

John 20:1-10

~ The Simplest Gospel ~

Introduction

Resurrection Sunday is **the high feast** of the Christian calendar!

The **high feast** of the Christian Church!

When we declare that Jesus Christ **is risen from the dead** we are declaring:

The simplest gospel

Paul says in Romans chapter 10 that:

*If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God **raised Him from the dead**, you will be saved...*

So Paul links the gospel of Jesus **in connection to** the glorious resurrection – and he says that when we believe **that event** has occurred – then we will **confess Him as Lord** with our hearts:

Resulting in salvation!

In fact, this is **what we mean** when we say that Jesus Christ **is Lord** – that for Jesus Christ to be Lord He must **in fact** be:

Lord of all

That there **cannot be** anything in this world that can hold Him down under its sway!

The greatest enemy – the fiercest foe – and the strongest power is **NOT able** to hold Him down!

And so when we say that Jesus Christ is Lord – when we say that He is the King of kings – what we mean is that:

He is Lord of all!

He is Lord of creation!

He is lord of salvation!

He is Lord of life!

Sin – sickness – death – disease – and even the grave!

And so the simple fact of our passage this morning friends – the simple gospel is this:

Jesus is alive

Now that might seem a bit simplistic – outdated – old fashioned and clichéd – **until you realize:**

He was dead!

That He died!

They buried Him in a tomb!

And sealed it up with **soldiers on hand!**

That was their **pathetic attempt** to hold Him in the grave!

But NOW HE'S NOT there anymore – He has risen!

And this Gospel changes everything

Jesus Christ was once dead in a tomb – but now He's alive!

Main Point

And so the **simple gospel** – the **main point** that I want us to see as we come to our text in John 20 – is this:

The tomb is empty, He is Risen, Jesus is alive!

John 20

So John chapter 20 – beginning in verse 1:

On the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark. She saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. ² So she went running to Simon Peter and to the other disciple, the one Jesus loved, and said to them, “They’ve taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we don’t know where they’ve put him!”

³ At that, Peter and the other disciple went out, heading for the tomb. ⁴ The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and got to the tomb first. ⁵ Stooping down, he saw the linen cloths lying there, but he did not go in. ⁶ Then, following him, Simon Peter also came. He entered the tomb and saw the linen cloths lying there. ⁷ The wrapping that had been on his head was not lying with the linen cloths but was folded up in a separate place by itself. ⁸ The other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, then also went in, saw, and believed. ⁹ For they did not yet understand the Scripture that he must rise from the dead.¹⁰ Then the disciples returned to the place where they were staying.

Opening Gambit

The humanist writer Aldous Huxley once said that:

Facts do not cease to exist simply because they’re ignored...

Something does **NOT** cease **being true** – simply because a person chooses to deny it!

Someone can choose to deny the reality of gravity – but when they jump off **of a building** gravity will be **right there** with them meeting them on the ground!

And **so too** with the resurrection – a denial of His resurrection – does **NOT** necessitate that it did **NOT** occur!

You see the temptation is that if something happened a **really long time ago** – then it becomes **less and less** true!

But that's **NOT** how reality works – something can be true 2,000 years ago and it still be true today:

Because it actually happened!

Tomb

In fact there's a word in this passage that's **repeated 7 times** in our text!

7 times John **impresses this word** into our minds so that we do NOT miss the point of the passage!

And it's a word you see that **carries-over** from the previous section in chapter 19!

