

The Gospel of John

Chapter 20

Outline:

- 1-10 Apostles Verify Empty Tomb
 - 1. Mary reported Jesus stolen (1-2)
 - 2. Peter and John confirmed it (3-7)
 - 3. Reaction to Jesus missing (8-10)
- 11-18 Mary Magdalene Sees Jesus
 - 1. Two angels engaged Mary (11-13)
 - 2. Jesus appeared to Mary (14-16)
 - 3. Mary told the apostles (17-18)
- 19-23 Ten Apostles See Jesus
 - 1. Jesus appeared to apostles (19-20)
 - 2. Jesus commissioned them (21)
 - 3. Jesus gave them the Spirit (22-23)
- 24-29 Doubting Thomas Sees Jesus
 - 1. Thomas rejected their report (24-25)
 - 2. Jesus appeared for Thomas (26-27)
 - 3. Jesus blessed unseen faith (28-29)
- 30-31 Why John Wrote John
 - 1. He could have written more (30)
 - 2. Enough evidence for faith (31)

Preparatory Reading: Matthew 28:1-20; Mark 16:1-20; Luke 24:1-53; Acts 1:1-26; I Corinthians 15.

Related Links:

- A. *Resurrection Power* (sermon outline with many related links at the end) ... <http://www.letgodbettrue.com/pdf/resurrection-power.pdf>.
- B. *The Resurrection Chapter* (I Corinthians 15 outline) ... <http://www.letgodbettrue.com/pdf/first-corinthians-15.pdf>.
- C. *This Day Have I Begotten Thee* (slides) ... <http://www.letgodbettrue.com/pdf/this-day-have-i-begotten-thee.pdf>.
- D. *John 11 – Resurrection of Lazarus* (expository sermon outline) ... <http://www.letgodbettrue.com/pdf/john-eleven.pdf>.
- E. *Christian or Sabbatarian* (expository sermon outline) ... <http://www.letgodbettrue.com/sermons/heresy/sabbatarianism/sermon.php>.
- F. *Ministries of the Holy Spirit in Ephesians* (slides) ... <http://www.letgodbettrue.com/pdf/holy-spirit-in-ephesians.pdf>.
- G. *Is Catholicism Christian?* (sermon outline) ... <http://www.letgodbettrue.com/pdf/is-catholicism-christian.pdf>.
- H. Many harmonies may be found in the Internet, though each of them will vary in their reconciliation.

Introduction:

- A. The most important event and fact the apostles had to prove was the resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth.
 - 1. Jesus answered the scribes and Pharisees about His identity by timed resurrection (Matt 12:38-45).
 - 2. Though He performed many miracles, He directed skeptics to the sign of Jonah, which He fulfilled.
 - 3. It was not very challenging in the first century to prove the existence and ministry of Jesus Christ.
 - 4. The Jews and the Romans had record of His crucifixion death, which could easily be ascertained.
 - 5. However, it was His resurrection that both Jews and Romans vociferously denied with their might.
 - 6. If Jesus rose, the Jews had murdered their Messiah; if Jesus rose, the Romans were incompetent.
 - 7. God made His death very open and public, but His resurrection was private proof to friends only.
 - 8. Those who have not seen the risen Lord but believe the sweet evidence pass the test of eternal life.
 - 9. Peter could reason with Cornelius that he knew about Jesus' life but not about His resurrection.
 - 10. There were about 520 eyewitnesses of the risen Jesus, and there many infallible proofs of His life.

11. Gifts of the Holy Ghost to fishermen were to prove Jesus was indeed risen (Acts 4:33; Heb 2:1-4).
 12. John's details about persons, words, linens, stone, etc., are all facts to bolster the resurrection case.
 13. Salvation from sin required resurrection, or Jesus had not satisfied God (I Cor 15:17; Ro 4:23-25).
 14. Faith that gives assurance of salvation must include Jesus as Son of God and raised (Ro 10:8-11).
 15. There have been several investigative reports done by detectives and cold case analysts to prove that the evidence for the resurrection of Jesus Christ is a closed case of truth by all usual measures.
 16. Here is an example for illustrative purposes only ... <http://www.tektonics.org/harmonize/greenharmony.htm>.
 17. Here is another example for illustration only ... <http://coldcasechristianity.com/tag/evidence-for-the-resurrection/>.
 18. Here is another example of a book/movie doing the same ... https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Case_for_Christ.
 19. Here is another example for illustration only ... <https://citybibleforum.org/city/melbourne/blog/resurrection-case-dismissed/>.
 20. An example for illustration ... <https://crossexamined.org/the-evidence-for-jesus-resurrection-part-9-probabilities-and-plagiarism/>.
 21. Another ... http://users.ox.ac.uk/~orie0087/pdf_files/Papers%20from%20Philosophical%20Journals/Swinburne_2013-resurrection.pdf.
- B. The Gospel of John is special and unique. What he related here is additional matter beyond the others.
1. We find a focus on Mary Magdalene to the exclusion of many women the other Gospels include.
 2. We find more of the personal relationship between Jesus and Mary and extra things He said to her.
 3. We find more details pertaining to Peter and John and their reaction to finding the empty tomb.
 4. We find dated meetings with apostles and Jesus displaying His wounds and doing ministerial work.
 5. We find the exchange with doubting Thomas and our Lord's praise of our faith without seeing.
 6. These are the main differences between John and the other Gospels; minor differences also exist.
 7. John's details about persons, words, linens, stone, etc., are all facts to bolster the resurrection case.
- C. Our Lord's resurrection is one of the most important facts of the gospel with great attendant blessings.
1. *Prophecy of the resurrection* ... was in more places than thought (Psalm 2; 16; 22; 110; Isaiah 53).
 2. *Priority of the resurrection* ... without it the crucifixion does not save (I Cor 15:17; Heb 2:14-15).
 3. *Power of the resurrection* ... is direct and indirect power (Mat 27:50-54; Phil 3:10; Eph 1:19-20).
 4. *Privacy of the resurrection* ... only a few insiders witnessed it firsthand (Ac 13:31; I Cor 15:3-8).
 5. *Proof of the resurrection* ... accounts of infallible proofs (Jn 20:30-31; Acts 1:1-4,22; 10:39-41).
 6. *Persons of the resurrection* ... are showings to Mary, Peter, and others (Jn 20:1-29; I Cor 15:3-8).
 7. *Preaching of the resurrection* ... was apostolic focus (Acts 2:22-32; 4:7-12; 10:36-42; 13:26-37).
 8. *Peculiarity of the resurrection* ... is its role in our perfect religion (Ac 17:16-20,30-34; I Co 15:19).
 9. *Profession of the resurrection* ... is the need to believe and confess it (Rom 10:9-10; I Jn 5:4-13).
 10. *Perpetuity of the resurrection* ... is by Baptist baptism (Ro 6:4-5; I Co 15:29; Col 2:12; I Pet 3:21).
 11. *Peace of the resurrection* ... is to comfort one another (I Cor 15:20-23,45,51-58; I Thess 4:13-18).
 12. *Practice of the resurrection* ... illustrates our changed lives (Rom 6:1-11; Eph 2:1-10; Col 3:1).
 13. *Promise of the resurrection* ... is why we bury, not cremate (Ro 8:11,23; I Cor 15:20; I Thes 4:14).
 14. *Punishment of the resurrection* ... is eternal judgment for denying it (Ac 13:26-41; II The 1:7-10).
- D. The apostolic emphasis was evidentiary proof for the resurrection rather than ideas for speculation.
1. John's details about persons, words, linens, stone, etc., are all facts to bolster the resurrection case.
 2. The varied accounts with circumstantial differences but agreement in substance indicate integrity.
 3. All true witnesses have this accepted character – *substantial truth, under circumstantial variety*.
 4. Consider – not a mention of *when* Jesus arose, when their epistles could have exalted such highly.
 5. Consider – not a mention of *how* Jesus arose, for any such speculation was inferior to real evidence.
 6. We give the apostolic writers the same liberty to differ as we do historians and witnesses in trials.
 7. There is enough discrepancy to show that there could have been no earlier conspiracy among them.
 8. We want to see the picture painted by each writer, and we want to emphasize Jesus Christ Himself.
 9. Too much focus on details or timeline could distract us from the writer's record and/or from Jesus.
 10. We want to see Jesus, like the Greeks in John 12:20-21, and details can be distracting like apostles.
 11. We do care about details that matter ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/two-or-three-some-details-do-not-matter.pdf>.
 12. There are difficulties to reconcile the four gospel accounts; all gospel harmonies vary in solutions.

