



NEW TESTAMENT • LESSON 39

THE RESURRECTION

Even though Jesus truly rose from the dead, not everyone believes.



MONDAY

THE STORY: MATTHEW 27:27-31

Soldiers were positioned to guard Jesus' tomb. Even though the disciples did not understand what Jesus meant when He said that He would rise again on the third day, some of the Pharisees seemed to understand. Though they knew, they did not believe. They asked Pilate to order the tomb guarded and sealed until the third day. Consider that around the time of Jesus' death, the sky grew dark, and the moment of His death the earth shook and rocks were split (see Matthew 27:51). In addition, many holy people who had died were raised to life and appeared to many people in the city of Jerusalem. It would be hard to keep quiet when a family member whom you buried months ago, suddenly appeared and shared the account and time of their resurrection. Given that there were many people raised, these reports likely reached the ears of the religious rulers as well. It is interesting to note they did all this "work" on the Sabbath.

TALK ABOUT IT:

What did the chief priests do to Jesus' tomb? (They sealed it and posted a guard.)

Why is it interesting that the priests sealed the tomb on the Sabbath? (The religious rulers criticized Jesus for healing on the Sabbath, yet here they worked to seal the tomb.)

PRAY:

Ask the Lord to help every member of your family to not doubt but believe.



TUESDAY

THE STORY: MATTHEW 28:1-10

Jesus rose with great power. A wax seal and a Roman guard could not stop the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. In fact, if the whole Roman army had been present, Jesus would have risen just the same. Imagine the soldiers' shock as the earth began to shake, then an angel bright as lightning rolled the stone away and sat upon it. What a glorious moment - death was defeated!

The guards were so afraid that they shook and fell to the ground (see Matthew 28:4). The angel spoke to the women, telling them that Jesus had risen from the dead just as He said! The angel sent them to report back to the disciples.

John 20:15 tells us that Mary saw Jesus but mistook Him for the gardener. But when Jesus called her by name, she instantly believed. Matthew 28:9 records that Jesus met the two women on their way to tell the disciples. The women fell down, grasped His feet and worshipped Him. The response of these two women demonstrates their faith. Jesus commissioned them in the same way He commissions all believers: "Go and tell" (see Matthew 28:10).

TALK ABOUT IT:

What is your favorite part of this story? (Draw the children out, as there is much to enjoy in the Resurrection story.)

What can we tell from the women's response to Jesus? (First, their worship indicates their faith. Second, Jesus did not rebuke them. God alone was to be worshipped. If Jesus were not God, He would have corrected them. This might seem obvious, but many today deny that Jesus was God, saying He was simply a good teacher or prophet.)

PRAY:

Take time to worship Jesus through prayers that exalt the name and ministry of Christ. (Parents, help each of your children to pray.)



**WEDNESDAY
WHERE IS THE GOSPEL?**

THE STORY: LUKE 24:1-12

Jesus is no longer in the tomb! This is the most critical part of the gospel. Paul said it like this:

“If there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain. . . If Christ has not been raised your faith is futile and you are still in your sins” (I Corinthians 15:13,14,17).

Paul goes on to say in 1 Corinthians 15:20-23 that Christ is the firstfruits (the first to be raised) and that we will also be raised! If Jesus had died but not risen again, we would all be lost! The Resurrection is not a tagalong to the cross. It is an integral part of the gospel message without which the gospel would have no power!

TALK ABOUT IT:

Did the disciples believe the women’s report? (No, they did not believe at first.)

Did Peter believe when he reached the tomb? (No, but he was puzzled and wondered what could have taken place.)

Why was the resurrection important? (Jesus said He would rise again. If Jesus could not or did not rise from the dead, then He would be a liar. In rising from the dead, Jesus demonstrated that He defeated death. If He was unable to rise again, death would have defeated Him.)

PRAY:

Praise the Lord in your prayers and ask that every member of your family be touched by God's grace to believe.



THURSDAY

THE STORY: MATTHEW 28:11-15

Not all who know the truth will be set free. Some of the guards returned to the chief priests and reported to them everything that happened. Consider that they told the chief priests about the earthquake, the angel, the bright light, the rising of Christ and the visit of the two women who met and conversed with the Lord. They heard all of this, and yet the chief priests did not believe. Instead they hatched a scheme to keep the guards quiet, actually spreading a rumor that the disciples stole the body. The soldiers accepted the money and agreed to lie.

TALK ABOUT IT:

After witnessing the Resurrection, did the soldiers place their faith in Jesus? (No, even after witnessing the Resurrection, the soldiers did not believe and were willing to spread lies in exchange for money.)

Did the chief priests place their trust in Christ after hearing the story? (No, they did not. Instead they paid off the guards to lie about what happened.)

What do we learn about faith from this passage? (Only those who were called were saved. The guards saw the power of God, and yet knowing what they saw to be real, they did not place their trust in Christ. Similarly the chief priests believed the story enough to pay off the guards, but not enough to place their trust in Christ. True faith is more than believing the events of history to be true. True faith is believing the events of the death and resurrection of Christ, and then placing your faith in Jesus for your salvation. Though they saw or heard about what took place, neither the guards nor the chief priests placed their faith in Christ.)

What is the difference between knowing what took place and putting your faith in Jesus? (Draw your children out and help them to see that, as sinners, we must recognize our need for salvation, which can only come through the sacrifice of Jesus. Believing in Jesus requires the “why” to be answered and embraced in our hearts. The “why” is answered when we understand our condition as sinners and understand that God’s Son came down to earth to die in our place. Then our trust and belief is placed in Jesus as Savior, not simply in a historic person.)

Is it possible to know about Jesus and yet not truly believe? (Yes, it is possible to know about Him and not believe. The guards and the chief priests are perfect examples of this.)

PRAY:

Pray that every member of your family would not simply know about Jesus but fully place their trust in Him. Ask God to call each of your family members by name, just as Jesus called Mary.



FRIDAY
ON THE ROAD TO EMMAUS

THE STORY: PSALM 34:19,20

While Jesus was still on the cross, the soldiers came to break his legs. But they saw He was already dead, and therefore did not need to break his legs. John tells us those events fulfilled Psalm 34:20 (see John 19:36). In a demonstration of God’s sovereign control over every detail, none of Jesus’ bones were broken.

TALK ABOUT IT:

Is God able to do what He says? (Yes, God is able to do what He says.)

Was God able to keep Jesus’ bones from being broken? (Yes, God did work it out that Jesus’ legs would not be broken.)

Why didn't God prevent Jesus from the agony of the cross? (God could have stopped the Crucifixion. Jesus Himself said He could call down legions of angels (see Matthew 26:53). God sent His Son to die for us, which required that Jesus endure great suffering in fulfillment of the Scriptures.)

PRAY:

Thank the Lord for the great suffering He endured that we might be saved.