GBC/Crossroads International Church/ CIC again/CIC yet again Dr. Rick Griffith

12 April 1998 (Easter)/8 April 2007 (Easter)/20 Feb 2011/1 Apr 18 (Easter) Message #28

NIV 50 Minutes

**New Life!**

Title

*John 20*

**Topic:** New Life (Easter)

**Subject:** Christ’s resurrection

**Complement:** meets you at your point of need.

**Purpose:** The listeners will be encouraged that whether despairing, discouraged or doubting, Christ's resurrection moves us to go on!

**Attribute:** We worship our Living Christ

**Meditation:** Revelation 1:17-18 [also Ps. 42:1-2; 84:2; Jer. 10:10]

**Video:** VTS\_01\_7.VOB 8:04 to

# Introduction

### Interest: “Dad, is Easter a chicken?”

Black

#### That’s what John asked me at dinner one Saturday night when he was five years old. I replied, “What made you think that?”

#### “Well… there’s Easter eggs…”

#### My boy was thinking—using his reasoning skills. And I, a theologian father, was sinking in my chair! Well, John and I diverted from our evening OT reading for a few nights and did some NT brush up!

Bunny Eggs

### Need Due to Diversions: This interchange with John caused me to reflect on how many substitutes Satan has created for Easter to get us off the real issue. We focus on eggs, bunnies, and chocolate. They don't even make sense because rabbits don't have eggs!

Chocolate

#### Such a focus appeared in a newspaper where a German optician unveiled a new contact lens for Easter: “Easter in View” says the caption. I thought, “Now what does this Playboy bunny have to do with Easter?”

Contacts

#### Satan has made the same replacements to Christmas where, instead of focus on Christ’s birth, we have Santas, reindeer, gifts, obligations and Panadol.

Christmas

#### In contrast, the non-Christian religious holidays have no satanic substitutes—Hari Raya is Hari Raya, Vesak Day is Vesak Day, etc.

### Need Due to Doubts: Our enemy know the importance of the cross and resurrection, so many so-called “evidences” against Christ create doubt at this time:

Three Crosses

#### We all know about *The Da Vinci Code* that claims Jesus died as a man—not God—saying that his deity was invented 300 years later. Even the claim that Christ was married to Mary Magdalene affects our movie clips, like “The Gospel of John” which depicts Mary Magdalene at the Passover meal when the NT says nothing of the sort.

Da Vinci Code

#### The Gospel of Judas letter depicts Judas as the hero of the story who had arranged with Christ this plot to put Christ on the cross.

Judas

#### In 2007 the ossuary or bone box of Jesus was supposedly discovered as “The Tomb of Jesus.”

Ossuary

#### But did you notice what *month* all these doubting mechanisms came out?

Timing

##### *The Da Vinci Code* book: March 2003

##### *The Da Vinci Code* movie: May 2006

##### *The Gospel of Judas*: April 2006

##### *The Tomb of Jesus*: March 2007

##### Isn’t the timing a little too obvious? Each release was carefully designed to happen right around Easter each year! Expect another one this year too. When have you ever seen a so-called evidence campaign against Buddha, Mohammed, Hinduism, or any other religion near their holidays?

Risen Door

### But what would our church be without a ***living*** Savior?

### Subject: So we’ve gathered here together today to consider what Christ’s resurrection means—and the answer, of course, is victory over death. We may have our struggles, but our most difficult struggle is with death.

John 20

#### Some time ago Susan and I were listening to a radio announcer reporting on the death rate. I can't recall if he said the rate was going up or down. But with a puzzled look on her face, Susan said, "I thought the death rate was still 100%!" It's true.

#### This struggle is so hard that everyone fails. All people die. Death has the whole world in its grasp—except One!

#### Today we celebrate the fact that Jesus Christ has won the victory in the most difficult struggle of all—He has defeated death itself!

### Background: Jesus had died and it looked like the Jewish leaders had put Him away once and for all, but Jesus emerged the victor!

#### In fact, Jesus controlled His own arrest (John 18:1-11).

Arrest

Trial

#### Jesus' illegal trials proved Him innocent (John 18:12-19:16a).

#### Then Jesus' death paid for our sin (John 19:16b-42).

Death

#### Finally, his tomb was made secure with a detachment of Roman guards.

Tomb

#### Years ago Napoleon’s forces seemed unstoppable as he rampaged through Europe. The British General Wellington was sent to stop Napoleon’s advance into England. As the British waited with anticipation on the outcome of the battle, the message came back, “Wellington defeated…” and then the fog set in. Later, the fog cleared and the full message was revealed: “Wellington defeated Napoleon at Waterloo”! What the British people thought was defeat actually was only part of the message. And the same is true when people see only Good Friday—death and defeat. However, the full message is that “Jesus defeated Satan at Calvary”! [RESURRECTION victory over Calvary]. And this has implications for each one of us!

• Satan

• Jesus defeated

• Napoleon

Wellington defeated

### Main Idea: In our text today we will see this truth: Christ’s resurrection meets you at your point of need. [In your unique situation, you can gain hope and encouragement from the assurance that Christ is alive!]

MI

### Text: John 20 is our text today.

### Preview: This chapter tells us both about the tomb itself as well as what this means to us today.

### Transition: But how do we know He’s alive? Well…

# I. The empty tomb shows us that Christ is alive today (20:1-9).

MP

[The rolled stone and missing body are evidence of His resurrection.]

1-9

VTS\_01\_7.VOB from 7:22-8:57

## In verses 1-9 we see three witnesses of the empty tomb: Mary, John, and Peter.

### Mary Magdalene (and actually several other women too, not mentioned by John) saw the empty tomb (20:1-2).

Witnesses

#### Mary was the woman from whom Jesus cast out seven demons. She probably thought, "Now I can show my appreciation for my Lord with these spices."