- E. John had a purpose – for you to believe Jesus is the Christ the Son of God for assurance of salvation.
 1. What he did or did not include was subordinate to his loving design by God’s plan (Jn 20:30-31).
 2. You can know you have eternal life by believing on Jesus Christ and obeying Him (I John 5:1,13).
 3. You can learn enough for gospel conversion by John without Matthew, Mark, or Luke’s accounts.
 4. It is one thing to believe an innocent Man died, but a whole different thing that He rose again.
- F. John’s emphasis on several individuals provide impetus for us to examine ourselves about the faith.
 1. Many of John’s chapters have individuals identified or emphasized that the other Gospels ignore.
 2. God and His Son deal with each child of God on an individual basis for our comfort and conviction.
 3. Here in John 20 you will meet Mary Magdalene, John, Peter, and Thomas, each with unique angles.
 4. Do you love Jesus like Mary? Run and believe like John? Be bold like Peter? Confess like Thomas?

***** *Apostles Verify Empty Tomb – Mary Reported Jesus Stolen – Verses 1-2* *****

1 The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre.

The first day of the week.

- A. Crucifixion week was past – the disciples, both men and women, waited and wondered.
 1. They did not wait for three days and nights to pass to see Him as He had promised.
 2. They did not understand the scriptures or His promises (Matt 16:21; 17:23; 20:19).
 3. They were away from home, since many lived in Galilee, and were out of sorts.
 4. Salvation from such confusion, doubt, and fear is to believe His word and love Him.
 5. Love God and His Son with the faith you have and He will reveal more to help you.
- B. This is Sunday, following the Jewish weekly Sabbath, when they rested (Luke 23:56).
 1. After watching His burial, they rested Thursday, the Passover sabbath (Mark 16:1).
 2. They bought the spices and prepared them on the workday Friday, when they could.
 3. They then rested the weekly Sabbath before heading to the tomb very early Sunday.
 4. They brought spices for their love was great but their faith was weak. Consider it.
 5. For a timeline and verses and much more ... <http://www.letgodbettrue.com/bible/holidays/easter.php>.
- C. We are Christians, since Jesus quickly exalted the first day of the week by His presence.
 1. Jesus met His apostles on this day, and He did it again the next week (Jn 20:19,26).
 2. We reject and resent any effort to exalt or recover the Jewish seventh-day Sabbath.
 3. The Jewish seventh-day Sabbath was God’s special sign for the nation of Israel only.
 4. Our rest is in our Lord’s finished work, including resurrection (Heb 3:7-19; 4:1-11).
 5. Denial of the seventh day ... <http://www.letgodbettrue.com/sermons/heresy/sabbatarianism/sermon.php>.

Cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark.

- A. Mary and her friends came very early, when it was still dark, not with the sun rising.
 1. John focuses on Mary alone, as he did Nathanael, Nicodemus, and others in his book.
 2. Matthew said at dawn, Mark sunrise; Luke very early (Mat 28:1; Mk 16:2; Lu 24:1).
 3. Therefore, it must have been at the first stages of the sunrise, while it was still dark.
 4. They did not see Jesus rise from the dead, for the stone and He were already gone.

5. John did not write how or when He arose, though liars would have emphasized it.
 6. Note Mary Magdalene came early – she did not wait – and you should not (Pr 8:17).
 7. Her passion was exceptional in life, at His death, and now ... and she was rewarded.
- B. Mary Magdalene is prominent in all accounts, for she was a special friend of our Lord.
1. **Magdalene.** Identifies origin from Magdala, Galilee (Matt 15:39). See Nazarene.
 2. The other Marys in the New Testament are identified by their children, not this Mary.
 3. Jesus saved harlots and women, but He cast seven devils out of this Mary (Luke 8:2).
 4. We cannot prove Mary Magdalene is the great sinner at Simon's (Luke 7:36-50).
 5. But we do understand her great love due to her great sins as Simon's lesson taught.
 6. She was a woman from Galilee serving Jesus and at Calvary (Matthew 27:55-56,61).
 7. She was a woman from Galilee serving Jesus and at Calvary (Mark 15:40-41,47).
 8. Mary also stood with Mary our Lord's mother near the cross as well (John 19:25).
 9. We assume she was among women in the upper room at Pentecost (Acts 1:13-14).
- C. Mary Magdalene is prominent in all accounts, but there were many other women also.
1. Notice by the terminology in context that Mary was not alone on this trip (Jn 20:2).
 2. John focuses entirely on Mary, but the other Gospels each identify the other women.
 3. This exclusive emphasis must be seen and applied to construct a proper harmony.
 4. Emphasis on Mary is like one or two Gadarenes and one or two blind men at Jericho.
 5. We find Mary the mother of Jesus (John 19:25); Mary the mother of James and Joses (Matt 27:55-56,61; 28:1) = Mary the mother of James the less (Mark 15:40); Salome the mother of Zebedee's children (Matt 27:56; Mark 15:40; 16:1), Joanna wife of Chuza Herod's steward (Luke 8:3; 24:10), and many other women (Mark 15:41).
- D. Mary and her friends came to the tomb very early Sunday morning to anoint Jesus body.
1. Two other gospel accounts give us this information (Mark 16:1; Luke 23:56; 24:1).
 2. Nicodemus's 100 pounds of spices were not enough to satisfy their love for Jesus.
 3. Mary did not come in faith, but in love, and her love was soon rewarded with faith.
 4. Though Song of Solomon 8:6-7 is about marriage, Mary surely showed it right here.
 5. How are you like these women? What do you do that is extra special toward Jesus?
 6. If you have to be told, it is not the kind of love David and these showed their Lord.

Unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre.

- A. They had carefully observed where Jesus was buried, so now they went there directly.
- B. They wondered on their way to the tomb about rolling the great stone away (Mark 16:3).
 1. They should have asked about Pilate's seal, but it happened later (Matt 27:62-66).
 2. They should have wondered about the governor's soldiers, but they were also there.
- C. They did not arrive in time to feel, hear, or see the earthquake and the Lord Jesus rise.
 1. They did not feel or hear the earthquake caused by the angel of the Lord (Matt 28:2).
 2. They did not see the angel of the Lord roll the stone away from the door (Matt 28:2).
 3. Get all Easter fantasies out of your mind about Jesus rising at sunrise. He was gone.
- D. When they arrived, the stone was already rolled away – great stone, sealed, and guarded.
- E. With such circumstances, they either find the body or assume He had risen as promised.

2 Then she runneth, and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and saith unto them, They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him.

Then she runneth.

- A. What is your gospel gait or pace? It should be equivalent to Mary Magdalene's running.
 - 1. Christianity is not a resting, sitting, talking, or walking faith – it is a Christian race.
 - 2. Haste to do what is right – haste to pursue Jesus Christ – should mark true believers.
- B. Of course, we discover in the context that she did not run for joy but rather for unbelief.
 - 1. She thought some plural party, *they*, had removed the body of the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - 2. But her great love and zeal for her Master will win the day and His singular approval.

And cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved.

- A. Simon Peter had gone into Jerusalem when Jesus was arrested and had a friend there.
- B. John had been at the cross, for Jesus spoke to him, assigning his mother's care to him.
- C. The other apostles might very well have been in Bethany, since they often stayed there.
- D. True Christians and especially ministers – forgive each other fully and quickly (Peter).
- E. John identified himself somewhat anonymously, as wont to do, as a favorite of Jesus.

And saith unto them, They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre.

- A. Mary by this account did not have more comprehension than the stone and body gone.
- B. She did not believe yet, and she will be still weeping at the tomb later than this event.
- C. She did not know whether Jews, Romans, or Joseph and Nicodemus had moved Him.

And we know not where they have laid him.

