

WHERE IS JESUS?

Jesus was resurrected to reign forever as the King.



TRANSFORMATION
for Adult LifeGroups

MATTHEW 28:1-15

MARCH 21, 2018/MARCH 25, 2018

TODAY'S TEXT

Text: MATTHEW 28:1-15 (NIV), *After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb. 2 There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. 3 His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. 4 The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men. 5 The angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. 6 He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. 7 Then go quickly and tell his disciples: 'He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him.' Now I have told you." 8 So the women hurried away from the tomb, afraid yet filled with joy, and ran to tell his disciples. 9 Suddenly Jesus met them. "Greetings," he said. They came to him, clasped his feet and worshiped him. 10 Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid. Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me." 11 While the women were on their way, some of the guards went into the city and reported to the chief priests everything that had happened. 12 When the chief priests had met with the elders and devised a plan, they gave the soldiers a large sum of money, 13 telling them, "You are to say, 'His disciples came during the night and stole him away while we were asleep.' 14 If this report gets to the governor, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble." 15 So the soldiers took the money and did as they were instructed. And this story has been widely circulated among the Jews to this very day.*

FIRST THOUGHTS

- ° Have you ever witnessed a car accident? Were you asked to report what you saw? Why is eyewitness testimony so important in certain situations?

UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT

After Jesus' crucifixion and death, Joseph of Arimathea buried Him in a tomb that Joseph had prepared for himself, carved from rock on a hillside (Matt. 27:57-60a). Security of the site began with rolling a large stone across the doorway (27:60b). The Jewish leaders insisted the Roman governor seal the stone and assign a group of soldiers to guard it against anyone who might take the body away (27:62-66).

These details are vital in understanding the reality of the resurrection. Jewish leaders were scared. Romans were scornful. Followers of Jesus were saddened beyond heartache. Then, the dawn broke on the first day of the week, revealing the tremendous truth that the grave was empty and Jesus was alive.

Matthew was not the only one to share an account of Jesus' resurrection—Mark, Luke, and John did too (Mark 16:1-8; Luke 24:1-12; John 20:1-18). Throughout the New Testament, the resurrection of Christ became the focal point in the proclamation of the gospel. For example, Peter pointed to the resurrection when he preached the good news of Christ at Pentecost (Acts 2:22-36). Paul also underscored the resurrection of Christ when he wrote about what's to be included in the proclamation of Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 15:1-8). John had the resurrected Christ in mind when he described his vision of the slaughtered lamb that took the scroll (Rev. 5). Accordingly, Christians across the centuries have celebrated Christ's resurrection.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

THE GRAVE OPENED

> Read Matthew 28:1-4

- ° What is significant about who was present in verses 1-4?

THE RISEN KING ANNOUNCED

> Read Matthew 28:5-10

- ° What evidence of the resurrection do we uncover in these verses?
- ° Why is prompt obedience so important?
- ° What were the women's responses upon encountering Jesus? How should we respond to the risen Savior today?

THE COVER-UP CONCOCTED

> Read Matthew 28:11-15

- What motives were at work as the chief priests' devised their deceptive plan?
- What reactions have you encountered from people today toward Jesus' resurrection?

SUMMARIZE AND CHALLENGE

Jesus conquered death, affirming His identity and giving all believers hope. As the resurrected King, Jesus is worthy of our worship. Even when faced with the undeniable facts of Jesus' resurrection, some will refuse to believe in Him.

- What is the evidence of your transformed life? And who are you sharing it with? No one can refute your story. People are hungry for the truth and there is no better time than Easter week to share with others. Who have you invited to Easter Eggstravaganza? To an Easter service? Be bold in sharing your personal transformation story!
- How does Jesus' resurrection give us hope for daily living right now? How can we live in a way that shows the power of the resurrection?

Personal Challenge: Take time this week to reflect on the hope we have as believers because of Jesus' resurrection. Allow the hope of the resurrection to show through your words and actions. Be ready to share the reason for your hope with others you encounter.

UPCOMING LESSONS

No LifeGroups next week – Easter Sunday

READ THROUGH THE BIBLE

25th - Joshua 21-22; Psalm 47; 1 Corinthians 10 | **26th** - Joshua 23-24; Psalm 44; 1 Corinthians 11 | **27th** - Judges 1-3; 1 Corinthians 12 | **28th** - Judges 4-5; Psalm 39, 41; 1 Corinthians 13 | **29th** - Judges 6-7; Psalm 52; 1 Corinthians 14 | **30th** - Judges 8; Psalm 42; 1 Corinthians 15 | **31st** - Judges 9-10; Psalm 49; 1 Corinthians 16