#### But by the time she got to the tomb, Matthew records that a huge earthquake split the morning stillness and an angel had moved the stone. Not only had the rocks split, but the guards split too!

#### She was shocked to see that the 1 1/2 ton stone over the door of the tomb was moved out of the way. Apparently she didn’t enter the tomb but only looked inside and saw that the body was gone.

#### The first thing she could think of was to tell Peter and John, two of Christ's closest disciples: "The grave robbers have even gotten to our Lord's tomb and stolen His body!"

#### The other gospels say after Mary left, the other women went inside the tomb and witnessed angels who reported that He had risen—but Mary didn’t know this.

(So Mary and at least 5 other women with her witnessed the empty tomb first…)

### John was next to see the stone rolled away and the body gone (20:3-5).

#### Other places in John's gospel reveal "the disciple Jesus loved" to be John.

#### He was younger than Peter and outran him in the footrace to the sepulcher.

#### And in his more hesitant manner, John didn’t enter the tomb.

### Then Peter, in typical impetuous fashion for Peter, boldly rushed into the sepulcher as the third witness that morning (20:6-9).

## But what did these witnesses actually see?

### They saw that the Roman seal—a cord stretched over the stone and fastened at either end with wax and stamped with the insignia of the Roman Empire—it was broken.

Seal

### They saw the huge stone that took 20 men to roll into place was rolled away.

Stone

### They saw that the guards who had been watching the tomb on penalty of death for any negligence—they were gone too!

Gone

### Now notice in verses 6-7 what else they saw.

Linens

#### The strips of linen around Christ's body laid where He had been—probably in an empty cocoon shape formed when the body went through them.

#### The cloth which had been over His head "was folded up by itself, and separate from the linen." Jesus was a real gentleman who always cleaned up after Himself! I bet He always made His bed!

(We all have heard of the phrase, "Seeing is believing," but is it really true? Does seeing always result in believing? Apparently not because…)

Seeing is Believing?

## Although Peter and John witnessed the same event they had different reactions.

### Peter only knew that the body was gone and later that day believed Christ arose when Jesus appeared to Him personally.

### But John, verse 8 says, "also went inside. He saw and believed."

### In fact, in verses 5-8 there are three different words for "see."

“Seeing”

#### John "looked" in verse 5, which means "peeped" (Morris, 832 n. 15; cf. “glanced” Moffat).

• look

#### In verse 6 Peter "saw," meaning he "beheld attentively" (BKC; cf. “noticed” Moffat).

• saw

#### But verse 8 records a third word, also translated "saw" in the NIV, but it has the idea that John "perceived." You see, John didn't just see some linens but perceived the *significance* of the grave clothes and believed.

• SAW

#### One writer says, "Peter must have been thinking, 'Why would a grave robber have left the clothes in this order? Why take the [naked] body of Jesus?' But John perceived that the missing body and the position of the grave clothes was not due to a robbery. He realized that Jesus had risen from the dead and had gone through the grave clothes. The tomb was not open to let Jesus out but to let the disciples and the world [in] to see that He rose" (BKC).

#### Even still, Peter and John didn't understand how Christ's resurrection fulfilled Old Testament prophecy. That's why verse 10 says that they went back to their homes—not to proclaiming the news in the streets!

(We've seen in verses 1-9 that Christ is alive because He left us an empty tomb. The rolled stone and missing body give evidence to His resurrection. But you know, an empty tomb in itself is not proof that Christ rose from the dead.

3 Witness

• 3 Appear

We've seen that there were three **witnesses** at the **tomb** itself. Now in John 20:10-29 we will see John record three **appearances** of Christ **away** from the tomb.

Each one of these three appearances encouraged different people with differing needs, just as we all have unique needs. As we look briefly at verses 10-29 I think we'll see that…)

# II. Christ's resurrection meets you at your need (20:10-29).

MP

Knowing that Jesus is alive will encourage us just where we need faith.

These various people (Mary, the disciples, and Thomas) were despairing, discouraged and doubting. In each situation Christ’s resurrection encouraged them.

## Christ's resurrection comforts the despairing [Mary] (20:10-18).

Despair

### What was Mary's problem? She was seeking comfort in her grief—but at least she was seeking and taking initiative.

Despair

10-18

#### She probably came back to the tomb because of her grief that her Lord would not have a proper burial, which was very important to Jews.

#### Notice her answer to whom she thought was the gardener in verse 15b. "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him."

##### She wants the body to give it a proper burial, without even thinking about the fact that she wasn't strong enough to take the body anywhere by herself anyway.

##### This is typical of a very grief-stricken person who doesn't make allowances or go into full explanations.

### Mary needed comfort.

#### And Christ met her right in her need.

#### How? He said her name. There's something comforting about hearing your name, especially when you're despairing. That's why we should make it such a priority to be good at learning names.

#### When Jesus said, "Mary," there was no question as to His identity.

#### His resurrection comforted her to the point where she could go and comfort others, which she immediately did (verse 18).

### Perhaps God's message to you today about the resurrection is because you, too, like Mary, are despairing and need comfort.

Need comfort?

#### Your marriage is struggling, your kids are turning away from what you value most, your financial situation is desperate, or people have failed you.

#### The Good Shepherd knows your name, your situation, and your solution.

#### “He calls His own sheep by name and leads them out…" [John 10:3].

#### This Shepherd said, "No one takes [My life] from Me, but I lay it down of My own accord. I have authority to lay it down and to take it up again" [10:18a].

#### Since Christ has taken his own life up again, conquering death itself—our greatest foe—he can comfort you with this same power.