In John 19:41 – he says:

*And there was a garden in the place where He was crucified. And a **new tomb** was in the garden; no one had yet been placed in it. So they placed Jesus there because of the Jewish day of preparation and since **the tomb** was nearby...*

So at the end of chapter 19 – the body of Jesus is clearly laid **in a tomb!**

Now notice how John **picks up** on this theme in chapter 20 verse 1:

*On the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came to **the tomb**...while it was still dark. And she saw that the stone had been removed from **the tomb**...*

Verse 2 as she goes to tell Simon and John she says:

*They have taken the Lord out of **the tomb**...*

Verse 3:

*At that, Peter and the other disciple went out, heading for **the tomb**...*

Verse 4:

*The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reach **the tomb**...*

Verse 6:

*Then, following him, Simon Peter also came and entered **the tomb**...*

Verse 8:

*The other disciple, who had reached **the tomb** also went in!*

Verse 11:

*But Mary stood outside **the tomb**...And as she was crying, she stooped to look into **the tomb**...*

So there's an intentional redundancy to this word – and it's meant to **capture the mind!**

John takes our attention **very intentionally** to the tomb – and he does this for a **very specific reason!**

The tomb is empty

And I cannot think of any more encouraging words to begin our time here this morning than simply to say Jesus is alive!

And if Jesus is alive this changes everything!

It changes everything!

Christianity **rises and falls** on the reality of the resurrection and the fact that **Jesus is alive!**

But that reality must still come to bear on the hearts of these men and women!

First Day

And so John writes there in verse 1:

Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early...

Notice that it **doesn't say**:

On the third day when He rose...

It says on the **first day** of the week!

And yet every single time **Jesus predicted** His resurrection – every time He spoke of being **raised from the dead** – He stated it in terms of:

The third day!

But notice that throughout the account of the resurrection **in all 4 Gospels** – they always state it in terms of:

The first day!

On the first day of the week!

Why?!?!

Because what happens here on **this first day** changes the course of history!

This is a new Covenant!

A new beginning!

A new creation!

The beginning of a new order!

A new way of life!

The age to come is going to **radically invade** the old order of business – and radically transform creation!

This will be the day that will forever be called:

The Lord's Day!

The day that distinctly belongs to the Lord!

And it will be the Day that Jesus begins His triumphant reign of:

Winning the nations!

Building the church!

Spreading the gospel!

On the first day of the week!

Mary

Notice also that John is highlighting **NOT only** the first day – but the **first witness**:

*On the first day of the week **Mary Magdalene** came to the tomb...*

Now we know from the other Gospels accounts that Mary was **NOT by herself** when she came to the Tomb:

Mary the mother of James, Salome, Joanna and various others also came bringing spices!

But John's focus here is upon **Mary** – NOT upon the other women!

Spotlight

John often highlights **specific people** in his Gospel and gives them a considerable amount of **time** and **leeway** on the stage – we think of:

Nicodemus in John 3!
 The woman in John 4!
 The man of Bethesda in John 5!
 The man born blind in John 9!
 Mary at His feet in John 12!
 Peter at His trial in John 18!
 Pilate at his palace in John 19!

John enjoys **highlighting specific people** and giving them the stage!

7 Demons

And we **also know** that from other Gospel accounts Mary had been delivered by Jesus from **NOT ONE** but:

7 demons!¹

7 evil spirits that were **coursing through her veins...**

You see in the time of Jesus **much like today** – the demonic world was **real** – it was **active** – and **affecting** people's lives!

When you look at the history of what demons did **in these days**– sometimes you would see that:

People would be **thrown into fires** – thrown into rivers – thrown into lakes causing all kinds of **physical harm** and pain to their bodies!

Other times they would encourage self-destructive **habits!**

One man is recorded as having supernatural **strength** and being **stripped naked** running through a graveyard & cutting himself!

¹ See Mark 16:9; Luke 8:2.

Other times people are recorded as having **physical ailments & diseases** – ranging from:

Muteness – to being lame – having seizures – convulsions – epilepsy and more!

And so **one can only imagine** what kind of a woman would be shaped by **the presence of** NOT one – but:

Two – three – four – five – six – but seven demons!

7 evil spirits that were **coursing through her veins** during the time of Jesus!

And this woman who clearly would have been seen as **the town crazy** – the **social outcast** is:

Universally chosen in all 4 Gospels as **the first witness** to the resurrection!

Women's Testimony

Now if the writers of the New Testament were **trying to start** a new religion – by **lying about** their teacher – and telling people that Jesus rose from the dead when he in fact **did NOT rise** from the dead:

These guys were the most **pathetic liars** in all of human history!

