Lesson Activities

Choose from the following ideas to introduce, illustrate, and apply this week's lesson.

AGES 3–5



INTRODUCE

GOOD NEWS SPREADS

Tell the children that you are going to share some wonderful news with them. Play a game of telephone by whispering, "Jesus Christ is risen" into a child's ear, and have him pass it along until the last child gets to announce the news to the entire class. In today's lesson, we will learn about Jesus Christ rising from the dead, proving that His death provides forgiveness for sin.

ONLY GOD CAN DO THAT

Bring a dead branch or plant to class. Can this branch/plant grow flowers or leaves? What can be done to make it come back to life? Explain that once things are dead, we cannot bring them back to life. But today we are going to hear about somebody rising from the dead. Who is able to do that? Can you guess who God raised from the dead?



ILLUSTRATE

A BOXED TOMB

Wrap a doll or action figure in cloth and place it in a box. Close the box and seal it with packing tape. Post a guard, either by drawing men onto the box or setting other dolls or action figures around it. This will help the children visualize how the chief priests and Pharisees made the tomb secure (Matt 27:66). Be sure to emphasize that it is impossible for the doll to get out without a miraculous display of divine power.

SPICES

The women bought spices so they could anoint Jesus' body for burial (Mark 16:1). They were serving Jesus by making sure His body was ready for the tomb. Bring in some sweet-smelling potpourri, and allow the children to take turns smelling it.



APPLY

HE IS RISEN

Materials: Plate, gray construction paper, green construction paper, brad, scissor, tape.

Directions: Cut in half the plate. Make a semicircle at the center of the plate. Color the plate. Cut a big circle on the gray construction paper and attach it with a brad to the plate. Tape a piece of gray construction paper in the back of the plate where is the semicircle and write "He is Risen". Add bushes around with the green construction paper.

He is Risen



TEACH THE BIBLE LESSON

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AGES 6–8



PLAYING POSSUM

The possum has an incredible ability to play dead. Show the children a brief video clip of a possum playing dead (many short videos are available on the internet). In today's lesson, we are going to learn that Jesus rose from the dead. However, there are some who believe that Jesus was just "playing possum." But as we will see today, this is not true. Jesus actually died and rose from the dead three days later.

GAME OVER?

What's the children's favorite game to play? Have they ever won a game when it looked almost certain that they would lose? We always hold out hope of winning until the game is over. But what about when it's over? Is there any hope of winning then? Nope. It's game over. That is where Jesus' followers were at after He was crucified. It appeared that all hope was lost. It looked like the forces of evil had won. It looked like game over. But then, something amazing happened: Jesus rose from the dead! The game was not over. What looked like certain defeat was actually victory!



BACK FROM THE DEAD

Tear a picture into tiny pieces and place them in a bag. Ask the children if any of them can put their hand in the bag and pull the picture out whole and perfect. Have some children try to do it. But that is exactly what God did. Have an identical, untorn picture taped to the side of the bag (cover the picture with your hand as the children reach into the bag). Pull this picture out, to their amazement. This is only an illusion, but God actually raised Jesus from the dead and gave Him a new, glorified body.

ACCEPTABLE PAYMENT

Tell the children you went to buy something yesterday, but weren't able to because the salesman wouldn't accept your payment. You are puzzled because you had more than enough money. Offer to show the children the money. Pull out some foreign currency and begin counting it up in front of them. How can we be certain God accepted Jesus' payment for sin on the cross? The resurrection. It proves that God accepted His sacrifice as the perfect payment for sin (Acts 17:31).



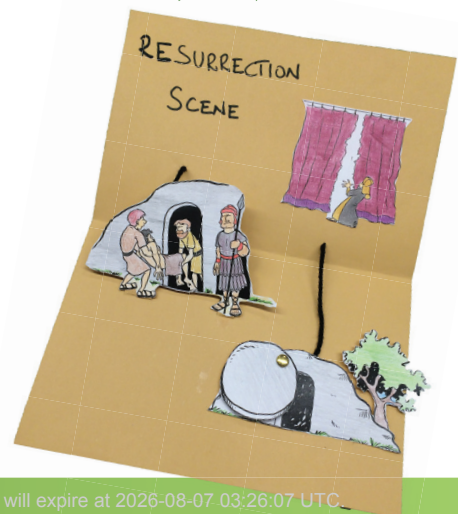
BURIAL AND RESURRECTION SCENE

See Year 3 Craft Book, Book 1.

Materials: Craft sheet, cardstock, crayons, tan construction paper, tape, scissors, yarn, brad.

Directions: Photocopy the craft page on cardstock. Color the three images, and cut them. Fold the construction paper in 2. Glue the "curtain" image on the top half. Cut a slip on the construction paper so that both the "burial" and the "empty tomb" scene could stand. Use a piece of yarn to help the images stand.

*Burial and Resurrection Scene
See Year 3 Craft Book, Book 1*



AGES 9–11



INTRODUCE

THE POWER OF THE RESURRECTION

Have you ever been in the presence of something powerful? Maybe you were walking through the woods, coming around a corner, and came nearly face to face with a bear? Or maybe after walking to the top of a hill, you realized you were right on the edge of a massive cliff? Or maybe you heard thunder close by and realized that lightning had struck very near you? This is kind of like what the women experienced when they went to Jesus' tomb: they realized they were in the presence of something far more powerful than anything they had ever experienced.

VICTORY CELEBRATIONS

What are some of the ways sports teams celebrate special victories: (1) They run and huddle together, piling on each other, (2) pour Gatorade over their coach, (3) throw their hands up in the air, (4) hold up their index finger, (5) or carry their coach or another player off on their shoulders? These moments are often captured by photographers and aired on the nightly news or run in the next day's newspaper. They give evidence of victory. As does the resurrection. It proves Jesus' victory over sin.



ILLUSTRATE

THE FINALITY OF DEATH

Have any of the children ever had a pet die? Have any of them ever lost a family member or friend? Death is so painful because we know we will never see that animal or person again in this life. There is nothing we can do to bring them back. And that is what makes the resurrection so amazing—Jesus came back from the dead! His followers would not need to wait until heaven to see Him. He was there! On earth! Alive again!

SELECTIVE HEARING

Do any of the children have selective hearing? They hear only what they want, ignoring the rest? This kind of hearing often gets us in trouble, especially with our parents and teachers. Part of showing respect is carefully listening to everything someone says. The disciples had selective hearing. Jesus had told them on numerous occasions that He would rise from the dead (Mark 8:31; 9:31; 10:34), but they didn't listen. In fact, the disciples still didn't believe that Jesus had risen from the dead even after the women told them He did (Luke 24:11).



APPLY

SUPPRESSING THE TRUTH

The chief priests and the Pharisees wanted to make sure that Jesus' disciples did not fabricate His resurrection, so they secured and sealed the tomb with Pilate's permission (Matt 27:62–66). Roman guards were placed outside the tomb to protect it from grave-robbing disciples. Everything that was humanly possible was done to prevent the resurrection of Christ. But rather than stopping Jesus' body from being stolen, it provided witnesses and an even more spectacular demonstration of Christ's resurrection. Yet the religious leaders still denied the resurrection (28:11–15). In the book of Romans, Paul writes that "the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth" (Rom 1:18). To "suppress the truth" means to deny something even though you know it to be true. How did the religious leaders "suppress the truth"? What does Paul say is the consequence for "suppressing the truth"?