#### Will you trust Him who defeated death to defeat whatever may be the cause of your own despair today?

(Mary was despairing and Christ's resurrection comforts the despairing even today. But there's a second group of needy people in verses 19-23—His own disciples. Not only does Christ being alive encourage the despairing, but these verses teach us that…)

## Christ's resurrection showed he was God to the *discouraged* disciples (20:19-23).

19-23

Discourage

### These men hit the depths of discouragement.

Black

#### Imagine you being with Christ for over 3 years.

##### You've seen Him heal a blind man right before your eyes.

##### You were there when He raised Lazarus from the dead.

##### You grew to love Him for His tenderness with little kids, and yet…

##### You respected Him for standing up for right—like when He cleared the ungodly, money hungry people from the Temple.

##### You trusted Him, being convinced He was the Messiah.

##### You planned on ruling the new kingdom with Him.

#### You see one crowd proclaim, "Hosanna" and then only five days later another crowd cries, "Crucify Him!"

#### Since you were with Him so much in public—since you almost got arrested with Him—there's no doubt the Jews would recognize you on the streets as a cohort of the "supposed king" executed a few days before.

#### You're no dummy—you keep the doors locked.

### You've never been more discouraged. You need encouragement.

Peter

#### Then, in the twinkling of an eye, Jesus appears right there in the room before your very eyes!

#### "Peace be with you," or "Shalom!" He says in the typical Jewish fashion.

#### You're overjoyed! You want to tell everyone He's alive!

#### And that's just what He says to do: "As the Father has sent Me, I am sending you" (v. 21).

#### Sending us to do what? To announce heaven's terms on how a person can receive forgiveness.

#### "If one believes in Jesus, then a Christian has the right to announce his forgiveness. If a person rejects Jesus' sacrifice, then a Christian can announce that that person is not forgiven" (BKC).

Discouraged?

#### The perfect tense here refers to proclaiming what has already been claimed in heaven (clarified as “have been forgiven” in the NASB).

### But does this relate to us? Could any of us be discouraged like the apostles?

#### You bet—and discouragement chokes out our potential to help others. When you lose sight of the resurrection, you lose zeal for evangelism. Our knowing that Christ rose from the dead encourages us to witness for Him!

#### You may feel let down by people like the disciples felt let down by Christ.

##### Maybe it took all you could muster just to make it here today rather than stay home in front of the computer or TV.

##### God wants you to take your eyes off circumstances and place them on Christ (gaze-glance principle).

(Unfortunately some still doubt. Some of us here today relate more to despairing Mary, others identify most with the discouraged disciples, but some are more like the doubting Thomas seen in verses 24-29, but…)

## Christ's resurrection proved he was God to the *doubting* Thomas (20:24-29).

Doubt

### Whereas Mary needed comfort and the disciples needed encouragement, Thomas needed evidence.

24-29

### Jesus met his need just as He met the needs of the other two groups.

Thomas

#### Thomas got the proof he needed in v. 27: "Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe." Interestingly, it never says that Thomas ever did touch Him!

#### But when he saw, he did believe and responded, "My Lord and my God!"

### Maybe you have doubts about Christ's resurrection like Thomas did.

Need proof?

#### Perhaps you don't feel that the evidence is as overwhelming as I see it.

#### All this means is that you need to do more study! Only those ignorant of history disbelieve the resurrection of Christ.

#### I’d be glad to talk to you more individually and evaluate the facts with you.

#### But Jesus typically doesn’t make house calls today. That’s why He says in verse 29 that believers who have not seen are even more blessed.

#### Just look at the evidence and ask *who moved the stone*? Some say Christ never died—he just fought his way out! The *Romans* wouldn’t have moved the stone on fear of death, the *Jewish leaders* did all they could to *prevent* it, the disciples were so despondent that they certainly couldn’t have fought off an entire Roman guard to steal a body and die for the lie!

Who?

(But believing that Christ rose from the grave is a very necessary part of being a Christian. In fact, we see in verses 30-31 that…)

# III. Christ's miracles are to bring us to trust Him (20:30-31).

30-31

MP

[The purpose Jesus did miraculous signs was to help us believe.]

## Christ did many other miracles that the Bible doesn't mention (30).

20:30-31

### Obviously the New Testament doesn't tell us everything Jesus ever did.

### But it does tell us enough to place our trust in Him.

## Throughout his book John gave these signs or miracles to prove Christ's deity (31a).

## These miracles are to help us trust Christ for salvation and receive eternal life (31b).

(So how can we wrap up all John is saying to us in chapter 20? Simply this…)

# Conclusion

### Christ’s resurrection meets you at your point of need—for comfort, encouragement, or proof—whether seeking, discouraged or doubting (MI restated).

MI

### What is your need this morning? Trust the living Savior to meet it! With whom in our story do you relate most?

Trust

#### Are you seeking comfort today like Mary? Take comfort that if He has defeated death itself, any other problem for Him is a piece of cake.

• Despair

#### Maybe you're discouraged like the disciples.

• Discouraged

##### 1) Do you fear what may happen to you if you *really* commit to Christ?

##### 2) John G. Paton committed himself to share Christ with a cannibalistic tribe of savages. Some friends could hardly believe he was doing this and tried to convince him not to go, saying, “You’ll be eaten by cannibals!” His response? “God has led you here to stay and die in this country and eventually be eaten by worms. But for me, it doesn’t matter to me whether I am eaten by cannibals or worms!”

##### 3) Christ getting a new body means we also will get a new body. This helps us put life in its true perspective. Don’t let anyone or anything discourage you from pursuing his calling for your life.

#### Perhaps you have some doubts as Thomas did.

• Doubt

##### Remember the issue isn't "seeing is believing."

##### Many in Christ's day saw all kinds of miracles but still rejected him.

#### What was so good about Good Friday? [Gospel Explanation] The *good* news is that you can believe that Jesus died for you but is alive today so you can have eternal life!

Friday

##### Arrest – trial – death – resurrection

##### Christ paid for your sin

Paid

##### [Optional: John 10:10/ Rom 3:23/ John 5:8/ Rev 3:20]

Ascension

##### Christ ascended so He’s still alive today

##### Jesus can give you a new life

Rose

##### Prayer to receive Christ is as simple as A-B-C

A-B-C

##### Yet if you feel some legitimate questions prevent you from trusting Christ, let's talk, OK? I’ll just wait for you right here up front.