Because the one category of people in the **Hebrew culture** that was NOT listened to – the **one category** whose testimony was **NOT relied upon** in the court of Law – was:

All women!

Women's testimonies were **NOT accepted** as valid or credible in the Hebrew culture!

And so if you were one of these disciples – trying to **make up a religion** and deciding upon:

Okay who's going to be the face of our new promo-campaign?

Who's gonna be the one running this thing?

Who's gonna be the first witness to the tomb!

That **all 4 of them** turn around together and say:

I know a demonically possessed woman!

*Which the town already regarded as being out to lunch – so let's choose Mary **the least credible** of any witness!*

Why would Mary Magdalene **be chosen by God** as the first gospel witness to the resurrection:

NOT because she was special!

NOT because she was credible!

NOT because she was valid!

But because this is a first-hand account of reality!

You **don't put** a detail like that in a story you're trying to make up – unless **it really happened:**

Unless it's **actually true!**

These disciples **did NOT pick** Mary – **God picked Mary** because it is **God's delight** to **constantly & consistently** exalt the **weak things** of the world to the high places of His Kingdom!

This is what Paul says in 1st Corinthians chapter 1 that:

*God has chosen what is **foolish** in the world to **shame** the wise... and what is **weak** in the world to shame the **strong**...*

And so Mary is chosen **NOT** because of anything special in Mary – but because:

These event actually happened!

It really occurred!

Mary is **the lynchpin** that connects the world to the resurrection!

Taken the Lord

It's the **same reason** he goes on to describe the foot race that occurs in verse 4!

After Mary discovers the tomb is empty in verse 1 – she runs to Simon Peter and **[John] the other disciple** in verse 2 – and she says to them:

They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we don't know where they've put Him!

Now notice that Mary still refers to Jesus as **the Lord!**

She's still a **devoted** follower – she's still a **devoted** disciple – she's **still referring** to Jesus as the King!

She hasn't given up on Him – she merely believes that He's dead!

But her heart and her devotion are **still actively living!**

Peter

Notice also that Peter is referred to here as **a disciple** of Jesus!

The last time Peter was mentioned was **all the way back** in John 18 when he denied Jesus 3 times over!

But here (even after his greatest moment of sin and betrayal) the other disciples have apparently forgiven him – and Jesus has **NOT** excluded him!

And we're gonna see that Peter is restored by Jesus Himself in the very next chapter!

Foot Race

But for now, let me draw your attention to **the footrace** that ensues in verse 3 – it says:

*At that, Peter and the other disciple went out, heading for the tomb. And the two were **running together**, but the other **disciple outran Peter** and got to the tomb first...*

What a strange detail to add right?

What a funny thing to say?

Peter and John are running to the tomb and John got there first!

Why would John put this detail in a story of Jesus designed to bring about saving faith?

Why is it important that John got there first?

Jewish Bravado

Well we can't be certain about this – but maybe there was a little bit of **Jewish male bravado** happening here – maybe John is highlighting **the age difference** between Peter and John!

Peter, you know is a **little bit older** than John – maybe a **little chubbier** – a little **too many** fish sandwiches for Peter!

And John is showing us that he outran Peter to the tomb!

Luke

Maybe this was John's way of **getting back at Luke** – in Luke 24 John is **NOT even mentioned** as going to the tomb but Luke **merely talks** of Peter – in Luke **24 verse 12** it says that:

Peter rose and ran to the tomb; and stooping to look in, he saw the linen cloths by themselves; and he went home marvelling at what had occurred...

And so maybe John being **a little bit ticked** that Luke wants to set the record straight:

*I was there, I was an eyewitness, and I was the one who **actually beat Peter** to that tomb...*

Peter and John

Or again maybe John is **simply highlighting** the nature of the relationship between Peter and John...

In the 4 Gospels:

They seemed to be good friends!

Often competitive!

