

# Three Days and a Large Stone

(John 20:1-10)

Yearly Theme: *“Love Is...”*

Series Title: *Truth and Justice*

April 21<sup>st</sup>, 2019

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## Something to think about:

It's Sunday morning, just before sunrise. The disciples of Jesus are hopelessly defeated. Some are beginning the journey back to their homes in complete discouragement and sorrow<sup>1</sup>, while others remain in Jerusalem contemplating what they're going to do now. Bewildered, confused, and in complete shock, the men and women who had followed Jesus are lost without Him by their side. One minute the world was theirs, the next minute their world was falling apart.

This is the scene as Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of Salome, and Joanna came to the tomb where Jesus' body had been laid three days earlier. They had come just before daybreak with spices and aromatic resins to embalm the body that had been hastily wrapped and placed in the tomb just before the Jewish Sabbath began at sundown on Friday evening. But, when the women arrive at the tomb, something unexpected happened. The women came expecting death, but all they found was an empty tomb. Let's take a look...

## *John 20:1-10 (NLT)*

<sup>1</sup> Early on Sunday morning, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and found that the stone had been rolled away from the entrance. <sup>2</sup> She ran and found Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved. She said, “They have taken the Lord’s body out of the tomb, and we don’t know where they have put him!”

<sup>3</sup> Peter and the other disciple started out for the tomb. <sup>4</sup> They were both running, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. <sup>5</sup> He stooped and looked in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he didn’t go in. <sup>6</sup> Then Simon Peter arrived and went inside. He also noticed the linen wrappings lying there, <sup>7</sup> while the cloth that had covered Jesus’ head was folded up and lying apart from the other wrappings. <sup>8</sup> Then the disciple who had reached the tomb first also went in, and he saw and believed— <sup>9</sup> for until then they still hadn’t understood the Scriptures that said Jesus must rise from the dead. <sup>10</sup> Then they went home.

We’ve been talking about truth and justice over these past few weeks, and have concluded that Jesus is the complete definition of truth.<sup>2</sup> But, what happens when the truth seems dead? What happens when the situation seems completely lost? Well, this is what we know about Jesus, and this is what we know about truth...

**Key Point:** *“Truth may seem dead for a time, but it will always rise in the end.”*

There are three characters in this narrative that illustrate this point:

- **Mary**<sup>3</sup>

*Though Mary and the disciples hung on every word that Jesus spoke, they didn’t always remember or understand what He meant. No matter how forthright and how transparent he was about his impending death and resurrection, Mary somehow lost it all in the head of the moment.*

*Truth may seem dead for a time, but it will always rise in the end.*

- **Peter**

*In the midst of all that he could see, it still didn’t make sense. Until this point, Peter hadn’t even understood the predictions given in the Old Testament about Jesus’ resurrection.<sup>4</sup>*

*Truth may seem dead for a time, but it will always rise in the end.*

- **John**

*Up to this point, John had fallen victim to the same hopelessness the rest of the disciples had fallen victim to. Until he peered into the empty tomb, and saw the empty grave clothes lying on the slab, he was taken over by grief. However, John’s mind reignited with hope as it was flooded with belief. Jesus had risen! Just like He said He would!*

*Truth may seem dead for a time, but it will always rise in the end.*

## Something to take home:

We are apt to forget truth if we don’t live it out on a daily basis. The truth of the resurrection of Christ is just that: *Truth!* But, truth is no good if it’s not believed. The disciples realized that. Those first to the tomb came to a stark realization... “The stone had been rolled away, not by grave robbers, and not so that Jesus could get out, but so they, and others, could get in and see that Jesus was gone.”<sup>5</sup>

No matter how tough it gets; no matter how difficult life may seem. When hope is lost, and when discouragement sets in, there is truth! and the truth is: *Jesus rose from the grave!*

**Key Point:** *“Truth may seem dead for a time, but it will always rise in the end.”*

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<sup>1</sup> Luke 24:14-34.

<sup>2</sup> John 14:6.

