

Sunday morning
teaching plan

Date:
12th April
2026

TITLE:	Empty Tomb
THEME:	The Life of Jesus
AIM:	To look at Jesus' resurrection – how it demonstrated Jesus' divine power and how Jesus' followers were taken from sadness to joy.

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The news of Jesus' resurrection impacted His friends and followers. Even though Jesus had tried to prepare them, none of them were ready to accept the truth initially, not until they had seen Him (and in some cases touched Him) did they dare to believe it was true.

But that moment changed not only a bad few days into some extraordinary it was the foundation of the Christian faith the pathway to a relationship with Jesus.

What we believe happened on that day counts and will shape our lives.

WARM UP

The Resurrection

Watch The resurrection of Aslan:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WsOBsj8g6Dw>

Discuss how the girls' feelings changed in this very short period. When they first saw that Aslan was gone, they were confused and fearful but that very soon changed to joy when they saw him face to face.

This mirrors very closely the resurrection accounts of Jesus. His friends were not expecting a missing body, nor were they expecting to see Him physically alive again even though He had tried to prepare them for this.

Teaching Point: To introduce the Biblical resurrection accounts of Jesus.

MAIN TEACHING

Too good to believe....Mary's story

Read **John 20:1–2** and **John 20:11–18**.

Questions:

1. Why did Mary Magdalene go to the tomb so early in the morning? *(She and the other women had been unable to do anything for Jesus since the crucifixion because of the Sabbath day – this was her first opportunity.)*

2. How must she have felt when she saw that the stone had been moved away?
3. What did Mary call Jesus in verse 13? What does this tell us about how she felt about Jesus? (*Rabboni/Teacher; she respected Him*)
4. Why didn't Mary recognise Jesus straight away? (*Maybe because she was expecting Him to be dead*)
5. How did Mary recognise Jesus? (*He said her name; Jesus knows us by name illustrating that intimacy in knowledge of us*).
6. How do you think the disciples reacted to Mary's news? (*They didn't believe them; look up [Luke 24:11](#). A women's testimony wasn't given any confidence then but Jesus still used a women as the first person He appeared to showing He trusts women's testimony*).

In spite of the disciples' disbelief, Mary must have been full of awe and wonder. She had seen her Lord again and had heard His voice speaking her name – whether or not they believed her wouldn't change what she had seen or heard.

The same is true for us today – once we know Jesus for ourselves, once we understand that He knows each one of us personally by name, no one can take that away from us, whatever they believe.

Teaching Point: Mary recognised Jesus when He spoke her name and she knew for sure that He was alive.

Worst Days Ever....Peter's Story

Ask everyone to write about their worst day(s) ever – only using a maximum of 10 words.

Share a few examples together if appropriate.

In small groups list some of the things that had made the time leading up to Jesus' death and just after the worst days ever for Peter and Jesus' other disciples.

Once they have a list, try and organise them into a sentence with a maximum of 10 words. (Can include the last supper, Jesus predicting his death, the garden of gethsemane, Judas betrayal, Peter's denial, the trail, the torture, the crucifixion).

By the Sunday morning, Peter and the other disciples must have been absolutely exhausted and depressed. Then, very early in the morning, Mary Magdalene arrives out of breath and in a distressed state with the news that Jesus' body has gone. Both Peter and John must have wondered whether things could get any worse.

Read what happens next from [John 20:1–10](#)

- What did Mary think had happened at first?
- What did Peter and the other disciple notice inside the tomb?
- What was unusual about the cloths?
- What do you think Peter and John thought when they were confronted with the empty tomb?

- Why do you think the other disciple believed even though he didn't understand everything yet?
- Have you ever believed something before fully understanding it?
- Why is it sometimes hard to believe in things we can't see?

- What helps *you* believe in Jesus?
- What questions or doubts do you still have?

Although they didn't yet realise it, that first Easter Sunday would be one of their best days ever.

Teaching Point: What Jesus' followers initially thought was a terrible day was in fact one of the best ever.

He is Risen

Don't be alarmed," he said. "You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who was crucified. He has risen!"

Mark 16:6a (NIV)

Provide each of the young people with a large stone and encourage them to write out the memory verse on it. They can then decorate it and varnish it. Encourage them to use it as a paperweight or door stop in their room at home, as a reminder that Jesus is alive.

TAKEAWAY

EXTRA INFORMATION

Equipment:

Stones and stone pens.