Always doing things together!

Sometimes they're walking together!

Arguing together!

And after **Jesus ascends** into heaven Peter and John become the **big-time preachers** in the Book of Acts!

So maybe he's highlighting the nature of their mutual relationship & love!

Factual

But whatever the case – the **main reason** this detail is in here is again because it **really & simply** happened!

That's it!

It happened!

John was an eyewitness to these things!

John is **concerned** to tell us what **actually** and **factually** happened!

The footrace is factual!

The footrace is true!

Illustration

So let me give you an example of what I'm talking about – let's say you're with your mate on the street and you come across a dead body...

You look down an alley and you find this **dead & lifeless** body kind of lying in the street!

And you **get the courage** to go down and have a look!

And so you and your mate **go down the alley** to examine the body – and just as you get to the body **you discover** that the person who **killed the man** is actually coming back to clean up the scene!

And because you've walked down this alley (that's really just a dead-end) – the killer has **come up behind you** – and now he **has you cornered!**

Knife in hand – you're now trapped in this alley!

But because you went to Rhoi's class on Future men this month – you **somehow managed** by God's grace to escape the assassin and now **you and your mate** are **violently running** back to the police to report **everything you've just witnessed** about this scene!

And let's say that you're **so scared** and **so shaken** that you manage to outrun your friend **to the station!**

Now you're probably **NOT** going to put that detail into your story of **who got there first:**

Unless it actually occurred!

Unless it **was pertinent** to the story to verify:

Your eyewitness testimony!

And that's why John does this:

It verifies it!

It solidifies it!
It demonstrates its truth!

See in a story designed to show us the **prominent death** of a man on a cross who has just been buried in a tomb – no one cares about who got to the tomb first!

But John adds that detail in to show us that this event is factual!

It's true!

It actually occurred!

And you can just imagine Peter saying to John:

Yeah okay you beat me to the tomb, but who's really gonna know...

And John's standing there going:

Everyone!

Everyone will know!

This is gonna be recorded in Scripture forever!

John was an eyewitness of these things!

In Character

And **true to form** when John gets to the tomb – verse 5 says that:

*Stooping down, he saw the linen cloths lying there, but he **did not go in**...*

But Peter – verse 6:

Following John, he entered the tomb and saw the linen cloths lying there...

Peter goes straight in – and John quietly reflects!

And this is in **total character** for both Peter and John!

John has always been the **more reflective** one – the more **pensive one** – he wants to **examine the scene** – think about the clothes – and **what all of this means** theologically!

Peter he goes **headlong** into the tomb – John **stands to examine!**

The Cloths

Now **what else speaks** of an eyewitness account?

We'll notice verse 7:

The wrapping that had been on His head was not lying with the linen cloths [back in verse 6] but was folded up in a separate place by itself...

Now again – that's an **odd detail** to add right!

The linen cloths were **folded up** in a separate place – and the face cloth the **one used** to keep the person's head in position was **also folded up** in a separate place!

The point that John is making is this:

The testimony of Mary could NOT and did NOT occur!
Because everything in this tomb **speaks of perfect order!**

Everything was in order!

Everything was left **exactly the way** that it was on **the day** that they **buried Him!**

Nothing was out of place!

And this verifies that:

Grave Robbing was out of the question!

Grave-robbing was **a big deal** in these days – and when people robbed tombs:

They took everything

Including the body they would also **take the wrappings** that the person was buried in because they were some of the most expensive items **one could get!**

And **NOT to mention** that this is Joseph of Arimathea's tomb so he probably would have used the **finest of materials!**

Transport

And when people robbed graves, they generally kept the body **wrapped up anyway** – because:

Keeping the body wrapped would make transportation of the body **much easier** if the person was **still bound together!**

And again they **wouldn't** leave the clothes behind either – because:

The clothes were some of the most expensive items!

Decompose

Think also that if they **did unwrap** the body – why is everything neat and tidy?

One would assume that it would be thrown into a pile – **NOT neatly** folded in the corner!