- A. Mary did not make a solitary trip to the tomb, as some speculate, due to John's focus.
 - 1. Observe that she used the plural *we* to describe the women that saw the tomb empty.
 - 2. When alone later, Mary used the singular *I*, for stating a similar fact (John 20:13,15).
- B. There is confusion, doubt, and ignorance by all related parties, indicating no conspiracy.

***** *Apostles Verify Empty Tomb – Peter and John Confirmed It – Verses 3-7* *****

3 Peter therefore went forth, and that other disciple, and came to the sepulchre.

Peter therefore went forth, and that other disciple.

- A. Luke mentioned only Peter, but recall different accounts of a Gadarene and a blind man.
 - 1. Matthew wrote of two Gadarenes but Mark only one (Matt 8:28-34; Mark 5:1-20).
 - 2. Matthew has two blind men, others one (Mat 20:29-34; Mk 10:46-52; Lu 18:35-43).
- B. Peter and John, two of our Lord's triumvirate, are not surprisingly together at this time.
 - 1. John called himself *that other disciple*, consistent with his usual, humble anonymity.

2. John had already introduced himself in context as the disciple Jesus loved (Jn 20:2).
 3. These two apostles fulfilled their high regard and showed again their superiority.
- C. They went forth, out of the place of seclusion and out of the city to visit Joseph's garden.

And came to the sepulchre.

- A. With both men likely in Jerusalem, Mary could access them more quickly than Bethany.
- B. They heard Mary's frantic tone and concern and followed this close friend of their Lord.
1. They did not take Mary's word about the stone, but hastened there to prove it firsthand.
 2. Every detail of these accounts should be considered for the greater evidentiary proof.
- C. This far there is no mention of their haste or speed or which of the two was the fastest.

4 So they ran both together: and the other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulchre.

So they ran both together.

- A. John gives considerable detail here, for it involves Peter and him, and his better result.
1. He recorded that the other unidentified runner outran Peter and got to the tomb first.
 2. He explained later that the great Peter did not yet believe while he John did believe.
 3. Can you identify John's four references to the fact that he outran Peter to the tomb?
 4. We must do our best, not envying those doing better, or despising those doing worse.
 5. If John deserved the title as the disciple Jesus loved, then he should have run fastest.
 6. Love of Christ – in both directions – should always elicit passion and zeal for Him.
- B. Let it always be true of God's people that they run together in gospel duties to Christ.
1. First, they should run, for there is no other gait or pace worthy of their reigning Lord.
 2. Second, they should run together, helping each other forward in the Christian race.
 3. The Lord sent His apostles out various times two by two, and they followed it here.
 4. The wisdom of Solomon was practiced by His Son and Lord (Ecclesiastes 4:9-12).
- C. They ran because they were surprised and confused by the report, opposite a conspiracy.

And the other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulchre.

- A. Did John outrun Peter because of an age difference, conditioning, or bold affection?
- B. We do not want to be too hard on Peter, but he might still grieve his denial of Jesus.
- C. Church history says John lived until 90 A.D.; he might have been younger than Peter.
- D. Why does this matter? There are other lesser reasons, but it provides further evidence.
1. Criminals or investigators may plant evidence, misdirecting the crime investigation.
 2. John got to the tomb first, did not enter, and saw the linen burial clothes lying there.
 3. Peter got to the tomb second, but did enter, and he also saw the linen burial clothes.
 4. John then entered after Peter and both saw firsthand the unusual nature of the clothes.
 5. Neither man could have planted the evidence, for John did not enter and saw first.
 6. Therefore, there are two corroborating witnesses to unique treatment of the clothes.

5 And he stooping down, and looking in, saw the linen clothes lying; yet went he not in.

And he stooping down, and looking in, saw the linen clothes lying.

- A. John was there first, but less impulsive than Peter, he was content to look in the tomb.
- B. When he looked in the tomb, he saw the linen burial clothes of Jesus still lying there.
- C. The detailed record of the burial clothes in this account has strong resurrection value.
 - 1. If thieves stole a body under watch, they would not carry the body without its clothes.
 - 2. If thieves stole a body under watch, they would not leave the burial clothes folded.
 - 3. The haste of a robbery precludes unwrapping the body and carefully folding clothes.
 - 4. The goal of a robbery precludes leaving valuables at all – linen clothes and spices.
 - 5. Recall how the Roman soldiers at the cross were very interested in clothing articles.
 - 6. If it had been a robbery, the body would have been left but the burial clothes taken.
 - 7. The burial clothes of Jesus were both fine linen and just purchased (Mark 15:46).
- D. The detailed record of burial clothes in this account has strong Shroud of Turin value.
 - 1. We will learn the Jews did not bury in a single cloth but had a napkin for the head.
 - 2. We will learn that the hoax of the RCC relic can be refuted by a Bible-reading child.
 - 3. For more about the Shroud of Turin ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/bible/heresies/shroud.php>.

Yet went he not in.

- A. Great passion does not always result in great courage, so in this case our John held back.
- B. Since Peter will have the courage, but not the speed, together they were a great team.
 - 1. Complementary synergism is a great thing two possess, as in Solomon (Ec 4:9-12).
 - 2. John's speed pulled Peter along the road; Peter's boldness pulled John into the tomb.
- C. Christians with zeal that know Proverbs know not to imagine a lion where there is none.
- D. By not going in, yet getting there first, John proves no planting of evidence by either.

6 Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes lie,

Then cometh Simon Peter following him.

- A. Peter eventually got to the tomb after John, not used to being second in many things.
- B. John was the leader in this case due to his greater speed running toward the sepulchre.

And went into the sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes lie.

- A. Peter, bold as usual, went right past John into the sepulchre without fear or hesitation.
- B. Blessed are those men that have Christian brethren both faster and bolder in their faith.
- C. Peter also saw the linen clothes lie. This is the second of three references to the clothes.
 - 1. Jesus' linen burial clothes are considerable circumstantial evidence of resurrection.
 - 2. They provide strong evidence against grave robbers and against the Shroud of Turin.
- D. Pagan unbelievers may fear cemeteries. Christians should consider them a sleep ward.

7 *And the napkin, that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself.*

And the napkin, that was about his head.

- A. Here we are told plainly that the Jews did not bury in a single cloth like the RCC Shroud.
- B. Lazarus was wrapped with burial clothes the same way – with a head napkin (Jn 11:44).
- C. For much more against the RCC Shroud ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/bible/heresies/shroud.php>.

Not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself.

- A. There was a neatness about the whole picture that rejected the idea of grave robbers.
- B. This is the third reference to the burial clothes in three consecutive verses. Consider it.
- C. The detailed record of the burial clothes in this account has strong resurrection value.
 - 1. If thieves stole a body under watch, they would not carry the body without its clothes.
 - 2. If thieves stole a body under watch, they would not leave the burial clothes folded.
 - 3. The haste of a robbery precludes unwrapping the body and carefully folding clothes.
 - 4. The goal of a robbery precludes leaving valuables at all – linen clothes and spices.
 - 5. Recall how the Roman soldiers at the cross were very interested in clothing articles.
 - 6. If it had been a robbery, the body would have been left but the burial clothes taken.
 - 7. The burial clothes of Jesus were both fine linen and just purchased (Mark 15:46).
- D. The detailed record of burial clothes in this account has strong Shroud of Turin value.
 - 1. We will learn the Jews did not bury in a single cloth but had a napkin for the head.
 - 2. We will learn that the hoax of the RCC relic can be refuted by a Bible-reading child.
 - 3. For more about the Shroud of Turin ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/bible/heresies/shroud.php>.
- E. Why does this matter? There are other lesser reasons, but it provides further evidence.
 - 1. Criminals or investigators may plant evidence, misdirecting the crime investigation.
 - 2. John got to the tomb first, did not enter, and saw the linen burial clothes lying there.
 - 3. Peter got to the tomb second, but did enter, and he also saw the linen burial clothes.
 - 4. John then entered after Peter and both saw firsthand the unusual nature of the clothes.
 - 5. Neither man could have planted the evidence, for John did not enter and saw first.
 - 6. Therefore, there are two corroborating witnesses to unique treatment of the clothes.