<sup>3</sup> Luke 8:1-3.

<sup>4</sup> Psalm 16:8-11.

<sup>5</sup> *Life Application Bible Commentary – John.*



# Three Days and a Large Stone

(John 20:1-10)

Series Title: *Truth and Justice*

## KICK STARTERS:

- ⇒ Has what you know to be true ever been tested? Explain...
- ⇒ What happens when the truth *is* tested?

**SCRIPTURE:** (Before studying this material, consider listening to the corresponding message online at: <http://www.northmaincog.org/media/sermon-media>)

*John 20:1-10 (NLT)*

<sup>1</sup> Early on Sunday morning, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and found that the stone had been rolled away from the entrance. <sup>2</sup> She ran and found Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved. She said, “They have taken the Lord’s body out of the tomb, and we don’t know where they have put him!” <sup>3</sup> Peter and the other disciple started out for the tomb. <sup>4</sup> They were both running, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. <sup>5</sup> He stooped and looked in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he didn’t go in. <sup>6</sup> Then Simon Peter arrived and went inside. He also noticed the linen wrappings lying there, <sup>7</sup> while the cloth that had covered Jesus’ head was folded up and lying apart from the other wrappings. <sup>8</sup> Then the disciple who had reached the tomb first also went in, and he saw and believed— <sup>9</sup> for until then they still hadn’t understood the Scriptures that said Jesus must rise from the dead. <sup>10</sup> Then they went home.

## GROUP DISCUSSION:

1. What’s going on in this passage of Scripture. Give a brief summary:  
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2. Mary Magdalene comes to the tomb early Sunday morning only to find the stone rolled away and Jesus’ body gone. In her disbelief and shock, she runs to get Peter and John. What does she tell them, and why is she so concerned (vv. 1-2)?  
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\_\_\_\_\_

3. After Mary tells Peter and John the news, what do they do (vv. 3-6a)?  
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4. What was the condition of the tomb when Peter and John arrived, and what was the condition of the grave clothes and head covering that encased Jesus’ body (vv. 6b-7)?  
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5. What does the disciple that reach the tomb first conclude in response to seeing the tomb empty (v. 8), and why do you think he reacts this way?  
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6. The Scriptures that this passage refers to in regard to Jesus rising from the dead are found in the Old Testament. For instance, read Psalm 16:8-11. Why do you think that the disciples didn’t realize the Scriptures *until* the resurrection (Read also Jesus’ prediction of His death and resurrection: *Matthew 16:21-23, 17:22-23, 20:17-19, 26:1-5; Mark 8:31-33, 9:30-32, 10:32-34; Luke 9:21-22, 9:43-45, 18:31-34; John 12-17*)?  
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7. What did Peter and John do after they saw for themselves that the tomb was empty (v. 10)?  
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8. What does it take for a person to believe the truth?  
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9. Why is it so hard for some people to believe the truth even when the evidence is clear?  
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10. How does Jesus’ resurrection from the dead prove once and for all that He is the Son of God, and why do some people refuse to believe it even when presented with archaeological, historical, and scientific evidence to prove it was real?  
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## SELF-EVALUATION/APPLICATION:

- ⇒ **TRUTH MAY SEEM DEAD FOR A TIME, BUT IT WILL ALWAYS RISE IN THE END.** We are apt to forget truth if we don’t live it out on a daily basis. The truth of the resurrection of Christ is just that: *Truth!* But, truth is no good if it’s not believed. The disciples realized that. Those first to the tomb came to a stark realization... “The stone had been rolled away, not by grave robbers, and not so that Jesus could get out, but so they, and others, could get in and see that Jesus was gone” (*Life Application Bible Commentary—John*).
- ⇒ **NO MATTER HOW TOUGH IT GETS;** no matter how difficult life may seem. When hope is lost, and when discouragement sets in, there is truth! and the truth is: *Jesus rose from the grave!*
- ⇒ **MEMORY VERSES:** *John 20:8* and *John 14:6*.