And so the description of the clothing here – indicates that they're in the position that the body was **originally laid in!**

That's John's Point!

That **somehow/ in someway** – Jesus has supernaturally de-clothed Himself and **moved through** the physical elements!

The cloths that His body were in were **neatly piled** on the floor – and the face wrap used to keep His head in position were also sitting there in this circular fashion after the body of Jesus had **passed through** the material!

Lazarus

And this is in **stark contrast** to the raising of Lazarus in John 11 – you remember that when Lazarus was raised – he emerged from the tomb **still bound together** with linen and **facecloths attached!**

And so Jesus had to **order those** who were nearby to **unbind Lazarus** so that he **could be set free!**

Jesus was raised to a state of resurrection – Lazarus was merely resuscitated back to life!

Poor Lazarus was going to **have to die** again!

But Jesus arose in a **glorious/resurrected** state!

Remember the Scriptures

And this is what John **sees** and **realizes** in verse 8:

*Then the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also **went in, saw, and believed...***

He went into the tomb – he saw the clothes – he put it all together and He believed!

Believed what?

In the resurrection!

In fact this is why he goes on in verse 9 to say:

*For they **did not yet** understand the Scripture that He must rise from the dead...*

That is:

Prior to this event – prior to the tomb – prior to the Resurrection & **seeing these clothes** both John **did NOT realize** that the Son of man would rise from the dead!

I mean Jesus had been saying these things repeatedly throughout His ministry – but John had **NOT** pieced these things together from the Scriptures!

Resurrection

See they had **always known about** the general resurrection of believers – the general resurrection from the dead – the **final and ultimate resurrection at the end of time:**

Psalm 16:10 – Daniel chapter 12 – Job 19 – Ezekiel 37 – Psalm 49 – Isaiah 26!

But they **never tied** any of those passages to the Person and Work of Christ!

Like **so many modern** Christians in our own day and time – they failed to understand the scriptures (the Old Testament) as distinctly:

Christian scriptures!

Scriptures that point us toward the Person and Work of Christ!

And this is why He will go on in **Luke chapter 24** to speak of all of the scriptures in the Old Testament that pointed to Him!

And so now that they've **seen it** – now that they know it – now that they've beheld His glory!

John says: *I believe!*

And this is exactly what Jesus said would happen – all the way back in John chapter 2 **after clearing the temple** – and saying to the Jews:

Destroy this temple and in 3 days I will raise it back up again!

John 2:22 says that:

*After He was raised from the dead, His disciples recalled what He had said and they **believed the scripture** and the words that Jesus had spoken...*

They saw the **clothes** – they saw the **tomb** and they remember the Scriptures!

Objective evidence

And so John says that he believes **without seeing** the resurrected Jesus – but all the *other disciples believe* when Jesus appears to them in the Upper Room!

And in fact Jesus will go on to **commend** that kind of faith *in verse 29* where He says to Thomas:

Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believed...

And so here is John's evidence for the resurrection of Jesus from the dead:

1. Jesus was **certifiably** dead – in chapter 19!
2. He was **carefully** buried – also in chapter 19!
3. And now His grave is **categorically** empty – in John 20!

And this is the **objective evidence** that John gives for us to believe in the resurrection!

You have **no more excuses** says John!

The tomb is empty, He is Risen, Jesus is alive!

Application

And so that's theology – that's the doctrine – that's evidence:

Now what does it all mean?

Why does it even matter?

Why is this important that Jesus rose from the dead!

Let me give you **3 quick points** as we close out our time!

First – the resurrection means that:

Jesus Christ is the Lord of creation

If Jesus Christ has risen from the dead then:

He is fundamentally the King of creation!

Creation bows **in submission** to the King – because He's the King who's **conquered** the grave!

Paul writes in Romans 1 that:

*Jesus was declared to be the Son of God **in power** according to the Spirit of holiness **by His resurrection***

He did NOT become the Lord of creation at His resurrection – His resurrection **declared Him to be**
the Lord of creation!

