

BYF—May 10, 2026
Resurrection Appearance #5: John 20:11-18 (and 20:1-10)
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1. Open with prayer, and then read aloud John 20:11-18.

2. Remind everyone about last week's lesson on Luke 24:36-53

3. Context: The Empty Tomb (vv. 1-10)

- The Rolled-Away Stone (v. 1)
- Mary Finds Peter (v. 2)
- Peter and the Other Disciple (vv. 3-10)
- Neat appearance of tomb belies snatching of body by intruders.
- **Question: *Why is it important to prove that the tomb is empty?***

4. Jesus' Appearance to Mary Magdalene (vv. 11-18)

- Mary Weeps (v. 11)
- The Two Angels (vv. 12-13)
- Jesus the Gardener? (vv. 14-15)
- Mary Recognizes Jesus (vv. 16-18)
 - Note the appearance of Jesus first to women (considered unreliable witnesses in court due to feminine nature!).
 - “Rabboni” is Aramaic for teacher, similar to Hebrew “rabbi.”
- **Question: *Why do you think Mary doesn't recognize Jesus? After she recognizes Him, what most impresses you about their encounter?***

5. Historicity of Resurrection Account Crucial

- Many scholars insist that nothing of importance is at stake if you say that Jesus never really rose from the dead.
 - Example #1: Rudolf Bultmann's comment that if the bones of Jesus were found in a Palestinian tomb, nothing essential to Christianity would be changed.
 - Example #2: Marcus Borg of the Jesus Seminar's quote—“I now see Easter very differently. For me it is irrelevant whether or not the tomb was empty. Whether Easter

involved something remarkable happening to the physical body of Jesus is irrelevant. My argument is not that we know the tomb was not empty or that nothing happened to his body, but simply that it doesn't matter. The truth of Easter, as I see it, is not at stake in this issue" (The Meaning of Jesus, 131).

- Response of orthodox Christianity to above summed up in quote from George Ladd:
"The uniqueness of the scandal of the Christian religion rests on the mediation of revelation through historical events. Christianity is not just a code for living or a philosophy of religion. It is rooted in real events of history. To some people this is scandalous because it means that the truth of Christianity is inexplicably bound up with the truth of certain historical facts. And if those facts should be disproved, Christianity would be false. This, however, is what makes Christianity unique because, unlike other world religions, modern man has a means of actually verifying Christianity's truth by historical evidence" (quoted by Gary Burge, *NIV Application Commentary: John*, 569).
- **Question: Is believing that Jesus rose from the dead as important as believing that He died on the cross for our sins? Explain.**

6. Close in prayer.