



## EXPLORE THE BIBLE®

Genesis Sermon Series

Supports Session 5: Believe!

Sermon Title: "The Right Conclusion" (John 20:1-17)

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### Connection to Session 5

Jesus's resurrection is a verified historical fact. It proves He was who He claimed to be.

### Introduction/Opening

I'm a longtime fan of *The Andy Griffith Show*. In one of the early episodes, Andy took his son Opie to task for only giving three cents to a local charity drive when he could afford to give much more. It turned out Opie was saving the money to buy a new coat for a girl in his class because her parents couldn't afford one. After Andy learned the truth, Opie asked him what they were having for supper that evening. Andy replied, "You and Aunt Bea are having fried chicken, and I'm having crow!" People have a bad habit of jumping to conclusions. Sometimes they are too cynical, but other times the truth is simply too amazing for them to accept. When Mary Magdalene saw Jesus's empty tomb, she jumped to the wrong conclusion. She assumed Jesus's body had been stolen, but the truth was, Jesus had risen from the dead.

### Outline

#### 1. A mysterious situation (vv. 1-2).

- a) The other Gospels tell of more than one woman going to the tomb, but John's Gospel only mentions Mary Magdalene.
  - i. All four Gospels mention her being at the tomb, and they all mention her first.
  - ii. John said it was still dark when she got to the tomb, so she may have gotten there ahead of all the others.
  - iii. The word translated "removed" (v. 1) in the original language literally means "to lift up and carry away." This suggests that the stone had been lifted from its trench and moved some distance from the door.
- b) When she saw the stone rolled away from the door, she ran to find Jesus's disciples.
  - i. She found Peter and "the disciple whom Jesus loved" (most likely John).
  - ii. At this point, neither Mary nor the disciples had any idea that Jesus had risen.

#### 2. A meticulous investigation (vv. 3-10).

- a) Peter and John immediately ran to the tomb.
  - i. John noted that he outran Peter and got to the tomb first, but he didn't enter it. However, he did notice that the linen cloths were still in the tomb.
  - ii. When Peter arrived, he went into the tomb, and John followed him. They noticed that the wrapping that had covered Jesus's face was lying by itself and was neatly folded.

- b) What was so significant about the graveclothes?
  - i. If someone had stolen Jesus's body, why would they take time to remove the wrappings?
  - ii. The linen cloths were arranged neatly. Anyone whose house has been burglarized knows that thieves are usually very messy.
  - iii. John was convinced a miracle had taken place.

### 3. A marvelous revelation (vv. 11-17).

- a) Mary returned to the tomb; she stood there and wept.
  - i. Jews in that day were not known for quiet weeping. When it says Mary "was crying" (v. 11), it means she did so loudly and mournfully.
  - ii. When she looked into the tomb, she saw two angels sitting where Jesus's body had been.
- b) Jesus appeared to Mary and asked why she wept.
  - i. Mary did not recognize Him; she mistook Him for the gardener.
  - ii. When Jesus spoke her name, she suddenly recognized Him.
- c) Why is the resurrection of Jesus important?
  - i. It proves His claims about Himself were true. We can believe everything else He says, including His promise to return.
  - ii. It proves He has power over death.

### Conclusion

Several years ago, a man went through a fast food restaurant drive-thru and berated the employee who was working there. It was in the national news. He didn't like the fact that the restaurant's CEO had spoken out against same-sex marriage, and he raked the young lady over the coals for working for such a "bigoted" company. To her credit, she didn't lash out at him. She responded to his rant with grace and kindness. Later, that man was fired from his job, lost his home, and has struggled to gain employment.<sup>1</sup>

I saw the story on social media, and several Christians were talking about "poetic justice." One commenter took them to task. He wasn't a Christian himself, but he said, "I thought you Christians were supposed to be about love and forgiveness." He went on to say, "It seems to me that someone should offer him a chance at redemption."

People may mock God, but He is the only one who provides real redemption, and that redemption comes only through the death and resurrection of His Son, Jesus Christ (John 14:6). Jesus has paid the full penalty for our sins with His death, and He has beaten death itself with His resurrection from the dead. Through Him, you can find forgiveness and eternal life. He is the right conclusion!

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*All Scripture quotations are taken from the Christian Standard Bible, Copyright 2020 by Holman Bible Publishers.*

<sup>1</sup> [Former CFO on Food Stamps After Controversial Viral Video About Chick-Fil-A - ABC News \(go.com\)](https://www.abcnews.com/news/2018/04/18/former-cfo-on-food-stamps-after-controversial-viral-video-about-chick-fil-a/)