Paul says in Colossians chapter 1 that:

Jesus Christ is the firstborn **from the dead** over all creation!

His rising from the dead means that He **stands over** creation!

And if He's the Lord of creation – if He's the King of Kings – here's what that means for us:

Nature is **NOT** mailable!

Creation is **NOT** infinitely mailable!

Male & female are **NOT** mailable!

Human sexuality **NOT** mailable!

Marriage **NOT** mailable!

Truth – wisdom – beauty – sin – righteousness – good & evil these things are **NOT** mailable!

You **cannot change** these things into **whatever you want** them to be!

The bible says that:

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth!

So these are **fixed realities!**

These are **fixed truths!**

They **cannot be changed** depending on emotion or how we feel!

Human beings may **try to** change them – and suppress them – but Jesus Christ establishes them & maintains them!

He is the King!

He is the Lord!

And therefore He tells us what is truth!

We **must conform** to His image – He does **NOT** conform to ours!

And because He has risen from the dead – He gets the final say in all creation!

Jesus Christ is the King – He has risen from the dead!

Sin's Presence

Second – if Jesus Christ rose from the dead then:

We too will rise with Him!

This is the glorious promise in all of Scripture!

If Jesus Christ has risen from the dead – then **we too** will rise with Him **in the resurrection!**

It's no accident that in 1st Corinthians 15 – a passage designed to demonstrate **NOT ONLY** Jesus' resurrection – but our own glorious resurrection:

Paul refers to the death of a Christians as **sleep**

He says:

All those who have fallen asleep in Christ will one day be raised!

Indicating that death **is NOT the final state** for the Christian – they are merely asleep **in Christ!**

And so the clear implication is that – death is **NOT** the final **state** – it is NOT the final **stage** – and it will be swallowed up in victory **at the end of all things!**

And this is the **good news** of our passage – the good news of the resurrection is that:

One day death will be no more!

One day there will be no more funerals – no more hospitals – grave sites – gravestones – grave heads
– coffins – cancer – car wrecks – catastrophes – devastation – heartache – pain – or sin!

All that will be **gloriously consumed** in the death of death in the death of Christ!

And when you trust in Jesus you join with Jesus – when you have faith in Jesus you become
together with Jesus:

His death becomes your death – His resurrection becomes your resurrection!

And one day **you will get** the same glorious **kind of body** that Jesus has!

A **glorious; resurrected; imperishable;** and **undefiled** body free from sin, free from pain, free from suffering, and the sting of death!

And you will never get old or pass away!

And you will never die!

And you will be free!

Because He has risen!

John Flavel the Puritan pastor once wrote that:

If death is a dragon, and the grave is its den, then Christ goes into the den and grapples the beast to the ground!

And that's what He did 2,000 years ago on our behalf!

Christ defeated sin and defeated death and therefore if we die **in Him** we will also live **with Him!**

And **we too** will one be raised to life!

Sins paid

And the reason is really found in this **third and final** point of application – if Jesus Christ rose from the dead then:

Sins penalty has been paid

See the Scriptures insist that the central problem of death is the **result of sin** – we die because in Adam we have all sinned!

Romans 5:12 declares that:

Just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned...

And so Paul says that **in Adam** all have died – **in Adam** all have sinned – **in Adam** all fall short of the glory of God!

But if Christ is risen from the dead – if the tomb of Jesus **is in fact empty**:

Then the power of death has been broken

What kept Him there on that cross?

What kept Him there on that tree?

Our sin!

All our lies!

All our lust!

All of our biting words!

Our hateful thoughts!

Our vile and disgusting acts!

And all of the shameful gunk we have done/said/and thought!

And **all of it** was laid on Him and **therefore Jesus died!**

Our sins were **credited** to **His account** – and His death was **credited** to **ours!**

And so if **your sin** and **my sin** has put Him **on the cross** – and **your sin** and **my sin** has put Him **in the grave** – and **He's NOT there** anymore – then:

Our sin is gone and our debt is paid for **in full**

It's no longer there – it's no longer present!