***** *Apostles Verify Empty Tomb – Reaction to Jesus Missing – Verses 8-10* *****

8 *Then went in also that other disciple, which came first to the sepulchre, and he saw, and believed.*

Then went in also that other disciple, which came first to the sepulchre.

- A. Peter's boldness helped John, so he followed him into the tomb to see things firsthand.
- B. John was not first to enter the tomb, but he wants you to know he did get there first.
- C. These were not two foolish men for idle reports, but cautious and older men taking note.
- D. Both men were now eyewitnesses to the unique treatment of the linen burial clothes.

And he saw, and believed.

- A. What did John see, and what did he believe? There are two options regarding the matter.
 - 1. Does John's emphasis on faith indicate here that he was quick to believe Jesus rose?
 - 2. Or does the context of the next verse include John and deny that he believed it at all?
 - 3. Luke recorded that when Peter saw the situation, he wondered in himself (Lu 24:12).
- B. Did John only see the linen clothes without a standing Jesus and believed Mary's report?
 - 1. The reason they came to the tomb was not due to three days but because of Mary.
 - 2. They ran – made haste – was not by a resurrection report but a missing person report.
 - 3. John arrived at the tomb before Peter; he had already seen the linens (John 20:4-5).
 - 4. Did he need to get into the tomb to confirm Jesus was not standing in a corner of it?
 - 5. By not going in, he cut off any false accusation that he planted the linens evidence.
- C. Or did John see the empty tomb and believe first of all that Jesus was risen from death?
 - 1. John wrote this Gospel account to bolster faith (John 20:30-31). Surely this is faith.
 - 2. But the context indicates that the apostles did not believe, or at least had not this far.
 - 3. If John believed Jesus had risen, why did he go to Jerusalem? To wait for Him there?
 - 4. We certainly value the context, but those merely confirming Mary go way too far.
 - 5. The word *believe* used like this requires spiritual intent (John 4:41,53; 6:64; 20:29).
 - 6. Yes, they returned home while still in doubt, as Luke's account of Peter (Lu 24:12).
 - 7. The emphasis on the clothes indicate something other than stealing away His body.
 - 8. Why would John write in a context of comparison to Peter of believing Mary first?
 - 9. Thus, we conclude John had his first moment of faith that Jesus rose from the dead.
 - 10. John did not believe scripture yet, but he believed the evidence, his epistle's purpose.
 - 11. His faith was by sight – he could see the evidence that it pointed toward resurrection.
- D. Observe that John did not try to convince Peter, for they had no such plan or conspiracy.
- E. They, the rest of the eleven, the women, and others believed as evidence was gathered.

9 For as yet they knew not the scripture, that he must rise again from the dead.

For as yet they knew not the scripture.

- A. God had blinded them to the prophecies of the resurrection to force dependence on evidence.
- B. The Old Testament had foretold Messiah's resurrection or assumed His resurrection.
 - 1. Do not presume the singular *scripture* means only one place; it is a collective noun.
 - 2. Jesus on this subject referred to many different Bible places (Luke 24:25-27,44-46).
 - 3. Paul wrote that Jesus was buried and rose again according to scriptures (I Cor 15:4).
- C. Jesus also made N.T. promises they missed (Mark 8:31-33; 9:9-10,31-32; Matt 12:40).
- D. There were specific O.T. prophecies of the Christ being delivered from His burial grave.
 - 1. David had prophesied clearly about Jesus being raised from the dead (Ps 16:9-11).
 - 2. Peter quoted this clear promise at Pentecost to prove His resurrection (Ac 2:24-31).
 - 3. Paul used David's same passage again in his first recorded sermon (Acts 13:35-37).

- E. There were other prophecies that assumed or implied the Messiah had to rise from death.
1. For example, Psalm 2:1-6 promised victory after rulers took counsel against the Son.
 2. For example, Psalm 2:7 meant more than His birth (Acts 13:29-33; Hebrews 1:3-5).
 3. For example, Psalm 22 does not end at death, but continues upward (Ps 22:22-31).
 4. For example, Psalm 110:1-4 could not be true if enemies killed Jesus (Ac 2:33-36).
 5. For example, Isaiah 53:10 refers to the Messiah in the context prolonging his days.
 6. For example, Isaiah 53:12 refers to the Messiah sharing spoil because after death.
 7. For example, Isaiah 55:3 meant that death would not end David's Son (Acts 13:34).
- F. *This Day Have I Begotten Thee* ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/this-day-have-i-begotten-thee.pdf>.

That he must rise again from the dead.

- A. Jesus had to rise from the dead so as to fulfill Bible prophecies, as shown directly above.
- B. But Jesus also had to rise from the dead to further the work of redemption of our souls.
1. Paul argued directly that if Jesus did not rise, we are still in our sins (I Co 15:12-23).
 2. The last enemy Jesus will destroy formally and finally is our death (I Cor 15:24-26).
 3. Paul connected our Lord's death and resurrection closely in salvation (Ro 4:23-25).
 4. Paul took it further to include ascension and intercession (Rom 5:10; 8:34; He 7:25).
- C. The chief apostles' disbelief in the resurrection enhances their later witnessing for it.
1. With O.T. prophecies, Jesus' promises, and a missing body, they still did not believe.
 2. Peter was not the first to believe it, though he would be one of the loudest very soon.
 3. The demand for greater evidence indicates they later must have seen infallible proof.
 4. There is no doubt the apostles declared the resurrection without apology or doubt.
 5. There must have been during the 40 days, as Luke wrote, infallible proofs (Acts 1:3).

10 Then the disciples went away again unto their own home.

Then the disciples went away again.

- A. There was no reason to stay around the grave, for John did not believe Jesus was nearby.
- B. He had not been hauled out of the grave by robbers to discard his body and keep clothes.
- C. They did not go anywhere to cause a stir by circulating their opinions about the Lord.
- D. They did not do anything lying promoters do; they waited for further confirmation.

Unto their own home.

- A. Whether home was Bethany or an apartment in Jerusalem, we are not told by John.
- B. But they were together, as Mary had found them, and were likely within Jerusalem.
- C. Even with this progress – a missing body – they did not promote any speculative theory.
- D. While Peter and John went back home ... the next follower of Jesus could not leave.

11 But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping: and as she wept, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre,

But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping.

- A. Another inspired disjunctive, *but*, which indicates Mary's difference from two apostles.
- B. John and Peter went back home, but not this woman saved from more than either man.
 - 1. Jesus taught the simple and obvious axiom – those forgiven the most love the most.
 - 2. He taught this important lesson to a Pharisee about a sinful woman (Luke 7:36-50).
 - 3. Every Christian is a sinner needing forgiveness, but God allows some to fall deeper.
 - 4. Remember that some men's sins go beforehand, others' follow after (I Ti 5:24-25).
 - 5. We are not told the character or conduct of Mary before or by the presence of devils.
 - 6. We tend to leap to the conclusion of a harlot, but what of lunacy or spirit of infirmity.
- C. Mary hardly knew what to do. She did not go to Jerusalem or Bethany or enter the tomb.
 - 1. So she stood outside the tomb frantically in some measure of confusion over events.
 - 2. She did not yet remember or believe what Jesus had told her about His resurrection.
 - 3. But rather than desert Him, she chose to stay and hope for a discovery or explanation.
 - 4. A crying lover will never desert, but will ever wait and seek, as in Solomon's Song.
- D. She wept as the outpouring of her heart at what she saw as a great loss for the moment.
 - 1. She had never neglected her Lord that we know of, in Galilee, the cross, or the burial.
 - 2. She went early that morning while yet dark to assist in further anointing His body.
 - 3. Have you ever stood at a grave and wept? Yet you knew where body and spirit were.
 - 4. Mary's weeping is exacerbated by not knowing where Jesus' body had been taken.
- E. We as believers should get more from John's gospel than evidence we already believe.
 - 1. How can we be more like Mary, since she was obviously one of our Lord's favorites?
 - 2. Repentant sinners should know, like Israel, that He will reveal Himself (Hos 6:1-3).
 - 3. Morning comes quickly to those who humble passion seek their Dayspring (Ps 30:5).
 - 4. Laboring and laden souls find rest for themselves waiting on Christ (Matt 11:28-30).
 - 5. How humbly, needy, and passionately do you seek the Lord by His chosen means?
 - 6. Do you weep for losing sight or love of Him? Do you even know this phenomenon?
 - 7. Though she wept, she did not stop seeking, so we also must rightly mix them both.