### Closing song: “Because He Lives”

**Black**

Grace Fellowship Church Palm Sunday/Easter Series Rick Griffith

April 19, 1987 Message 2 of 2

NIV 35 Minutes

The Thrill of Victory!

John 20

**Subject:** Knowing that Christ is victorious over death

**Complement:** encourages each of us in our individual needs.

**Purpose:** The listeners will be encouraged that whether they are despairing, discouraged or doubting, Christ's resurrection moves us to go on!

**Attribute:** We worship our Living God

**Meditation:** Revelation 1:17-18 [also Ps 42:1-2; 84:2; Jer 10:10]

Introduction

1. I wonder if anyone here likes to lose—enjoys being on a losing team? No, victory encourages us all. Everyone likes to be on the winning side.

a. Take, for example, victory in sports.

1) The *Wide World of Sports* saying "The thrill of victory and the agony of defeat" is for the most part true.

2) Of the eight years I played baseball as a boy, the two years that my team won the championship were my favorite.

b. Victory in war—being a citizen of the winning country also is something each person desires because everyone wants their own country to win.

c. In fact, victory in any kind of struggle is our preference.

2. Sports and war may be very real struggles, but the most difficult struggle is our struggle with death.

a. This struggle is so hard that everyone fails. All people die.

b. Death has the whole world in its grasp.

c. Not too long ago the radio announcer was giving a report on the death rate. I can't remember whether he said the rate was going up or down. Susan was listening with me, and with a puzzled look on her face she said, "I thought the death rate was still 100%!" It's true.

3. This Easter Sunday we celebrate the fact that Jesus Christ has won the victory in the most difficult struggle of all—He has defeated death itself!

4. [RESURRECTION, OF CHRIST (victory over death)= Wellington’s victory over Napoleon at Waterloo though people thought Wellington was defeated!]

5. The resurrection of Christ spells victory—and that's why Easter for us is a time of celebration.

M.I. 6. Through our text this morning we will see this truth: Knowing that Christ is victorious over death encourages each of us in our individual needs.

Restate [Each of us in our unique situations can gain hope and encouragement from the assurance that Christ is alive!]

I. Jesus is alive because He left us an empty tomb (20:1-9).

The rolled stone and missing body are evidence of His resurrection.

A. In these few verses we see three witnesses to the fact of the empty tomb: Mary, John and Peter.

1. Mary Magdalene (and actually several other women too, not mentioned by John) saw the empty tomb (20:1-2).

a. Mary was the woman from whom Jesus cast out seven demons. She probably thought, "Now I can show my appreciation for my Lord with these spices."

b. By the time she got to the tomb, though, Matthew records that the huge earthquake had already occurred, an angel had moved the stone, and the guards split.

c. She was shocked to see that the 1 1/2 ton stone over the door of the tomb was moved out of the way.

d. The first thing she could think to do was to tell Peter and John, two of Christ's closest disciples: "The grave robbers have even gotten to our Lord's tomb and stolen His body!"

(So Mary and the at least 5 women with her witnessed the empty tomb first…)

2. John was next to see the stone rolled away and the body gone (20:3-5).

a. Several other places in John's gospel reveal "the disciple Jesus loved" to be John.

b. He was younger than Peter and outran him in the foot race to the sepulcher.

c. But in his more hesitant manner did not enter the tomb.

(But what about the 3rd witness of the empty tomb? Peter!)

3. Peter, in typical impetuous, Petrine fashion, boldly rushes into the sepulcher as the third witness that morning.

B. But what did these witnesses actually see?

1. They saw that the Roman seal (a cord stretched over the stone and fastened at either end with wax and stamped with the insignia of the Roman Empire)—it was broken.

2. They saw that the huge stone that took 20 men to roll into place was gone.

3. They saw that the guards who had been watching the tomb on penalty of death for any negligence—they were gone too!

4. Now notice in verses 6-7 what else they saw.

a. The strips of linen around Christ's body were laying where He had lay (not necessarily in a cocoon shape as has previously been taught).

b. The cloth which had been over His head "was folded up by itself, and separate from the linen." Jesus was a real gentleman who always cleaned up after Himself! I bet He always made His bed!

c. Sometimes I'm asked, "What do you think of the Shroud of Turin?"

1) That's that 14 foot piece of cloth with the imprint of the body of a man who had been crucified. Is this shroud of Jesus Christ?

2) Verses 6-7 give us the answer: Jesus was wrapped in **strips** of linen and a **separate** cloth for His head.

3) Evidently the Shroud is of some other man who was crucified.

(We all have heard of the phrase, "Seeing is believing," but is it really true? Does seeing always result in believing?)

C. Apparently not because although Peter and John witnessed the same event they had different reactions.

1. Peter only knew that the body was gone and believed Christ arose some time later.

2. But John, verse 8 says, "also went inside. He saw and believed."

3. In fact, in verses 5-8 there are three different words for "see."

a. In verse 5 John "**looked**," best understood in our vernacular as "**peeped**" (Morris, 832 fn. 15).

b. In verse 6 Peter "**saw**," meaning he "**beheld attentively**" (BKC).

c. But verse 8 records a third word, also translated "**saw**," having the idea that John was "**perceiving**." You see, John didn't just see some linens but perceived the significance of the grave clothes and believed.

d. One writer comments on Peter's thoughts, "Peter must have been thinking, 'Why would a grave robber have left the clothes in this order? Why take the [naked] body of Jesus?' But John perceived that the missing body and the position of the grave clothes was **not** due to a robbery. He realized that Jesus had risen from the dead and had gone **through** the grave clothes. The tomb was not open to let Jesus **out** but to let the disciples and the world [**in**] to see that He rose" (BKC).

e. Even still, Peter and John didn't understand how Christ's resurrection fulfilled Old Testament prophecy. That's why verse 10 says that they went back to their homes—not to proclaiming the news in the streets!

