

They engaged in a footrace to the burial site. It wasn't a friendly competition; Peter and John were just bewildered at Mary's claim that the tomb was empty. Their grief was still raw over the horrid crucifixion, death, and burial of their Master. And now they saw for themselves that Jesus' body was missing. Only the linen grave clothes remained.

They returned to their homes confused, "for as yet they did not understand the Scripture, that he must rise from the dead" (John 20:9, ESV). But Mary lingered behind, weeping over the loss of her beloved Jesus. And then, Jesus spoke her name. "Mary."

Instantly, everything changed. Mary raced to tell the disciples, "I have seen the Lord" (vs. 18). Hope was alive in her soul! Her faith was revived to believe in Jesus as her Messiah. The disciples soon followed with their own renewed faith when Jesus appeared to them that evening, breathed on them, and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit" (vs. 22).

Yes, Jesus is alive! This month, His resurrection will be celebrated around the world. Let's pray for revived faith and hope initiated by a great outpouring of His Spirit!

1 Pray that as you prepare for Resurrection Sunday, you will know the voice of your Master and Savior. Even today, He speaks your name (John 20:16).

2 Ask God to increase your faith, even when you don't yet understand all His purposes. Like John and Peter, run breathlessly to discover Jesus in His Word. Pray for more of Jesus in your life (John 20:4-9).

3 Pray that you will join Mary in telling everyone, "I have seen the Lord!" As Easter approaches, ask God for the courage to declare Jesus and point to Him with even greater expectancy (John 20:18).

4 Although they were meeting behind locked doors, "The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord." Jesus surprised them and reassured them of His peace and power. Pray that you will never take for granted the hope of Jesus' resurrection (John 20:20).

5 Jesus encouraged His disciples to "touch me and see." He challenged them to rise above their doubts and simply believe He was no longer dead. Pray for the skeptics in your life to encounter Jesus and be free from doubt (Luke 24:38-39).

6 Jesus breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit." Pray that you are filled with the reviving, refreshing power of the Spirit as you journey in prayer toward celebrating Jesus' resurrection (John 20:22).

7 Jesus declared Himself to be "the resurrection and the life." Pray for your heart to be revived to the joy of living daily in the resurrection power of Jesus (John 11:25).

8 Jesus also declared that by believing in Him, you will never die. Pray for an eternal perspective and an urgency to share this wonderful news with others (John 11:26).

9 Scripture tells us that although death came through a man, "the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man"—Jesus! Ask the Spirit to revive your hope in your future resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:21).

10 In God's great mercy, "he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." Pray for ways to express that living hope to your family and loved ones (1 Peter 1:3).

11 After Jesus' resurrection, the apostles continued to testify about Christ, and "God's grace was so powerfully at work in them all." Pray for the Church to come alive with resurrection power to fervently proclaim Christ! (Acts 4:33).

12 By knowing Christ, we can know the power of His resurrection and participate in His suffering. Pray for the faith and confidence to identify with Jesus and testify to His reviving power (Philippians 3:10).

13 Today is Palm Sunday. Join with the voices who declared, "Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!" (Luke 19:38).

14 As you pray through this week, take courage in Jesus' humility coupled with strength: "Do not be afraid, Daughter of Zion; see, your king is coming, seated on a donkey's colt." Thank Him for our hope in the One who reigns forever (John 12:14-15).

15 Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem created quite a stir, and the people asked, "Who is this?" Pray that your community will be awakened with curiosity to the truth and power of Christ (Matthew 21:10).

16 As we move through Holy Week, pray that you and your church will "be strong and take heart, all you who hope in the Lord." Pray that no matter how dark the world seems, God will raise up a prayer movement of belief and hope in Jesus (Psalm 31:24).

17 We live in hope because God demonstrates His love for us through the death of Christ. Praise God that your sins are forgiven in Jesus and that you are so deeply loved by God (Romans 5:8).

18 Today is Good Friday. Pause and reflect on Jesus' great gift to us: "He himself bore our sins' in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; 'by his wounds you have been healed'" (1 Peter 2:24).

19 Jesus was mocked, spit on, flogged, and killed. Yet the promise remained that "three days later he will rise." Praise God that evil never wins in the end. Pray that you will daily live in Jesus' conquering victory (Mark 10:34).

20 Today is Easter Sunday. Resurrection Day! Praise God that the message delivered by the angel holds true for us today: "He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay" (Matthew 28:5-6).

21 "By his power God raised the Lord from the dead, and he will raise us also." Pray for your church to embrace and live in resurrection power as you testify of Jesus to lost people in your community (1 Corinthians 6:14).

22 Jesus was raised to life and is now "at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us." Pray for your heart to align with Jesus as you intercede for revival and awakening in our nation (Romans 8:34).

23 Because Christ was raised from the dead and sin has no mastery over Him, we too can count ourselves dead to sin and alive in Christ. Pray for victory over any sin that lingers in your life. Pray for loved ones to be set free from bondages (Romans 6:9-11).

24 By His resurrection, Jesus has "rescued us from the domain of darkness." Pray that your loved ones will live with victory over the enemy's schemes and lies and instead flourish here and now in His Kingdom (Colossians 1:13).

25 Pray that your family and friends will declare that "Jesus is Lord" and believe that "God raised him from the dead." Intercede for the salvation of those far from Christ (Romans 10:9).

26 Jesus invites us today as His disciples to deny ourselves, take up our crosses daily, and follow Him. Pray that the Church in our nation is revived to radical obedience for the sake of Christ (Luke 9:23).

27 Jesus' death and resurrection may seem like foolishness to the world, but it is the power of God to those who believe. Pray for an awakening across this nation that opens people's hearts to the joy of salvation (1 Corinthians 1:18).

28 The same power that raised Jesus from the dead is now available to us who believe. Pray for your prayer life to reflect a revived heart that believes for the impossible made possible in Christ! (Ephesians 1:19).

29 Jesus died and rose again, and we are assured that "God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him." Praise God that your future destiny is guaranteed by Jesus' victory over death (1 Thessalonians 4:14).

30 Do not be afraid. Jesus is the First and the Last. Though He was dead, "now look, I am alive for ever and ever!" Pray that you will live courageously as one revived by the power of the resurrection (Revelation 1:17b-18a).