

JESUS: The Greatest Life of All

STUDY SIXTEEN

Not to Worry . . . He Is Risen!

Matthew 27:55–60; John 20:1–10, 24–28

Because Jesus lives, we will live forever with Him.

—Pastor Charles R. Swindoll

ON the day Christ was crucified, at noon, when the sun was at its peak, darkness fell like sackcloth “across the whole land” (Matthew 27:45). The light of the sky dimmed as the Light of the world died.

Sunlight eventually returned, but clouds of grief followed the disciples. Gloom draped the men who removed Jesus’ body from the cross and wrapped Him with “spices in long sheets of cloth” (John 19:40). Sorrow weighed heavily on the women, who watched the men put Jesus’ body in the cave-like tomb carved in the rock and “roll a great stone across the entrance” (Matthew 27:60).

The devil, it seemed, had achieved his diabolical mission to imprison the world in darkness and death. And yet, in his prophecy, Zechariah told “those in the darkness” to keep their eyes on the horizon—

*Through the heartfelt mercies of our God,
God’s Sunrise will break in upon us. (Luke 1:78 MSG)*

All hope was *not* lost. In the darkest hours, the light of dawn broke through when the Son of God rose from the dead!



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PREPARE YOUR HEART

Do you sometimes live under death's shadow? What fears do you carry in your darkest hours? Bring them to the Lord in prayer.

Father, life's worries surround me all around—my own eventual death, the passing of a loved one, the decline of health, the end of a career, the loss of a relationship. I hand them over to You. Help me to find hope in Jesus' empty tomb, where the promise of eternal life still glows. In His name, amen.



TURN TO THE SCRIPTURES

Some have claimed that Jesus merely lapsed into a coma. The tomb's cool air revived Him, and He walked out in His own power. That theory is impossible. Read [John 19:28–41](#), and write down the conclusive proofs of Jesus' death.

Jesus was dead, but the Jewish leaders still wrung their hands. According to [Matthew 27:62–66](#), what did they worry about, and what did they do?

Despite the extraordinary measures to secure the tomb, the women who came discovered what no one, not even Jesus' closest friends, could have imagined. ***Jesus' body was gone!***



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Observation: The Glory of Christ’s Resurrection

Let’s compare the resurrection accounts in the gospels. Each writer emphasized a particular point of view. Use your skills of observation to summarize how the disciples discovered the empty tomb and how they realized that Jesus was resurrected from the dead.

In Matthew’s and Mark’s accounts, the angel is the central character. What did the angel do and say? Who all heard the angel’s message and how did they respond?

<p>The angel and the earthquake <i>Matthew 28:1–4</i></p>	
<p>The women’s discussion <i>Mark 16:1–4</i></p>	
<p>The angel and the women <i>Matthew 28:5–8; Mark 16:5–7</i></p>	

The resurrected body of Jesus didn’t need to have the stone removed to exit the tomb. In His glorified state, space and matter were not obstacles. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll

Luke focused on the women’s experience. Summarize their encounter with the angels at the tomb, the message they received, and their report to the men.

<p>The women’s encounter <i>Luke 24:1–7</i></p>	
<p>The men’s response <i>Luke 24:8–12</i></p>	

The women got it! No one had taken the body. Jesus had, in the power of the living God, been raised from the dead! —Pastor Chuck Swindoll



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John highlighted Mary Magdalene’s, Peter’s, and John’s discovery of the empty tomb. How did each of these people process what they saw?

<p>Mary <i>John 20:1–2</i></p>	
<p>Peter and John <i>John 20:3–10</i></p>	

Jesus had come out of the tomb before the stone was removed. The stone was rolled back to let the disciples see in. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll



Interpretation: How Peter and John Came to Believe

The disciples didn’t immediately grasp the reality of Jesus’ resurrection. John used three Greek words for *saw* in his account to show Peter and John’s progression from seeing to believing.

John was the first to arrive at the tomb. “He stooped and looked in and *saw* the linen wrappings lying there, but he didn’t go in” (John 20:5 emphasis added). The Greek word for *saw* is *blepo*, which is the general word for physical sight, as when a blind man gained sight (*John 9:25*).

When Peter arrived, he pushed past John and entered the tomb.

He looked at the linen wrappings lying there and the face-cloth which had been on His head, not lying with the linen wrappings but folded up in a place by itself. (John 20:6–7 NASB)

Peter “looked at” the scene like a policeman examining a crime scene. The Greek word is *theoreo*, from which we get the word *theorize*. Remember, Mary told Peter that she thought thieves had stolen Jesus’ body (*John 20:2*), so Peter was looking for signs of a grave robber. But what was so unusual about Jesus’ graveclothes that perplexed Peter?



