

Jesus proves who He is by being raised from the dead. He commissions the citizens of His Kingdom to expand it, and God promises that one day Jesus is coming back to rule! In the meantime, He gives us His Spirit to empower us to live a full life and to rule in our hearts.

Introduction

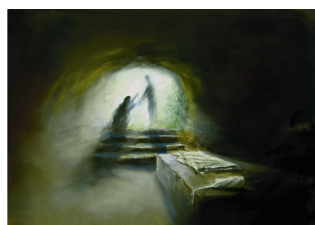
Jesus was unjustly executed, and because it was a religious day of rest, hurriedly buried in a garden tomb.

The women go to the tomb



Mary and some other women who followed Jesus go to the tomb early Sunday morning to anoint Jesus' body with burial spices. They wonder who will roll the stone away...

Mary looks for Jesus



When they arrive, the stone is rolled away and the body isn't there! Mary stands outside crying. A Man, whom she thinks is a gardener, comes up and

Mary asks Him if He knows where Jesus' body is. The Man says, "Mary!" and she knows right away that it is Jesus! Jesus tells her to go and tell the others that He is risen!

40 days of teaching

Jesus appears to many of His followers on several occasions over the next 40 days, teaching them.



The Commission

One day Jesus said to His followers, "I have been given all authority. Therefore, go and make followers of all people in all the nations, baptising them to show that they've turned away from their disobedience and turned towards God. Teach these new followers to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

The Promise

Jesus told His followers to wait in Jerusalem, because He was going to send them God's Spirit, and they would receive power to tell everyone everywhere the Good News.



The Ascension



While Jesus was saying this, He began to rise up into the clouds. Two men in white said, "Why are you staring into the sky? Someday Jesus will come back the same way you saw Him go!"

The Wait

Jesus' followers stayed in Jerusalem, praying and meeting together and waiting for God's Spirit to come.

Weekly Meditation and Reflection

Below are some questions and further reading if you would like some extra food for thought on this story. Some may find it helpful to journal the answers, and others may simply want to read and pray through them.

1. For some reason, although Jesus said He would rise from the dead, His followers still did not expect it to happen. Can you imagine Mary's devastation when not only has Jesus died, but she can't even find His body? Can you imagine her surprise when she sees Him? Has God ever surprised you with something good? Take some time to think over His wonderful, good, unexpected "surprises" in your life, and thank Him for them!
2. Jesus gave His followers a commission. What part has God asked you to play in this commission? There are so many different ways that God can ask you to be a part of His commission – but be assured that you are a part of it! He honours us by asking us to make disciples, and He equips us by being with us and by giving us His Spirit. If you don't know already, ask God what part He wants you to play in His plan.
3. Someday Jesus is coming back in the same way He left. Do you believe that? How does that knowledge affect your daily life?

Meditate on the other resurrection passages to get a full picture of what happened that morning.