(We've seen in verses 1-9 that Christ is alive because He left us an empty tomb. The rolled stone and missing body are evidence of His resurrection. But you know, an empty tomb, as good of evidence as it may seem, is not the only proof we have that Christ rose from the dead.

We've seen that there were three **witnesses** to at the **tomb** itself. Now in John 20:10-29 we will see that there were three **appearances** of Christ **away** from the tomb.

Each one of these three appearances encouraged different people with differing needs, just as we all have unique needs. As we look briefly at verses 10-29 I think we'll see that…)

II. Christ's resurrection meets each of us in our unique need (20:10-29).

Knowing that Jesus is alive will encourage us just where we need faith.

I see these various people, Mary, the disciples and Thomas as the despairing, the discouraged and the doubting.

A. Christ's resurrection encourages the despairing [Mary] (20:10-18).

1. What was Mary's need? She was despairing and needed comfort.

a. "John says nothing about her return to the tomb, nor about whether she got there before [Peter and John] left" (Morris).

b. But she came back, probably because of her grief that her Lord would not be able to have a proper burial, which was very important to Jews.

c. One writer says, "The depth of her grief is perhaps due to the emphasis the Jews of the day placed on correct and seemingly burial. They regarded with abhorrence any disrespect paid to a corpse" (Morris).

d. Mary experienced so much grief that she didn't even recognize angels or Christ! (Of course, this may be because the angels looked like regular men and Christ, in His glorified body, wasn't easily distinguishable.)

e. When she finally **did** find who she was looking for, in her grief and despair she didn't even recognize Him! Perhaps it was because of her tears flowing so freely that even after she saw Jesus she turned away.

f. There's another indication of her deep despair. Notice her answer to whom she thought was the gardener in verse 15b. "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him."

1) The implication is that she wants the body to give it a proper burial, without even thinking about the fact that she wasn't strong enough to take the body anywhere by herself.

2) But she doesn't even identify **which** body is meant—nor even that she was referring to a **body**!

3) This is typical of a very grief-stricken person who doesn't make allowances or go into full explanations.

2. Mary needed comfort

a. And Christ met her right in her need.

b. How? He said her **name**. There's something comforting about hearing your name, especially when you're despairing. That's why we should make it such a priority to be good at learning names.

c. When Jesus said, "Mary," there was no question as to His identity.

d. His resurrection comforted her to the point where she could go and comfort others, which she immediately did (verse 18).

3. Perhaps God's message to you today about the resurrection is because you, too, like Mary, are despairing and need comfort.

a. Your marriage is on the rocks, your kids are turning away from what you value most, you're despairing in your financial situation.

b. The Good Shepherd knows your name, your situation, your solution.

c. "He calls His own sheep by name and leads them out…" [John 10:3].

d. This Shepherd has said, "No one takes [My life] from Me, but I lay it down of My own accord. I have authority to lay it down and to take it up again" [John 10:18a].

e. Since Christ has taken His own life up again, conquering death itself—our greatest foe—we can have that thrill of victory!

f. Will you trust Him who defeated death to defeat whatever may be the cause of your own despair today?

(Mary was despairing and news of Christ's resurrection comforts the despairing even today. But there's a second group of people with need in verses 19-23—His own disciples. These verses teach us that Christ being alive not only encourages the despairing but…)

B. Christ's resurrection encourages the discouraged [Disciples] (20:19-23).

1. These men hit the depths of discouragement.

a. Imagine being with Christ for over 3 years.

1) You've seen Him heal a blind man right before your eyes.

2) You were there when He raised Lazarus from the dead.

3) You grew to love Him for His tenderness with the little children, and yet…

4) You respected Him for standing up for right—like when He cleared the ungodly, money hungry people from the Temple.

5) You trusted Him, being convinced He was the Messiah.

6) You planned on ruling the new kingdom with Him.

b. Then in five short days you saw the crowd do a complete 180—from saying "Hosanna" to "Crucify Him!"

c. Since you were with Him so much in public—since you almost got arrested with Him— there's no doubt the Jews would recognize you on the streets as a cohort of the "supposed king" executed a few days before.

d. You're no dummy—you keep the doors locked.

2. You've never been more discouraged. You need encouragement.

a. Then, in the twinkling of an eye, Jesus appears right there in the room before **your** very eyes!

b. "Peace be with you," or "Shalom!" He says in the typical Jewish fashion.

c. You're overjoyed! You want to tell everyone He's alive!

d. And that's just what He says to do: "As the Father has sent Me, I am sending you" (v. 21).

e. Sending us to do what? To announce heaven's terms on how a person can receive forgiveness.

f. "If one **believes** in Jesus, then a Christian has the right to announce his forgiveness. If a person **rejects** Jesus' sacrifice, then a Christian can announce that that person is **not** forgiven" (BKC).

g. The perfect tense here refers to proclaiming what has **already** been claimed in heaven (clarified in the NASB).

h. The plural on "anyone" (NIV), "any" (NASB), "whosoever" (KJV) refers to classes of people, not individuals.

1) Those who **reject** Christ are in a class of people who do **not** have forgiveness of sins.

2) And we have a responsibility to let them know this.

3. But how does all this apply to us? Could any of us be discouraged like the apostles?

a. You bet—and discouragement has its way of keeping us from ministry to others. When you lose sight of the resurrection, you lose zeal for evangelism.

b. God wants our knowledge that Christ rose from the dead to encourage us in witnessing for Him!

c. RESURRECTION, OF CHRIST (foundation of Christianity)= “get yourself crucified and raised again to start new religion."

c. Buddha died and stayed dead.

d. Mohammed passed away and hasn't been seen since!

e. Every other religious leader was conquered by our great foe, death. That's defeat—the **agony** of defeat!

f. But we know the thrill of victory and celebrate that today! Christ is alive!

