

**CALVARY PANDAN BIBLE-
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

[Adapted from Bethel Bible-Presbyterian Church,
10 Downing St. Oakleigh, Vic., 3166]

**DHW BIBLE CLASS
LESSON 41
THE LIFE OF CHRIST**

INTRODUCTION

The death of the Lord Jesus Christ shattered the dreams of His eleven apostles and the other disciples. Their expectation that the “the kingdom of Israel” in the Lord Jesus, their Messiah-King, would reign over the world was gone. It was the darkest day for the disciples.

The Christian faith is held up by three pillars: the Virgin Birth, the Vicarious Death and the Victorious Resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the Cornerstone on which the whole edifice of Christianity stands. The destruction of any one of the three pillars would bring down the Faith.

There are four gospel accounts of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. Many have tried to prove that the resurrection of the Lord Jesus never happened and that the gospel records were false. None has been successful in their anti-resurrection theory. In fact, one lawyer who set out to prove that the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ was untrue ended being convinced without the shadow of a doubt that it

was true (Morrison, *Who Moved the Stone*).

This study will familiarize us with the details of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus and its attending events. It is important because it will strengthen our faith and help us to refute our enemies.

OUTLINE

1. The Lord Jesus Christ Rose From the Dead (Matthew 28:1-4, Mark 16:1, John 20:1)
2. The Women Visited the Tomb Where Jesus Was Laid (Luke 24:1-3, Mark 16:2-4, John 20:2)
3. The Angels Announced That Jesus Is Risen (Matthew 28:5-7, Mark 16:5-7, Luke 24:4-8)
4. The Lord Jesus Appeared to the Women on Their Way Home From the Empty Tomb (Matthew 28:8-10, Mark 16:8)
5. The Women Reported to the Eleven and to All the Rest (Luke 24:9-11)
6. Peter and John Visited the Tomb (John 20:3-10, Luke 24:12)
7. The Lord Jesus Appeared to Mary Magdalene at the Garden Tomb (John 20:11-18, Mark 16:9-11)

COMMENTARY

The Lord Jesus Christ Rose from the Dead

The Sabbath day after the death of the Lord Jesus must have been the most depressing time for the disciples. Their hopes of a Messianic Kingdom had been shattered. They were undoubtedly bewildered and disillusioned for their Messiah King had been crucified in shame. But soon, they would hear of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus.

In the wee hours of the morning of the third day of Jesus' death, which was also the first day of the week (Sunday), Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joses, and Salome made their way to Jesus' tomb. They had brought sweet spices for the purpose of further anointing the body of Jesus. The loyalty and love of these women for the Lord Jesus surely evoke a measure of good feeling at a time of great despair.

A great earthquake had happened in the night and an angel of the Lord had rolled "back the stone" which covered the entrance of the Lord Jesus' tomb. The angel sat on the stone and appeared "like lightning and his raiment white as snow" (Matthew 28:2, 3). The guards who kept watch over the tomb so that the Lord Jesus' disciples could not come by night to steal the body were so fearful that they "did shake" like an earthquake (Greek, *seismos*) and "dropped "as dead men.

The Women Visited the Tomb Where Jesus Was Laid

On the way to the tomb, the women talked about how to roll away the stone. When they arrived, they found that the stone had already been removed. They entered the tomb but could not find the body of the Lord Jesus. These three women were the first to discover that the tomb was empty. This means that the Lord Jesus had risen from the dead very early in the morning on Sunday, the third day after His death. Some who insisted on a twenty-four hour day calculation, that is, that Jesus must be interned in the tomb for three full days, are ignorant of the common Jewish understanding of a day.¹

The swoon theory, which is rather ludicrous, says that Jesus did not die but revived and was strong enough to roll the stone himself and walk away. Proponents of this view have forgotten the embalming process which would have securely bound any strong man so that he cannot even rise up and walk.

As soon as Mary Magdalene saw the empty tomb, she ran off to tell Peter and John leaving the two women at the tomb. She told them that "they" had taken the body of the Lord Jesus out of the tomb. Mary could have been referring to the Jewish leaders or the Roman soldiers. She did not understand the full impact of what the Lord Jesus

¹ The Lord Jesus died and was buried on Friday. The body interned for a full day on Saturday. Then in the very early hours of Sunday, the Lord Jesus resurrected.

had repeatedly said about His ascension on the third day.