And as she wept, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre.

- A. Frantic and consistent with her thoroughness, Mary stooped down to look in the tomb.
- B. Believing that the body had been taken, though of no value, it could be anywhere to her.
- C. She took another look in the tomb, though she nor the two apostles had seen anything.
 - 1. Her first look was before Peter and John – stone moved and body gone (Jn 20:1-2).
 - 2. She followed them back to the tomb; they confirmed Jesus' body gone (Jn 20:3-10).
 - 3. But in frantic grief and not knowing where else to look, she checked the tomb again.
 - 4. Did our Lord move her to check again to engage with two angels? Heaven will tell.

12 And seeth two angels in white sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain.

And seeth two angels in white sitting.

- A. On this third check of the tomb – first by herself and then two apostles – she saw angels.
 - 1. Our religion is a very spiritual religion, with the emphasis on spirits – good and bad.
 - 2. Angels can be very intimidating like with Joshua or rather ordinary like with Jacob.
 - 3. These angels were involved with the body of their Captain, their soon Lord of hosts.
 - 4. Satan desired Moses’ body; how much more our Lord’s? but these prove His victory.
 - 5. We know what happens next, so we should not be surprised these angels were gentle.
 - 6. For much more about the angels of God ... <http://www.letgodbetruer.com/pdf/angels-of-god.pdf>.
- B. She was not confused, frightened, or intimidated by these angels, which was unusual.
 - 1. Rather than run away or go into paralysis like the guards had, she engaged the angels.
 - 2. Either she did not recognize the angels or did not care about angels in light of Him.
 - 3. Greeks preferred Jesus over the apostles, but Mary preferred Jesus over His angels.
 - 4. There were two of them for sufficient witness of the event – two or three is wisdom.
 - 5. They were in white, indicative of holy angels, by God’s preservation, not salvation.
 - 6. Rather than a flaming sword to keep her from life, they told her about Life Himself.

The one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain.

- A. The whole host of heaven was greatly concerned and involved in the life of Jesus Christ.
 - 1. By announcing His birth individually and collectively, they were active at His birth.
 - 2. They helped Him in His temptation in the wilderness and in His grief in Gethsemane.
 - 3. As the largest choir found in scripture, they jointly worshipped Him at His ascension.
 - 4. Notice their positions. They knew exactly where the Son of God had laid in waiting.
 - 5. Notice their positions. They were involved with the whole body of Jesus Christ.
 - 6. The whole host of heaven of every rank now report to the Man Christ Jesus the Lord.
 - 7. Jesus could easily have had twelve legions of angels He told Peter about (Mat 26:53).
- B. Never forget that God created them to serve the heirs of heaven, the elect sons of God.
- C. Jesus had told Nathanael that he would see angels actively involved with Him (Jn 1:51).
- D. *Jesus and the Angels* ... <http://www.letgodbetruer.com/sermons/christ/jesus-and-the-angels/sermon.php>.

13 And they say unto her, Woman, why weepst thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him.

And they say unto her, Woman, why weepst thou?

- A. Heaven is sympathetic and helpful to troubled believers. Are you like these holy angels?
 - 1. They knew why Mary wept, but they kindly inquired to let her tell them anyway.
 - 2. They had the remedy for her tears, and we have the remedy for most tears as well.
- B. She did not weep for fear of the angels, for her love and desire for Jesus was far greater.

- C. The angels do the bidding of the Lord Jesus Christ perfectly, so you know the plan here.
1. They absolutely and perfectly knew why she was weeping, but they asked anyway.
 2. Foolish and cruel spouses will often say, *You know I love you, though I don't say it.*
 3. Our God wants the words – calves of our lips – giving praise to Him before others.
 4. Jesus will by these circumstances elicit the praise of adoration He already knew well.
 5. You cannot forget the importance of using your tongue – your glory – to praise God.
 6. You do not truly know your circumstances or people you meet – what they are for.
 7. For example, sober Paul in the New Testament taught entertaining angels unawares.
 8. Thankfully, the angels were not lust-filled or sex-starved as some say in Genesis 6.
- D. Why not beat the Lord to the punch and express your passion about Him before others?
1. Our church's pulpit is open for David's desire and Paul's rule (Ps 35:18; Heb 13:15).
 2. Let us not be content with loving and thankful hearts; let us declare both verbally.
 3. Let us never cause Jesus to ask about this church (Lu 17:11-19), *Where are the nine?*

She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord.

- A. Mary without pretense or hypocrisy told the angels she greatly missed her Lord Jesus.
1. It is impossible for a person to declare Jesus Lord but by the Holy Ghost (I Co 12:30).
 2. But far more than declaring Jesus Lord generally, she declared Him *her* Lord. Amen!
 3. But far more than being her Lord, Mary thereby declared how much she missed Him.
 4. She did not know who *they* were; all she could reason was that others moved Him.
 5. She admitted by implication that all else in the holiday week was meaningless to her.
 6. Jesus heard every syllable Mary spoke and perfectly knew her heart in those words.
 7. Rather than fear Jesus the Word of God, rejoice He knows your heart (Heb 4:12-16).
- B. If Mary did not know they were angels, would she have been as direct with mere Jews?
1. The apostles were afraid, but Mary had not avoided the crucifixion or His burial.
 2. Some of the details that may slightly intrigue us are ignored to focus us elsewhere.
 3. If Mary had any fear of these angels, John does not tell us about it to focus on Jesus.
- C. A true Christian knows this – the greatest pain is the loss of fellowship with Jesus Christ.
1. Are you as distraught as Mary when you lose close fellowship with the Lord Jesus?
 2. If you have never lost fellowship with God, then you have never had it to start with.
 3. A simple perusal of the Psalms shows that David lost fellowship with God at times.
- D. All men in every place will soon confess Jesus as Lord to God's glory (Phil 2:5-11).

And I know not where they have laid him.

- A. The reason for her tears was her confusion about where the body of her Lord might be.
1. She had seen Him die; she had seen Him buried; she had come to anoint His body.
 2. We are a combination of spirit and body, and she wanted to anoint her Lord's body.
 3. Though only His body, Mary was fully devoted to proper care of it out of great love.
- B. Ignorance about any aspect of Christ should convict us and motivate us to learn more.
1. When we are so convicted and motivated, He will outdo our desires (Eph 3:19-21).
 2. But we cannot presume on such blessings without the fervency of Paul (Ep 3:14-18).

14 And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus.

And when she had thus said, she turned herself back.

- A. She did not interrogate the angels further, since they could have answered her problem.
 - 1. They had not offered quickly enough for news about His body, so she turned away.
 - 2. Their question may have indicated to Mary their ignorance or unwillingness to say.
 - 3. Whether she heard or sensed another Person near the tomb, we are not told, so okay.
- B. The angels did not interest her. Now this by itself is unusual, but indicative of her love.
 - 1. Angels in most appearances in the Bible were incredibly interesting to those present.
 - 2. The Lord of angels was more important to Mary than the angels that reported to Him.
 - 3. Mary Magdalene, unlike adoring Catholics, rejected worshipping angels (Col 2:18).

And saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus.

- A. There are no accidents or coincidences at all from our Lord's and heaven's perspective.
 - 1. During the short time she told the angels she had lost her Lord, a strange man arrived.
 - 2. If you are truly broken hearted, He is nearer than you think (Psalm 34:18; 145:18).
 - 3. Whether you hear, see, or feel Him or not, He is ready to enter your life (Rev 3:20).
 - 4. For His promise of dear fellowship ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/fellowship-with-christ.pdf>.
- B. Jesus withheld His identify from Mary, which is His prerogative and wisdom to do.
 - 1. His regular clothes were on Roman backs; His burial clothes were folded in the tomb.
 - 2. Mary had been around Jesus very often, so she should have known Him instantly.
 - 3. We are told that this very day Jesus hid Himself from two disciples (Luke 24:16).
 - 4. Is romantic pursuit a pleasant activity? Indeed so, thus Solomon's Song (S.S. 5:2-8).
 - 5. It is called playing hard to get, and it is in Solomon's Song, and it draws forth pursuit.
 - 6. If or when Jesus withdraws from you, it is your high pleasure to run after Him hard.
 - 7. Jesus had heard every word of Mary's love, and He was about to reward her well.

