

LESSONS THIS QUARTER

- 1) 03 Mar.....Genesis 21-23.....A Substitute
- 2) 10 Mar.....Genesis 24.....Guidance Needed
- 3) 17 Mar.....Genesis 25-27.....A Deceiver
- 4) 24 Mar.....Genesis 28-30.....A Stairway
- 5) 31 Mar.....**John 20.....Believe!**
- 6) 07 Apr.....Genesis 30-31.....Blessed
- 7) 14 Apr.....Genesis 32-33.....Wrestled
- 8) 21 Apr.....Genesis 34-36.....Renewed
- 9) 28 Apr.....Genesis 37.....Dreamer
- 10) 05 May.....Genesis 38-39.....Accused
- 11) 12 May.....Genesis 40-41.....Revealed
- 12) 19 May.....Genesis 42-46.....Reconcile
- 13) 26 May.....Genesis 47-50.....Revenge?

INTRODUCTION

- The crux of our faith – the Resurrection, is only addressed in 1 chapter each in Matt, Mark & Luke. John covers it in 2 chapters
- Matthew's account constitutes less than 5% of his Gospel; Mark gave 6% of his story to the resurrection; Luke 4%; and John 9%.
- If the Resurrection of Christ is the cornerstone of our faith why so few details provided in the Gospels?
- Does having more information, more facts, really make it easier to believe in something?
- Why is it difficult to change our beliefs?
Do we have the wrong facts? Wrong Assumptions? Not enough information? Fear of the unknown? Fear of Rejection? Pride?

Passage	Comments
John 20:1-4	<p>Everybody is Running to and from the Tomb</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • v1. Mary came to the tomb while it was still dark. Do you think she was up all night? Her courage was awesome considering she would probably be finding Roman soldiers guarding the tomb – at night & alone • v2. After Mary Magdalene saw the stone moved away, and no guards, she RAN to get Peter and John • vv3-4. Peter & John RAN to the tomb to check it out • Do you think they were frantic, nervous, perplexed, scared, doubting, all of the above? • It was a good thing there were no TV cameras, cell phones, computers, radios, social media, and the internet around at that time. The resurrection story would've truly been twisted and distorted beyond imagination and recognition. God thinks of everything!
20:5-9	<p>Who's Afraid of the Unknown?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • v5. John, "the other disciple," hesitated entering the tomb for some unknown reason, possibly a little afraid and wanted to wait for backup • v6. Peter, sometimes a bull in a China shop, catches up to John and marches in to check it out • Is it OK to be like Peter – bold and reckless, or like John, overly cautious? • vv8-9. John saw & believed, but v9 says they did not understand the Scripture that Christ must rise again from the dead. What John believed, then, was Mary's report of the Lord's body being gone • But why were the Disciples blind to the Scripture, especially when Jesus plainly told them numerous times He must undergo suffering and death, and He would rise again after three days? • Aren't we the same way when people tell us things that are beyond our comprehension at first (like calculus) until we get to a point when it sinks in and we finally GET IT! It just takes time. • Thank God for His patience with all of us

Passage	Comments
Stumbling Blocks to the Truth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More often than not, our assumptions and biases, which form our perceptions of what is true, are the old wineskins (Matthew 9:17), or the strongholds and fortresses which have to be demolished and rebuilt before we change our beliefs2Corinthians 10:4 • Jesus followed a timely principle to get His disciples to see the Truth: "Gently instruct those who <i>don't</i> see the truth. Perhaps God will change their hearts, and they will <i>eventually</i> get it." (Rod's rendition)2Timothy 2:25
20:11-18	<p>Mary to the Rescue Again</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why would Jesus make His first appearance from the grave to a woman with a shady past? • To Mary's credit, she watched her Lord suffer on the cross while most the disciples went & hid19:25 • v15. Jesus asked Mary two questions beginning with Why & Who. But they didn't jar Mary out of her despair • v16. But when Jesus got personal and said her name, it registered and she popped up with a new attitude • v17. "Stop clinging to me" – Mat 28:9 records women holding Jesus by the feet, and that was OK. Later Jesus tells Thomas to put his hand into His side (v27). Mary M. possibly wasn't willing to let Jesus go. • v18. Mary shared what she saw and heard from the Lord to His Lord's disciples, but we know from Mark 16:10 they did not believe her testimony. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Would we be just as unbelieving?
	<p>Does God still open up minds to perceive Him correctly?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God did supernaturally intervene to open up certain eyes/minds: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ His disciplesLuke 24:45, 1John 5:20 ♦ He struck Saul (aka Paul) down to wake him upActs 9:3-4 • But God expects us to use the reasoning ability He gave us to discern and acknowledge His truth <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Come now, let us reason togetherIsaiah 1:18 ♦ If you can discern the sky for rain, you should be able to discern spiritual things (this is not rocket science)Mat 16:3; Lk 12:56 ♦ We may need to remove some old wineskins (bad assumptions, biases, or pride) to perceive the truthMark 2:22

CONCLUSION/APPLICATIONS

- We must realize God gave us all we need to know about the Lord's resurrection for our faith to stand firm, and He provided wiggle room for those who do not want to believe to continue in their unbelief

NEXT WEEK: Genesis 30-31. It's time for Jacob to take his wives and 12 sons back to his homeland, but not without more drama ensuing.

The Back Pew – Jeff Larson



The First Annual Empty Tomb Dash and John defeats Peter [John 20:1-4](#)