The Angels Announced That Jesus Is Risen

At the tomb-site, the two women, Mary the mother of James and Joses, and Salome were perplexed. Then suddenly they saw “two men” standing by them in long shining white clothes. The women were so afraid that they bowed down with their faces toward the earth. These “men” were angels. One of them said to the women, *“Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified. Why seek ye the living among the dead? HE IS NOT HERE: FOR HE IS RISEN”* (Matthew 28:5, 6; Luke 24:5, 6). The angel invited the women to further inspect the tomb. Then he reminded them of what the Lord Jesus had told them regarding his crucifixion and ascension on the third day. The women remembered the words. The angel instructed them to go quickly and tell the disciples and Peter that the Lord Jesus had risen from the dead and that He would go before them into Galilee where they could see Him. This reminder by the angels of the Lord’s prediction concerning Himself is very significant. The Lord Jesus’ resurrection firmly attested to the verity of all His preaching and teaching.

Angels are God’s messengers. God often sends them to make important announcements. The two angels appeared as “men.” In other words they took the form of a man. They

could speak the language of their hearers, in this case, Aramaic. They knew about the Lord Jesus’ earthly ministry, His words and His works. They were intelligent. They wore clothes. They were powerful and could appear and disappear at will! Note that Peter was especially singled out by the angels to be informed of the Lord Jesus’ resurrection. Surely, God knew what Peter had done and how he was feeling inside. He was probably the most discouraged and dejected of all the disciples. Now that the Lord Jesus was crucified, dead and buried, all hope was gone. He needed lifting up from the depths of despair and despondency that he felt especially after he denied the LORD three times...

The Lord Jesus Appeared to the Women on Their Way Home from the Empty Tomb

Mary the mother of James and Joses, and Salome ran quickly away from the sepulchre with a mixed feeling of fear and joy, of perplexity and amazement. They were trembling and were so frightened that they said nothing to anyone along the way. They just ran as fast as they could to the Lord Jesus’ disciples. On the way, the Lord Jesus suddenly appeared and called out to them, “All hail (Greek, *chairo*, literally, rejoice, be glad).” How wonderful is the Lord Jesus Christ. He knew the hearts of the two women as they ran from the tomb-site. He calmed them and removed their fear. They came and held Jesus by His feet, meaning that they bowed down and worshipped Him. They

could recognize the Lord Jesus Christ. This means that Jesus looked physically the same, except now He has the glorified body. Jesus' words of comfort and instruction were short and sweet, "Be not afraid: go tell My brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see Me" (Matthew 28:10). Observe the personal possessive pronoun used by the Lord Jesus Christ – My brethren! The Lord Jesus Christ chose to appear to them and let them see Him in Galilee because the major part of His ministry took place there.

The Women Reported to the Eleven and to All the Rest

The women told the eleven apostles and all the rest who were together at that time all that they had seen, and what the angels told them. Imagine their excited voices as they related their experiences to the disciples. However, the reception was sad – those who heard thought that the words of the women were "idle tales" or mere women's chatter. They showed a lack of faith and did not believe their testimony.

Peter and John Visited the Tomb

Peter immediately took off to the tomb. He was joined by "the other disciple" who could be none other than John. John outran Peter, thus indicating that John was much younger and stronger. John reached the tomb first but he did not enter in. He stood at the entrance and peered in. He saw the linen clothing lying in the tomb. Then Peter reached the tomb. He did not stop.

He ran past John straight into the tomb. He stooped down and saw that the linen cloth, which was used to bind Jesus' body, and the napkin, which was used for covering His head, were folded neatly and placed separately. This evidence shows that whatever had happened was not done in haste. Then John followed Peter and went into the tomb. John saw and believed. He was the first disciple to believe. On the other hand, Peter was wondering to himself what he had seen. At that point of time, they had not accepted from Scripture that the Lord Jesus was to rise from the dead.

The Lord Jesus appeared to Mary Magdalene at the Garden Tomb

Peter and John went back to their home. Mary Magdalene remained at the tomb weeping. Like Peter, she had not yet believed that Jesus had risen from the dead. While still weeping, she stooped down and looked into the sepulchre. She saw two angels in white, one sitting at the head and the other sitting at the feet where Jesus had been laid. She may have thought that the two angels were men. The two angels asked her why she was weeping. Mary replied that she did not know where they had taken her Lord Jesus.