15 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away.

Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou?

- A. Jesus built this drama for her and us. Do not resent His drama and other Bible drama.
 - 1. Men and women in this church have told me their great love for the story of Joseph.
 - 2. How can you read David and Jehovah debating who would build whom a house?
 - 3. How can you read Psalms, like 18 and 45, and not be affected by the power of drama?
 - 4. How can you read about the Gadarene or Simon's house and not be greatly moved?
 - 5. How can any read books of Ruth, Esther, Job, Philemon, and others without effect?

- B. Those weeping earnestly for their Lord: He will come graciously, secretly to them.
1. God and Jesus want to know if you love them and why you love them (Jn 14:21,23)?
 2. Are you able to tell the God of glory and His Son Jesus that you earnestly miss them?
 3. Do you understand they may test your passion and resolve like in Solomon's Song?
 4. General or inane platitudes or clichés will not get you anywhere with the Most High.
 5. He will draw nigh to them that draw nigh, but it is more than attendance (James 4:8).

She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him.

- A. Mary may have thought the gardener had chosen to change the burial place of the Lord.
- B. Jesus did not reveal Himself to Mary here, so He was hidden as on the road to Emmaus.
1. In ignorance, innocence, integrity, she said more in devotion to Jesus as He listened.
 2. God's choice of first conversion and subsequent conversions are by His perfect will.
 3. Joseph waited to show himself to his brethren by saying, *I am Joseph* (Gen 45:3-4).
 4. Jesus waited until the Emmaus disciples broke bread to open their eyes (Luke 24:31).
- C. Her words here are so much like Solomon's Song, *Saw ye him whom my soul loveth?*
1. He wrote nearly prophetically ... *It was but a little that I passed from them, but I found him whom my soul loveth: I held him, and would not let him go* (Song 3:1-4).
 2. We do not say it was prophetic, but true love and devotion have consistent traits.

Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away.

- A. Mary may have thought the gardener had chosen to change the burial place of the Lord.
- B. Mary is still totally ignorant of the resurrection, even neglecting the angels in the tomb.
- C. Listen to our sister's passion and obsession for Jesus. She would herself take Him away.
1. Love promises great things, and Mary's was no exception, though maybe 275 lbs.
 2. Important in this context is Mary's use of plural *we* (Jn 20:2), but not here, not now.
 3. She had exposed herself as passionate and vulnerable as she could to three strangers.
- D. John told us many details about Mary here. Let us seek much more than CSI evidence.
1. How does God know you? How does Jesus? What is your reputation in heaven?
 2. This woman fulfilled the axiom of heaven – *those forgiven much will love much*.
 3. Passion for Jesus Christ is not the same as passion for facts, doctrine, or knowledge.

16 Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master.

Jesus saith unto her, Mary.

- A. This is one of the most dramatic moments in the Bible, which ought to excite your soul.
1. God loves drama, not the foolish variety, but the God-glorifying variety for worship.
 2. Jesus had intentionally hid Himself from her recognition by one means or another.
 3. He then spoke her name, which she would have heard Him say many times before.
 4. Terrified apostles thought they had seen a ghost, until Jesus said, *It is I* (Mark 6:20).

- B. Jesus knows and calls each of His sheep by name (Jn 10:3). Believest thou this comfort?
1. The LORD God comforted Moses that He knew him by his name (Exodus 33:12,17).
 2. Jesus called Saul of Tarsus by his name and prepared for him by name (Acts 9:4,11).
 3. Eternal life for His elect is discovered and revealed by individual name (Rev 3:5).
- C. Do you think Mary is in a special category that you can never reach with God or Jesus?
1. Remember the other Mary that the Bible exalts as a close friend of Jesus (John 12:3).
 2. John did not think so, for he wrote often about himself as the disciple Jesus loved.
 3. God has favorites in the Bible, and the only reason you could miss out is your flesh.

She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master.

- A. Nothing is said that she saw Jesus differently, but that she heard His voice say her name.
1. The sheep of Jesus Christ hear the voice of their Shepherd and not any other voice.
 2. If you are born again, then Jesus spoke to you by His own life-giving voice (Jn 5:25).
 3. We do not need to hear Him audibly any more than we need to see His wounds.
- B. **Rabboni.** From Rabbi, a respectful Jewish title for a spiritual doctor, master, or teacher.
1. The title for Jesus of *Rabbi* is recorded seven times in the Gospels, five in John.
 2. The Jews used it for different degrees of honor; the lowest being *Rab*, master; then *Rabbi*, my master, next *Rabban*, our master, and highest, *Rabboni*, my great master.
- C. She turned herself to Christ, first away from angels, and then away from a gardener.

***** *Mary Magdalene Sees Jesus – Mary Told the Apostles – Verses 17-18* *****

17 Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.

Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father.

- A. Some have been confused by these words, *Touch me not*, as if He could not be touched.
1. They read Jesus this way: *You cannot touch my body until I get back from heaven.*
 2. They assume by the unusual use of *touch* some science fiction or Gnostic nonsense.
 3. There is nothing here to suggest that Jesus had an ethereal body or anything like one.
 4. He did not need to go to heaven to have His body altered for human touch on earth.
- B. Some have been confused by these words, *Touch me not*, as if He gave a spiritual lesson.
1. They read Jesus this way: *Do not enjoy me here on earth; enjoy my reign in heaven.*
 2. Calvin, Darby, Henry, Jamieson, Poole, Trapp, etc. take this angle on the difficulty.
 3. Thankfully, Barnes, Clarke, and Gill are not so infatuated with spiritualization here.
 4. There is no reason to assume Jesus sent her away with a half-baked spiritual lesson.
 5. He allowed and encouraged others to touch Him; He said He was *not* yet ascended.

- C. Jesus had already been to the Father in His human spirit and had stayed there three days.
1. Jesus told the thief they would be in spirit in heaven crucifixion day (Luke 23:43).
 2. Jesus also commended His own human spirit to His Father in heaven (Luke 23:46).
 3. Jesus died like all men die. His body ceased to function; His spirit returned to God.
 4. He would ascend bodily to His Father in heaven, but that was still forty days away.
- D. Jesus did not have a problem with either women or men touching His resurrected body.
1. Matthew reported the women had grabbed hold of Jesus' feet (Matthew 28:8-10).
 2. Later that day Jesus appeared to the ten and asked them to touch Him (Luke 24:39).
 3. The same John wrote later that the apostles handled Jesus with their hands (I Jn 1:1).
 4. A week later Jesus appeared to the eleven and told Thomas to touch His wounds.
- E. What did Jesus actually intend and mean by His words here about touch and ascension?
1. Read it this way: *Do not hold or cling to me now to delay the good news; go tell the apostles I am risen; I will ascend to God, but we will have forty days before I do so.*
 2. Paul used the word *touch* with much more to it than mere body contact (I Cor 7:1).
 3. Women that followed Jesus did touch Him at length at times (Luke 7:38; John 12:3).
 4. After three days of grief and loss, Mary would have wanted to never let Him go.
 5. Note the coordinating conjunction *for* and inspired disjunctive *but* to grasp the sense.
 6. The issue was one of timing – *for* he was not yet ascended, *but* He must soon do so.
- F. There was urgency to use resurrection time well, so she should share Him with others.
1. While God chooses individuals for great fellowship, they in turn profit many others.
 2. Consider David's role as worship leader by his exceptional relationship with God.
 3. Paul desired to be out of this life and with Christ but chose to stay for the Philippians.
 4. Loners in temperament must embrace corporate worship for others (Heb 10:23-25).
- G. What a harbinger of things to come! The ascension of Jesus Christ from earth to heaven!
1. Often neglected in comparison to death, burial, and resurrection is the ascension.
 2. Because He had to arrive in heaven to complete the legal aspects of our redemption.
 3. The Bible exalts His coronation, glorification, and promotion over all creatures.
 4. John rejoiced; heaven rang with praise; and Jesus opened the book (Rev 5:1-14).
 5. Never forget that our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is on His throne in the heavens.
 6. We reject the RCC infatuation of their Jesus in a manger or hanging on a crucifix.
 7. For more of the ascension (slides) ... <http://www.letgodbettrue.com/pdf/he-ascended-powerpoint.pdf>.
 8. For more of the ascension (outline) ... <http://www.letgodbettrue.com/pdf/he-ascended-up-on-high.pdf>.
 9. For the *Great Mystery of Godliness* ... <http://www.letgodbettrue.com/pdf/mystery-of-godliness.pdf>.
- H. Would to God Jesus had to tell us to end private devotions to share Him with others!