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Peter was still examining the scene when John entered and “saw and believed.” (20:8). The Greek word for *saw* here is *eiden*, which means “to perceive.” What did John perceive? What did he now believe? What clicked in his mind, according to *John 20:9*? (“The Scriptures” may refer to *Psalms 16:10*).

Peter and John were staring at the greatest miracle in all the New Testament. Not all the disciples became immediately convinced. But when each did, his entire personality was transformed. No longer fearful, no longer unsure or insecure. They were ready to proclaim the message to the world, and they died as martyrs doing so. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll



Correlation: What Jesus’ Resurrection Means

The resurrection of Jesus is the center point of Christianity. It confirms everything Jesus said and did, and it lays the foundation for everything we believe. Look up the following verses and write down the spiritual implications of the resurrection.

Romans 6:4: _____

Romans 8:11: _____

1 Corinthians 15:17–18: _____

2 Corinthians 4:14: _____

1 Thessalonians 4:14–17: _____

The resurrection validates Jesus’ death as being effective for forgiving sins. It enables us, through His Spirit, to live in power over sin. It gives us a living hope, assuring us of our future resurrection when Christ returns. Because Jesus was raised, so will we!



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When we come to death's door, we move through the door into eternity with God. We could never have done that had Jesus not been raised from the dead. Because He lives, we will live also. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll



Application: The Journey from Doubt to Belief

The disciples' reactions represent some of the ways people respond to the message of Jesus' resurrection.

1. Some people hear the message and respond immediately—*like the women at the tomb*. They heard the angels and they believed.
2. Some people immediately reject the message—*like the disciples at first*. The women's story “sounded like nonsense to the men, so they didn't believe it” (Luke 24:11).
3. Some people won't believe until they see proof—*like Thomas*. When Jesus appeared and showed His scars to Thomas, only then did Thomas believe. “My Lord and my God!” Thomas exclaimed (John 20:28).

What has been your response to the message of Jesus' resurrection? Describe your journey of belief.

Jesus told Thomas, “You believe because you have seen me. *Blessed* are those who believe without seeing me” (20:29 emphasis added). The blessing comes in many forms—peace of mind, hope for the future, new life in Christ, and freedom from fear.



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What blessing have you received because you believe without seeing?

For those who believe in Jesus' resurrection, death is not a hopeless plunge into the unknown. It is a door that leads us through Christ into the presence of our heavenly Father. Some people may follow a dead hero into death, but only a living Savior can lead us out of death into life—out of the darkness into the dawn.



A FINAL PRAYER

Father, I praise Your name because You have raised Your Son from the dead and seated Him in a place of power. He reigns over all things. He lifts me above the worries of this life and takes me on a journey from earth to heaven. I am secure in my hope because Jesus has risen from the dead. In Jesus' name, amen.



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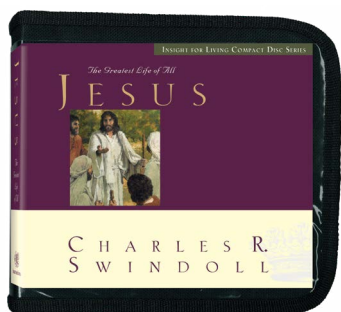
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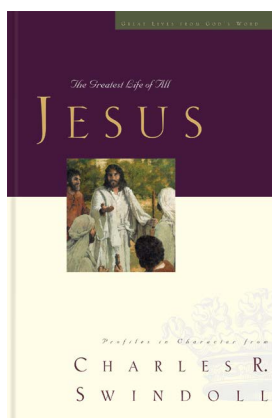
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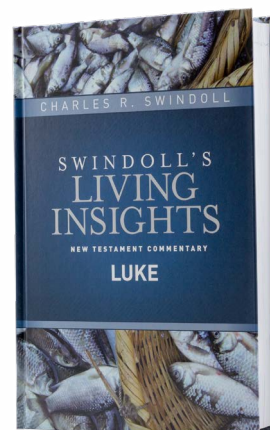
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For the 2023-2024 broadcasts, this *Searching the Scriptures* study was developed by Bryce Klabunde, vice president of *Searching the Scriptures* Ministries, based upon the original outlines, charts, and transcripts of Charles R. Swindoll's messages.



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