After she had said those words, she turned round and right before her stood the Lord Jesus. He asked her why she was weeping and whom she was seeking. Mary, thinking that the Lord Jesus was the gardener and that he had taken the body, asked him where he had

put it. That she did not recognize the Lord Jesus does not imply that the Lord Jesus appeared in a different form. She could have been blinded by her tears or her eyes were not opened by the LORD till later. Then Jesus called out her name, "Mary." Mary who must have turned away after speaking to the "gardener" turned back. She recognized the voice and called the Lord Jesus, "*Rabboni*" (*literally, my teacher*) which is to say, *Master*. Jesus said to her, "*Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended unto my Father: but go to my brethren and say unto them, I ascended unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.*" The word "touch" is the Greek word *haptomai*, which means "to touch" or "to cling to." Jesus later permitted others to touch Him, even invited them to do so. Because of what Jesus further said, some supposed that Jesus would ascend to His Father between this appearance to Mary and later appearances. Some who disagree argue that it was too short a time. A.T. Robertson explained thus -- that Jesus was telling Mary to stop clinging to Him but to bring His message to the apostles. This command of the Lord Jesus to declare the fact of His resurrection and the message of salvation is the same in the other appearances of the Lord Jesus and the angels (Compare Acts 1:10-11). Robertson's view is the biblical view in that the women would not wish to let Him go and this is why the LORD told them to not hold on to Him.

Observe what the Lord Jesus said to Mary concerning her relationship with God — "... your Father...your God." Mary and all the other believers have become the sons and daughters of God. They called God, "Abba, Father."

Mary Magdalene, in obedience, went to the disciples. She told them that she had seen the Lord Jesus and testified that the Lord Jesus had spoken all these things to her. However, the disciples did not believe her.

PRACTICAL VALUE

As mentioned, the Christian Faith rests on three fundamental pillars concerning the Lord Jesus Christ: (1) His virgin birth, (2) His vicarious death, and (3) His resurrection. We have looked into the resurrection account by the four gospel writers. We see how difficult it was even for the apostles and disciples of the Lord Jesus to believe His resurrection. The Lord Jesus knew that and so He spent forty days with all His disciples (Note that He did not appear to any unbelievers) before ascending to Heaven. Once the apostles and disciples were convinced that Jesus indeed rose from the dead, their lives were transformed and they were no more fearful.

In the face of the evidence, we also have no excuse not to believe in the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. To do so would be tantamount to behaving like an ostrich with its head buried in the ground pretending that the

facts were not there. We believe by faith even though the incident happened nearly 2,000 years ago. Without faith it is impossible to please God. The resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ is irrefutably true and our hope in Him is sure and certain. We serve a living Lord and Saviour. His promises are true and we are all awaiting His second coming. We ought to live our life in total surrender to Him, to be used of Him for the furtherance of His kingdom. That is our reasonable duty and responsibility. Every born-again Christians must carry the gospel message of salvation to others. Let us seek to tell this great and glorious truth to others so that they too might believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and receive the blessings of salvation.

Saviour after His resurrection.
AMEN

One of the things attending the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus that we could not fail to notice is the way the women demonstrated their devotion and loyalty to Him. The Lord has thought fit to mention their names in the gospel account. It is for the purpose that future generations might read and be inspired by them. Their love and loyalty for the Lord Jesus Christ is beyond compare. Should we not do the same in the Church of which the Lord Jesus Christ is the Head?

For all those who sincerely love the Lord Jesus Christ and are loyal to Him, He gives a special blessing. Mary Magdalene, Mary, the mother of James and Joses, and Salome were the first people to see their risen Lord and

DAILY READING & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Daily Readings

MONDAY: Matthew 28:1-4, Mark 16:1, John 20:1

TUESDAY: Luke 24:1-3, Mark 16:2-4, John 20:2

WEDNESDAY: Matthew 28:5-7, Mark 16:5-7, Luke 24:4-8

THURSDAY: Matthew 28:8-10, Mark 16:8, Luke 24:9-12, John 20:3-10

FRIDAY: John 20:11-18, Mark 16:9-11

Discussion Questions

1. What do you think of the action of the women disciples in the account of Jesus' resurrection? What was the reason for their visit to the Tomb on the first day of the week?

2. What did the women find when they visited the tomb?

3. Why were the women perplexed at what they saw?

4. What can we learn from what angels said?

5. Why do you think Peter was specifically mentioned?

8. Do you agree that the Christian faith hangs on the above three pillars or should there be more? Explain your answer.

6. Why did Jesus appear to the women first and not to His eleven disciples specifically Peter, James and John?

9. How does the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ impact you?

7. Why do you think the disciples did not believe the women's report on the resurrection of Jesus?