But go to my brethren, and say unto them.

- A. Having shortened Mary's embrace of our Lord Christ, Jesus sent her to tell His apostles.
1. Let us never be content with growth in grace or knowledge without desire to share.
 2. Paul had a great burden to share the truth of Christ with His people (Ro 9:1-5; 10:1).
- B. Jesus did not intend biological *brethren* by the term, as small and large context shows.
1. His biological siblings did not believe until near Pentecost (John 7:1-10; Acts 1:14).
 2. Mary shows what Jesus intended by telling His disciples, or His apostles (Jn 20:18).

3. They had to hear it from a woman once possessed, but who had distinguished herself.
 4. She got to be an apostle to the apostles, if we think on the intent of the word apostle.
- C. This is the first time He called apostles *brethren*, which they surely needed (Mat 28:10).
1. It was not the last; He will call us *brethren* soon before the universe (Heb 2:10-13).
 2. He could have, we would have, rebuked and rejected them for their treachery to Him.
 3. He forgave them without them asking, forgot their crime, and did not rebuke them.

I ascend unto my Father, and your Father.

- A. Do not overlook the plural *your*, for Mary heard news for herself and for the apostles.
- B. Jesus had known and told them He would go to God (John 13:1-3; 14:1-3; 16:28; 17:11).
1. Jesus had, in the hours before dying, explained much about His ascension and Father.
 2. His Father was also their Father, and the Father loved them Himself (Jn 16:26-28).
 3. The death of Jesus was legal payment for our adoption as sons of God (Eph 1:5-6).
 4. Adoption is by far the greatest facet of our salvation by Jesus' death (I John 3:1-3).
 5. It brings unity with Christ, as His brethren, as joint-heirs (Heb 2:10-13; Ro 8:14-17).
 6. Note salvation facets ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/sermons/salvation/facets-of-salvation/sermon.php>.
 7. For much more of adoption as sons of God ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/sons-of-god.pdf>.
- C. The ascension is one of the great N.T. events, leading to coronation and ministerial gifts.
1. David prophesied and Paul confirmed Jesus giving gifts (Psalm 68:18; Eph 4:8-11).
 2. David prophesied and Paul confirmed honor and glory to Jesus (Ps 8:5; Heb 2:6-9).
 3. Peter preached it at Pentecost; Stephen confirmed it at death (Ac 2:33-36; 7:55-56).
 4. After war in heaven, the devil was thrown out and Jesus reigned alone (Re 12:5-10).
 5. He will return for us to be with Him, but if we die first, we will go straight to Him.
 6. For more of Jesus' ascension (slides) ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/he-ascended-powerpoint.pdf>.
 7. For more of His ascension (outline) ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/he-ascended-up-on-high.pdf>.
- D. Believer! Do you understand that Christ's Father is your Father? Do you fear this Judge?
1. How could you be safer? Since this God adopted you for the sake of His other Son?
 2. Will you return a little affection and separation to enjoy its benefits (II Co 6:14-18)?
 3. Will you love your enemies like He loves them and you before (Matthew 5:43-48)?
 4. When you pray to the Father, will you believe it? Will you like He is your Father?
- E. If you fully grasp His resurrection and ascension, let it rule your life (Col 2:12; 3:1-4).
- F. If the Father of Jesus Christ resurrected Him for His presence in heaven, He will us also.

And to my God, and your God.

- A. Do not overlook the plural *your*, for Mary heard news for herself and for the apostles.
- B. Jesus was God in His divine nature (Jn 1:1-3); in His human nature God was His God.
- C. The Father of Jesus Christ is our God; this is an identifying truth (Rom 15:6; II Cor 1:3).
- D. Do not fear the true God like Adam did; Jesus your mediator is His Son and worshipper.
1. We have great leverage by Jesus' life (Rom 5:10; 8:34; Heb 4:16; 7:25; 10:19-22).
 2. We also have great leverage with God by Jesus' name (John 16:23-24; I John 2:1).
 3. He is the perfect lawyer ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/sermons/christ/you-need-a-lawyer/sermon.php>.

- E. The Christian religion is a drama (of eternal reality) that annihilates all comparisons.
 1. What God is there like our God? There is none whatsoever, though He sought them.
 2. What God sent His Son for enemies, not to save them from death but for adoption?
 3. What God bequeathed all to His Son, for Him to share it with those adopted enemies?
- F. When you think of meeting God, recall this scene and Jesus declaring such relations.
- G. If the God of Jesus Christ resurrected Him for His presence in heaven, He will us also.

18 Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that he had spoken these things unto her.

Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord.

- A. Mary did exactly what Jesus had told her to do, and John put all the focus on her only.
 1. Mark wrote, God and Jesus made choice He would appear to Mary first (Mark 16:9).
 2. They had left the tomb without her passion and efforts and thus missed the blessing.
- B. Did John use the verb *came* as opposed to the word *went*, since he was there with them?
- C. What a privilege for Mary – to bring the news to the greatest preachers in church history.

And that he had spoken these things unto her.

- A. Consider again some of the things Jesus said to Mary that would have comforted them.
 1. He had not yet ascended, but He would, so they needed efficient use of the 40 days.
 2. He called them His brethren, which was His first use of the term for the lowly men.
 3. He told them He would return to God His Father, Who was also their God and Father.
- B. She relayed to the apostles that He wanted His deserter disciples to know He was alive.

***** *Ten Apostles See Jesus – Jesus Appeared to Apostles – Verses 19-20* *****

19 Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.

Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week.

- A. This is the same appearance written by Luke in more and different detail (Lu 24:36-48).
- B. Let all Bible Christians rejoice in John’s choice of words for the first Sunday assembly.
 1. It is the same day – meaning it was the day that Jesus first appeared to any disciples.
 2. It was still Sunday – though it was evening and close to or past Jewish reckoning.
- C. We defy Sabbath-keepers as one of the most ignorant segments of so-called religionists.
 1. Sabbatarianism is hardly a form of Christianity; it is contrary to Christ and apostles.
 2. It is clear from this day forward that Jesus and the apostles did not keep the Sabbath.
 3. Any use of the Sabbath by the apostles was exclusively for evangelistic purposes.
 4. Four simple, conclusive passages (Col 2:16-17; Ga 4:9-11; I Co 16:1-2; Ac 20:6-7).

5. It was for Israel only (Exodus 31:12-18; Deut 5:15; Neh 9:13-14; Ezekiel 20:12,20).
6. It has no more religious value than worshipping *Nehushtan!* like superstitious Jews.
7. The RCC did not change the day: (a) it only began after 300 A.D.; (b) apostles did.
8. Against Sabbatarianism ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/sermons/heresy/sabbatarianism/sermon.php>.

When the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled.