(Unfortunately some still doubt. Some of us here this morning relate more to despairing Mary, others identify most with the discouraged disciples, but some are more like the doubting Thomas seen in verses 24-29…)

C. Christ's resurrection encourages the doubting [Thomas] (20:24-29).

1. Whereas Mary needed comfort and the disciples needed encouragement, Thomas needed evidence.

2. Jesus met his need just as He met the needs of the other two groups.

a. Christ provided the evidence he needed in verse 27: "Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe."

b. And when he saw, he **did** believe and responded, "My Lord and my God!"

3. Maybe you have doubts about Christ's resurrection like Thomas did.

a. Perhaps you don't feel that the evidence is as overwhelming as I see it.

b. All this means is that you need to do more study! Only those ignorant of history disbelieve the resurrection of Christ.

c. I would be glad to talk to you more individually and evaluate the facts with you.

(Believing that Christ rose from the grave is a very necessary part of being a Christian. In fact, we see in verses 30-31 that…)

III. All of Christ's miracles are to bring us to faith in Him (20:30-31).

The purpose Jesus did miraculous things was to help us believe.

A. Christ did many other miracles which the Bible doesn't mention (20:30).

1. Obviously the New Testament doesn't tell us everything Jesus ever did.

2. But it does tell us enough to place our trust in Him.

(But throughout his book John gave seven signs or miracles proving Christ's deity…)

B. John's seven pre-cross miracles are recorded for us to trust Christ for salvation (20:31).

1. The reason for these miracles is to give us a basis upon which to trust Christ.

a. Of course, the greatest miracle of all is His resurrection.

b. Doesn't it seem strange that Christ's first appearance after His resurrection was to a woman?

c. Here's a mark of the historicity of the text, for as one writer notes, "No Jewish author in the ancient world would have invented a story with a woman as the first witness to this most important event" (BKC).

d. Why then did Christ show Himself to Mary first? Because she sought Him earnestly.

1) She was at the cross when He was dying [John 19:25].

2) And she made **two** trips to the tomb, even early in the morning, when most of the disciples didn't go once.

2. Are you diligently seeking Christ like Mary? Have you trusted Him for salvation?

a. Gospel explanation: John 10:10/ Rom 3:23/ John 5:8/ Rev 3:20

b. Prayer to receive Christ

3. Maybe you're fearful and discouraged like the disciples.

a. He'll meet your need, too.

b. Perhaps you are fearful of what may happen to you if you're really committed to Christ.

c. RESURRECTION, OF BELIEVERS (promise of gives zeal for service)= John G. Paton eaten by cannibals or worms!

4. Perhaps you have some doubts as Thomas did.

a. Remember the issue isn't "seeing is believing."

b. Many people in Christ's day saw all kinds of miraculous signs and still rejected Christ.

c. That's why Jesus said, Because you have seen Me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed" (20:29).

d. But if you feel some legitimate questions prevent you from trusting Christ, let's talk, O.K.?

Conclusion

M.I. 1. Knowing that Christ is victorious over death encourages each of us in our individual needs—whether despairing, discouraged or having doubts.

2. What is your need this morning?

a. Salvation?

b. Identification with Christ in baptism?

c. A body of believers who will be committed to you and you to them?

3. Closing Hymn # *Because He Lives*

4. The invitation to publicly identify with Christ is open today.

a. Invitation to trust Christ.

b. Invitation for baptism.

c. Invitation for church membership.

Grace Baptist Church Rick Griffith

12 April 1998 Single Message

NIV 35 Minutes

The Thrill of Victory!

John 20

Introduction

1. “Dad, is Easter a chicken?”

2. This interchange with John caused me to reflect on how many substitutes Satan has created (“Easter in View”, Christmas, non-Christian religious holidays)

3. We’re here to see what Easter really does mean—Christ’s victory (context, death rate).

4. “Wellington defeated… Napoleon at Waterloo”

M.I. 5. Through our text this morning we will see this truth: Knowing that Christ is victorious over death encourages each of us in our individual needs.

6. But how do we know He’s alive? For one…

I. Jesus is alive because He left us an empty tomb (20:1-9).

A. In verses 1-9 we see three witnesses of the empty tomb: Mary, John, and Peter.

1. Mary Magdalene saw the empty tomb (20:1-2).

2. John was next to see the stone rolled away and the body gone (20:3-5).

3. Then Peter, in typical impetuous fashion for Peter, boldly rushed into the sepulcher as the third witness that morning (20:6-9).

B. But what did these witnesses actually see? (Roman seal, stone, guards, linens)

(We have heard that "seeing is believing" but is it really true? Apparently not because…)

C. Although Peter and John witnessed the same event they had different reactions.

(We've seen three **witnesses** at the **tomb** itself. Now in John 20:10-29 we will see three **appearances** of Christ **away** from the tomb—and see ourselves as well…)

II. Christ's resurrection meets each of us in our unique need (20:10-29).

A. Christ's resurrection encouraged the despairing [Mary] (20:10-18).

1. What was Mary's problem? She was despairing (no burial).

2. Mary needed comfort (He said her name, she could comfort others).

3. Perhaps you are despairing and need comfort (marriage, kids, finances, people).

B. Christ's resurrection encourages the discouraged [Disciples] (20:19-23).

1. Imagine you being with Christ (blind, Lazarus, kids, cleansing, Messiah, kingdom but “crucify!” cohort).

2. You need encouragement (sending you, announce forgiveness)

3. Could you be discouraged like the apostles? (evangelism zeal, people: gaze-glance)

C. Christ's resurrection encourages the doubting [Thomas] (20:24-29).

1. Thomas needed evidence.

2. Maybe you have doubts about the resurrection (study, house calls, tomb).

III. All of Christ's miracles are to bring us to faith in Him (20:30-31).

Conclusion

M.I. 1. Knowing Christ conquered death encourages us in our individual needs—for comfort, encouragement, or proof—whether despairing, discouraged or doubting.

