

Luke 23:50-56

Jesus' Burial

⁵⁰ Now there was a man named Joseph, a member of the Council, a good and upright man, ⁵¹ who had not consented to their decision and action. He came from the Judean town of Arimathea and he was waiting for the kingdom of God.

⁵² Going to Pilate, he asked for Jesus' body. ⁵³ Then he took it down, wrapped it in linen cloth and placed it in a tomb cut in the rock, one in which no one had yet been laid. ⁵⁴ It was Preparation Day, and the Sabbath was about to begin.

⁵⁵ The women who had come with Jesus from Galilee followed Joseph and saw the tomb and how his body was laid in it. ⁵⁶ Then they went home and prepared spices and perfumes. But they rested on the Sabbath in obedience to the commandment.

Luke 24:1-12

The Resurrection

¹ On the first day of the week, very early in the morning, the women took the spices they had prepared and went to the tomb. ² They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, ³ but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. ⁴ While they were wondering about this, suddenly two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning stood beside them. ⁵ In their fright the women bowed down with their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, "Why do you look for the living among the dead?" ⁶ He is not here; he has risen! Remember how he told you, while he was still with you in Galilee: ⁷ "The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, be crucified and on the third day be raised again." ⁸ Then they remembered his words.

⁹ When they came back from the tomb, they told all these things to the Eleven and to all the others. ¹⁰ It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the others with them who told this to the apostles. ¹¹ But they did not believe the women, because their words seemed to them like nonsense. ¹² Peter, however, got up and ran to the tomb. Bending over, he saw the strips of linen lying by themselves, and he went away, wondering to himself what had happened.

Luke 23:50 - 24:12

1. Who was Joseph in Verse 50? (John 19:38) What was courageous about what he did? What can we learn from his example?
2. How much of a risk-taker are you? What's the biggest risk you've ever taken?
3. What risks are involved in serving Christ today?
4. Which kind of disciple of Jesus are you most like: Peter, John, or Joseph?
5. In what ways can we show our respect for Jesus Christ today?
6. When is it difficult to openly demonstrate our loyalty to Jesus? Why?
7. What did the women followers of Jesus do that his disciples did not do? Were they rewarded for their devotion? How?
8. As believers, we may feel that we can't do much for Jesus. How can the women followers of Jesus serve as an example to us?
9. Why is Jesus' resurrection central to the Christian faith? Why is it so important? What would be different if Jesus had not risen from the dead?
10. In 24:11, why did the disciples express disbelief even though Jesus had told them clearly that he would arise from the dead? Why do people sometimes not believe the truth of the gospel?
11. What does this passage teach us about witnessing and evangelism? Does it encourage you to share your faith with others?
12. What should you do if others reject you or your testimony when you share your faith? Do we have a responsibility to witness to others even if they continue to reject the gospel?

Luke 23:50 - 24:12

1. Who was Joseph in Verse 50? (John 19:38) Joseph of Arimathea was a wealthy and honored member of the Jewish Council. He was also a secret disciple of Jesus. The disciples who had publically followed Jesus had fled, but Joseph took a stand that could cost him dearly. He cared enough about Jesus to ask for his body so he could give it a proper burial.

7 & 8. The women could do few things for Jesus. They were not allowed to stand up for him before the Jewish Council or before the Roman governor. In those days, women had to be submissive to their husbands. However, the women stayed at the cross when the disciples had fled. They got ready to anoint the Lord's body. Because of their devotion, they were the first to know about the resurrection. As believers, we may feel we can't do much for Jesus today. But we must take the opportunities given to us, doing what we can do and not worrying about what we cannot do.

9. (Verses 24:6-7) The resurrection of Jesus from the dead is the central fact of Christian history. On it, the church is built; without it, there would be no Christian church today. Jesus' resurrection is unique. Other religions have strong ethical systems, concepts about paradise and afterlife, and various holy Scriptures. Only Christianity has a God who became human, literally died for his people, and was raised again in power and glory to rule his church forever.

Why is the resurrection so important? (1) Because Christ was raised from the dead, we know that the kingdom of heaven has broken into earth's history. Our world is now headed for redemption, not disaster. God's mighty power is at work destroying sin, creating new lives, and preparing us for Jesus' second coming. (2) Because of the resurrection, we know that death has been conquered, and we too will be raised from the dead to live forever with Christ. (3) The resurrection gives authority to the church's witness in the world. Look at the early evangelistic sermons in the book of Acts: the apostles' most important message was the proclamation that Jesus Christ had been raised from the dead! (4) The resurrection gives meaning to the church's regular feast, the Lord's Supper. Like the disciples on the Emmaus Road, we break bread with our risen Lord, who comes in power to save us. (5) The resurrection helps us find meaning even in great tragedy. No matter what happens to us as we walk with the Lord, the resurrection gives us hope for the future. (6) The resurrection assures us that Christ is alive and ruling his kingdom. He is not legend; he is alive and real. (7) God's power that brought Jesus back from the dead is available to us so that we can live for him in an evil world.

Christians can look very different from one another, and they can hold widely varying beliefs about politics, life-style, and even theology. But one central belief unites and inspires all true Christians—Jesus Christ rose from the dead! (For more on the importance of the resurrection, see 1 Corinthians 15:12-58.)