Jesus Christ has risen from the dead – and therefore **we are free!**

You are Free

Bryan Chappell (a famous preacher) tells the story about the **first Jewish chaplain** who made it into Buchenwald (Booken-wald); a Nazi concentration camp after world war II!

And after Patton's 3rd army had liberated that camp from the Nazi's... many of the people in those camps were down to their last few days...

These prisoners were skin and bone – severely malnourished – **hundreds and hundreds** of these starving men piled in bunks from floor to ceiling... men who had lost all hope...

And even though Patton's 3rd army had come into the camp and liberated these men from this horrible place, the prisoners of the camp remained in their barracks because when the good guys came in to release them they simply **did not believe** that they were free...

After all, those who **now came** and claimed to be liberators were in uniform, just as their captors (the Nazi's) had been for years, and so the prisoners thought that these new uniforms just meant **new oppression and new abuse, and a new regime!**

And so Rabbi Hershel Schachter (shack-ter) came into the first barracks of the camp and spoke in their language in a language these Jews could understand... He said:

Shalom Aleichem Yidden...Ihr (ear) zint frei (fry)!"—"Peace be upon you, Jewish brothers, you are free!

But no one moved – no one **even dared** to believe it and so again he proclaimed:

Shalom Aleichem Yidden...Ihr (ear) zint frei (fry)!"—"Peace be upon you, Jewish brothers, you are free!

And so one man lowered his legs on the floor, and dared to believe it... he started walking and shouting to the others *"we are free brothers we are free!"*

And one by one they started walking out of the barracks... they shouted to the next barracks “we are free!” and they shouted to the next barracks “we are free!”

They streamed into the center of the concentration camp shouting: “*We are free! We are free! Peace be upon you, we are free!!!*”

When Jesus rose from the dead, He said to His disciples:

Peace be upon you! You are free!

Conclusion

And for 2,000 years He’s been proclaiming that **same truth** in that **same glorious gospel!**

The Gospel of the resurrection is that Jesus Christ has paid for our sins:

The tomb is empty and He is risen because death could NOT hold Him under its sway!

God is true and we are free; God is real and we are His; God’s alive and the world is now ours to enjoy!

Nothing can **separate us** from His love – nothing can **keep us** from His grace – and nothing in all the world **can stop** the glory of the simple gospel!

John 20:1-10

Discussion Questions

[Read John 20:1-10].

Main Point: The tomb is empty, He is Risen, Jesus is alive!

Q1. Is there anything that stands out to you as odd or interesting that the other gospels exclude in their accounts? **[See especially verses 4 & 7].** – What word do you think is repeated most often in this account, and why is that significant? [Hint: John is highlighting the nature of the **empty tomb**].

Q2. The resurrection has always been called an **essential aspect** of the Christian faith [something you need to believe to be a Christian] but what makes the resurrection so foundational to our faith? **[See also 1 Corinthians 15:1-4].** – **[Read Romans 10:9-10].** How does Paul connect the resurrection of Christ to our confession of faith? – Why is calling Jesus *Lord* so critical to being a Christian?

Q3. Discuss the significance of the “*first day of the week*” as the Day of resurrection. – Why might the Gospel writers consistently refer to it this way instead of “*On the third day*”? – What does this new beginning symbolize in Christianity?

Q4. [Read verses 3-4]. Why is the mention of the footrace important in John’s mind? – What do their reactions [verses 5-6] tell us about their personalities?

Q5. [Read verses 8-9]. Many have struggled to make sense of John’s faith in verse 8 and his doubt/misunderstanding in verse 9 – how do you reconcile these verses?

Q6. How does the Resurrection of Jesus relate to the concept of atonement? – Are there any other truths derived from the resurrection?

Q7. What does the empty tomb tell us about Jesus' authority over creation and life? – Reflect on how Jesus' resurrection affirms His Lordship over life, death, and all creation (Romans 1:4, Colossians 1:18).