2. What is your need this morning? Trust the living Saviour to meet it!

a. Despairing? If He defeated death itself, any other problem is a piece of cake.

b. Discouraged? (If committed? Paton: cannibals or worms—resurrection)

c. Doubts? (“seeing isn’t believing,” gospel, let’s talk)

# Study Questions (Step 1)

# Context: What did the author record just prior to this passage?

# Purpose: Why is this passage in the Bible?

# Background: What historical context helps us understand this passage?

# Questions

### Was Mary Magdalene the first to come to the tomb? Discuss this in relate to the Synoptics.

### Does 20:6-7 imply that Christ’s body left the wrappings without disturbing them?

### Which Scriptures about Christ rising from the dead are in view in 20:9?

### Explain why Mary could not cling to Jesus prior to the ascension (20:17) but the women (Matt. 28:9) and the disciples (Luke 24:39) were allowed to touch him.

### How does John 20:29-29 form a climax to the book?

### Discuss how the disciples could receive the Spirit (20:22) before Pentecost.

### How could the disciples offer forgiveness that only God can give (20:23)?

# Tentative Theme/Thrust Statements (Step 5)

Text

# Possible Illustrations (Step 6)

# Introduction for Easter Messages in 1998 and 2007 as I had a different intro in 2011 due to our 20th anniversary in Singapore

### Interest: “Dad, is Easter a chicken?”

Black

#### That’s what John asked me at dinner one Saturday night when he was five years old. I replied, “What made you think that?”

#### “Well… there’s Easter eggs…”

#### My boy was thinking—using his reasoning skills. And I, a theologian father, was sinking in my chair! Well, John and I diverted from our evening OT reading for a few nights and did some NT brush up!

### Need Due to Diversions: This interchange with John caused me to reflect on how many substitutes Satan has created for Easter to get us off the real issue—focus on eggs, bunnies, chocolate…

#### Such a focus appeared in a newspaper where a German optician unveiled a new contact lens for Easter: “Easter in View” says the caption. I thought, “Now what does this Playboy bunny have to do with Easter?”

Contacts

#### As we know Satan’s replacements have happened to Christmas where, instead of centering on Christ’s birth, we have Santas, reindeer, gifts, obligations and Panadol.

Black

#### In contrast, the non-Christian religious holidays have no satanic substitutes—Hari Raya is Hari Raya, Vesak Day is Vesak Day, etc.

### Need Due to Doubts: Our enemy know the importance of the Resurrection, so plenty of so-called “evidences” against Christ create doubt at this time:

#### We all know about *The Da Vinci Code* that claims Jesus died as a man—not God—saying that his deity was invented 300 years later. Even the claim that Christ was married to Mary Magdalene affects our movie clips, like “The Gospel of John” which depicts Mary Magdalene at the Passover meal when the NT says nothing of the sort.

DVC

#### The Gospel of Judas letter depicts Judas as the hero of the story who had arranged with Christ this plot to put Christ on the cross.

Judas

#### In 2007 the ossuary or bone box of Jesus was supposedly discovered as “The Tomb of Jesus.”

Ossuary

#### But did you notice what *month* all these doubting mechanisms came out?

Timing

##### *The Da Vinci Code* book: March 2003

##### *The Da Vinci Code* movie: May 2006

##### *The Gospel of Judas*: April 2006

##### *The Tomb of Jesus*: March 2007

##### Isn’t the timing a little too obvious? Each release was carefully designed to happen right around Easter each year! Expect another one this year too. When have you ever seen a so-called evidence campaign against Buddha, Mohammed, Hinduism, or any other religion near their holidays?

John 20

# Intro in 2011 at CIC

### Interest: [For Susan and me, our best days are ahead—not behind.]

#### On 20 February 1991 a tired, young family emerged at Singapore’s Changi airport to begin their service at Singapore Bible College. That was 20 years ago TODAY! Can you believe it? That’s why I gave Susan a 20-flower bouquet for today.

Flowers

2011•1991

#### We looked quite young then in our family of four, but the next year the two young boys grew to three, as John was born at Gleneagles Hospital.

Auto pics

#### During those first 2.5 years of adjustment and teaching 14 different classes at SBC, a dream of helping start ICS also was born. I served with four other founding directors of ICS—a ministry that also saw Susan direct the music program the first ten years, serve eight years as librarian, and be art and music teacher.

#### Over the years that followed God opened doors to lead trips to Israel twice in 1994-95.

#### But then God changed my heart to reach out to the poor. Now that has resulted in 45 teaching trips to 10 countries.

#### We served 10 years at Grace Baptist, then 5 at International Baptist. But in 2006 God impressed me to start Crossroads International Church, where we have served the past 4+ years.

#### And here we are today, 20 years later!

#### But for Susan and me, our best days are ahead—not behind.

### Interest: On Friday I saw a friend who asked me if things are continuing at Crossroads. I told him, “For Crossroads, our best days are ahead—not behind!” I am happy to report that many of the weaknesses I noted a few months ago are now strengths!

Pro/Con

CIC

#### Many of you know that Susan and I head back to the US in June to help John for 6-12 months adjust to college and take some time to rest.

#### The screening committee is getting busy now to find a replacement for me.

#### The finances have improved remarkably the past few months, though there is still more to go to afford a full-time pastor-teacher.

#### The Global Action Team (GATE) is laying plans how we can extend our reach overseas as well as within Singapore.

#### Enriko is turning worship leadership over to Jonathan, assisted by Ming.

#### The youth have their first ever youth retreat this coming weekend.

#### Women’s ministry continues to grow in depth in their Friday Bible study.

#### The home group is strengthening in numbers and commitment.

#### More people are stepping into membership.

#### The website outreach is now reaching over 1000 people per sermon preached! One sermon has been listened to over 1400 times!

#### These are exciting days!

# Possible Applications (Step 6)

### Text

**Outlines (Steps 2-5)**

**The Thrill of Victory!**

***John 20***

**Exegetical Outline (Steps 2-3)**

# Exegetical Idea (CPT): The purpose Jesus proved His *deity* and ability to impart *eternal life* through His resurrection was so that all people may believe in Him for this life (Ch. 20).

# I. On Sunday morning Mary Magdalene, Peter, and John witnessed the empty tomb (20:1-10).

# II. The three appearances of Christ proved His power as God to conquer death for each person at their point of need (20:11-29).

## That morning *Mary* saw Jesus alive again (20:11-18).

## That evening *ten disciples* saw Jesus alive again (20:19-23).

## The next Sunday *Thomas* saw Jesus alive again (20:24-29).

# III. John concludes that the reason he wrote about Jesus’ miracles was so that readers could have eternal life through believing in Him (20:30-31).

**Purpose or Desired Listener Response (Step 4)**

The listeners will see that the resurrection of Christ affects them even today because it shows us his deity and ability to give us eternal life.

**Homiletical Outline** (Cyclical deductive form)—Steps 5-6

# Main Idea: Christ’s resurrection meets you at your point of need.

# Introduction

### Interest:

### Need:

### Main Idea: Through our text this morning we will see this truth: Christ’s resurrection meets you at your point of need. [In your unique situation, you can gain hope and encouragement from the assurance that Christ is alive!]

MI

### Background:

### Text:

### Preview:

### Transition:

# I. The empty tomb shows us that Christ is alive today (20:1-9).

# II. Christ's resurrection proves he is God who meets each of us in our unique need (20:10-29).

## Christ's resurrection showed he was God to comfort the seeking Mary (20:10-18).

## Christ's resurrection showed he was God to encourage the discouraged disciples (20:19-23).

## Christ's resurrection proved he was God to the doubting Thomas (20:24-29).

# III. Christ's miracles are to bring us to trust Him (20:30-31).

# Conclusion

### Christ’s resurrection meets you at your point of need (MI/CPS).

### Main Points

### Exhortation/Application

# Discussion Questions:

Rick Griffith

Easter Sunday

8 April 2007

The Thrill of Victory!

*John 20*

# Introduction

Views of Easter Today:

• Diversions

• Doubts

Main Idea: Christ’s resurrection meets you at your point of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .

# I. The \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ tomb shows us that Christ is alive today (20:1-9).

## Mary (1-2):

## John (3-5):

## Peter (6-9):

# II. Christ’s resurrection meets you at your \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (20:10-29).

## Mary (10-18): Christ's resurrection showed he was God to comfort the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

## Disciples (19-23): Christ's resurrection showed he was God to encourage the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

## Thomas (24-29): Christ's resurrection proved he was God to the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

# III. All of Christ's miracles are to bring us to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in Him (20:30-31).

# Conclusion

### Christ’s resurrection meets you at your \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Main Idea).

### With whom do you best relate today?

****

**Rick Griffith**

1 April 2018

Easter Sunday

**New Life!**

***John 20***

# Introduction

We celebrate many things—the resurrection foremost!

Main Idea: Christ’s resurrection meets you at your point of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .

# I. The \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ tomb shows us that Christ is alive today (20:1-9).

## Mary (1-2):

## John (3-5):

## Peter (6-9):

# II. Christ’s resurrection meets you at your \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (20:10-29).

## Mary (10-18): Christ's resurrection showed he was God to comfort the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

## Disciples (19-23): Christ's resurrection showed he was God to encourage the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

## Thomas (24-29): Christ's resurrection proved he was God to the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

# III. Christ's miracles are to bring us to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Him (20:30-31).

# Conclusion

### Christ’s resurrection meets you at your \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Main Idea).

### With whom do you best relate today?

Download this sermon PPT and notes for free at BibleStudyDownloads.org/resource/new-testament-preaching/

**SEGMENT 1**

NIV John 20:1 Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the entrance.

2 So she came running to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one Jesus loved, and said, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we don't know where they have put him!"

3 So Peter and the other disciple started for the tomb.

4 Both were running, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first.

5 He bent over and looked in at the strips of linen lying there but did not go in.

6 Then Simon Peter, who was behind him, arrived and went into the tomb. He saw the strips of linen lying there,

7 as well as the burial cloth that had been around Jesus' head. The cloth was folded up by itself, separate from the linen.

8 Finally the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went inside. He saw and believed.

9 (They still did not understand from Scripture that Jesus had to rise from the dead.)

**SEGMENT 2**

10 Then the disciples went back to their homes,

11 but Mary stood outside the tomb crying. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb

12 and saw two angels in white, seated where Jesus' body had been, one at the head and the other at the foot.

13 They asked her, "Woman, why are you crying?" "They have taken my Lord away," she said, "and I don't know where they have put him."

14 At this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not realize that it was Jesus.

15 "Woman," he said, "why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?" Thinking he was the gardener, she said, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him."

16 Jesus said to her, "Mary." She turned toward him and cried out in Aramaic, "Rabboni!" (which means Teacher).

17 Jesus said, "Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet returned to the Father. Go instead to my brothers and tell them, 'I am returning to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'"

18 Mary Magdalene went to the disciples with the news: "I have seen the Lord!" And she told them that he had said these things to her.

**SEGMENT 3**

19 On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!"

20 After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord.

21 Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you."

22 And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit.

23 If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven."

**SEGMENT 4**

24 Now Thomas (called Didymus), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came.

25 So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord!" But he said to them, "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe it."

26 A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!"

27 Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe."

28 Thomas said to him, "My Lord and my God!"

29 Then Jesus told him, "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

**SEGMENT 5**

30 Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book.

31 But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life.