- A. The apostles were in a secluded and secure place to assuage their fear of the rabid Jews.
 1. The mention of closed (or locked) doors was first to explain their fear of the Jews.
 2. The second mention of closed (or locked) doors was to enhance our Lord's arrival.
 3. Closed (or locked) doors will be mentioned again when Jesus appeared a week later.
- B. Jesus could walk on water before glorification in heaven: He could walk through walls.
 1. It is a shame to read those that deny His ability to do this thing if He had a real body.
 2. A real body could not be suspended on water, if it was a real body with real mass.
 3. A real body could not walk through crowds and not be touched, if their logic is right.
 4. A real body could not levitate or elevate against gravity and disappear into clouds.
- C. Ten apostles were there (Jn 20:24); grasp the general term *eleven* (Mk 16:14; Lu 24:33).
 1. This is one of those places in the Bible to remember to combat ignorant literalists.
 2. The general term *twelve* was used for the apostles in general in various combinations of the 15 or so actual apostles (John 6:70-71; 20:24; Acts 6:2; I Cor 15:5; Rev 21:14).
 3. The general term *twelve* tribes was used for Israel in general in combinations of 14 names that could be used e.g. Dan, Levi, Joseph, Manasseh, Ephraim (Rev 7:4-8).
 4. We need not identify the ten nations of the little horn of Rome – all know it as ten.
 5. We need not identify the start or end of the 1260 years, for all know the Dark Ages.

For fear of the Jews.

- A. The Jews had rushed Jesus through a slanderous trial and murdered Him in one night.
- B. Without Spirit power they got later, the apostles fled Gethsemane and were still fearful.
- C. They would on the Day of Pentecost and later defy the Jewish rulers without any fear.

Came Jesus and stood in the midst.

- A. We believe Jesus suddenly appeared in their midst without using the doors to the room.
 1. First, the Bible declares that they were in a room with the doors closed, likely locked.
 2. Second, they were terrified when He appeared (Luke 24:37), no cause if He knocked.
- B. Jesus had appeared to Mary, women, two from Emmaus, Peter (Luke 24:34; I Cor 15:5).
- C. There is no basis for Lutheran consubstantiation as claimed by Jesus mixing substances.
 1. Catholics hold to *transubstantiation* – their cracker fully turns into Jesus Himself.
 2. Lutherans hold to *consubstantiation* – Jesus is in and with their cracker in substance.
 3. Doctrinal comparisons of Christ in communion ... <http://christianityinview.com/eucharist.html>.

And saith unto them, Peace be unto you.

- A. First, get a clear picture of what the apostles and others were like in that secluded room.

1. They did not believe the report they had from women that had seen and heard Jesus.
 2. For the first time there was division among them about the Lord, causing confusion.
 3. They were afraid of the Jews, for they had killed Jesus their Master and Protector.
 4. They had deserted Jesus in Gethsemane, one had betrayed, one denied, all had fled.
 5. They knew the tomb was empty – Jesus missing – they were guilty and responsible.
 6. It had taken two others – Joseph and Nicodemus – to properly retrieve and bury Him.
 7. If Jesus was alive, like John might speculate, how could they ever face Him again?
 8. If Jesus was alive, like the reports indicated, how would they justify their unbelief?
 9. If Jesus was alive, how could He rely on them for the ministries He had prophesied?
 10. The men ordinarily in charge (Peter and John) were divided, confused, impotent.
 11. Jesus suddenly appeared with them ... without knocking, using the door, or asking.
 12. They were terrified and affrighted (Lu 24:37); they assumed a spirit (Job 4:13-16).
- B. No wonder the Lord of glory immediately spoke of peace, for there was nothing to fear.
1. In a moment He relieved their fear, confirmed reports, rebuked, and comforted them.
 2. In a moment He reassured them of His presence and power similar to Lake Galilee.
 3. Luke recorded best how Jesus rebuked and comforted (Luke 24:36-43; Mark 16:14).
 4. Never forget the Lord of peace wants you to have peace; anything else is your fault.
 5. God will keep those who think on Him in perfect peace (Isaiah 26:3-4; Phil 4:6-7).
 6. For much more of His peace (see verse 27) ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/john-fourteen.pdf>.
 7. For much more of His peace (see verse 33) ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/john-sixteen.pdf>.
 8. A contemporary song that describes Peter ... <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7TC0lgH2a1s>.

20 And when he had so said, he shewed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord.

And when he had so said.

- A. Mark recorded that He upbraided them first for their lack of belief in eyewitness reports.
- B. After giving them a blessing of peace and rebuking their lack of faith, He caused faith.
- C. He knew the weak faith of these men without Holy Ghost light, which He soon supplied.

He shewed unto them his hands and his side.

- A. Since they fearfully thought He was a spirit, He proved He had a real body and parts.
 1. He showed them His hands and His side (John here) and also His feet (Luke 24:40).
 2. He told them to look at His wounds, but also suggested handling Him (Luke 24:39).
 3. He explained in Luke's account a spirit does not have flesh and bones like He did.
- B. John will testify later in his first epistle that they did indeed handle Jesus (I John 1:1).

Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord.

- A. They had denied CSI evidence, O.T. prophecies, Jesus' promises, eyewitness accounts.
- B. But now they had the Lord Himself in front of them showing His crucifixion wounds.
 1. Consider the intimacy and lack of decorum as He moved garments to show His side.

2. They could confirm by these five wounds that it was truly their Jesus that had died.
 3. We accept the song, *Arise, My Soul, Arise*, and the five bleeding wounds at Calvary.
- C. Luke recorded that Jesus proved His flesh and bone body alive by eating before them.
1. He wrote that the apostles did not believe by seeing Jesus due to joy (Luke 24:41).
 2. Jesus asked if they had any meat, solid food, and He ate some fish and honeycomb.
 3. Peter described eating and drinking like this when testifying to Cornelius (Ac 10:41).
- D. The apostles now fulfilled the joy He had clearly prophesied about (John 16:20-22).

***** *Ten Apostles See Jesus – Jesus Commissioned Them – Verse 21* *****

21 Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.

Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you.

- A. What had Jesus said that He now repeated? He had said, *Peace be unto you* (John 20:19).
1. They needed peace more than in a storm on the sea of Galilee, which He also gave.
 2. Peace in heart and mind from confusion, doubt, fear, and guilt is a wonderful thing.
 3. Every epistle but James opens or closes with peace (Romans 1:7; I Pet 1:2; Rev 1:4).
 4. God can and does give great peace (Job 22:21; Is 26:3-4; Rom 15:13; Phil 4:6-7).
 5. Before His arrest, Jesus gave them every reason for peace; see John chapters 14-17.
 6. Jesus had opened and closed with promises to them about peace (Jn 14:1,27; 16:33).
 7. His name for the Holy Spirit was Comforter, which is One that provides much peace.
 8. Jesus gave peace inside by His Spirit in them, and He would not take Him away.
 9. For much more of His peace (see verse 27) ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/john-fourteen.pdf>.
 10. For much more of His peace (see verse 33) ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/john-sixteen.pdf>.
- B. The repetition must indicate importance. It is our duty to identify its purpose and value.
1. He calmed all confusion and troubled doubts they might have had about themselves.
 2. He calmed all confusion and troubled doubts they might have had about His power.
 3. He calmed all confusion and troubled doubts they might have had of His kingdom.
 4. He calmed all confusion and troubled doubts they might have had of future ministry.
- C. With His resume and now victory over Jews, Romans, and death, His peace did comfort.
- D. After blessing them by further peace, He proceeded to their commission and ordination.

As my Father hath sent me.

- A. God sent Jesus on a divine mission by His decree (Jn 1:1-18; Rom 1:1-5; Phil 2:5-8).
1. He came to do the express and perfect will of God as His Ambassador (John 6:38).
 2. He came to do the commandments of God His Father (John 10:18; 12:49-50; 14:31).
 3. He was given an unlimited measure of the Spirit (Jn 3:34), which He next shared.
 4. He was sent to alter the form of worship to be more acceptable to God (Jn 4:20-24).
 5. He would combine king and priest in new ways (Ps 110:1-4; Heb 4:12-16; 10:1-22).

6. Jesus was successful in only a small percentage of those that heard Him preach truth.
 7. Jesus' ministry of reproving Jewish rulers for their hypocrisy cost Him His own life.
- B. The combination of Jesus and the apostles is the great mystery of godliness (I Tim 3:16).
1. Details of the mystery (slides) ... <http://www.letgodbettrue.com/pdf/mystery-of-godliness-powerpoint.pdf>.
 2. Details of the mystery (sermon outline) ... <http://www.letgodbettrue.com/pdf/mystery-of-godliness.pdf>.

Even so send I you.

- A. Jesus charged the apostles with a divine mission of the everlasting God (Ro 16:25-27).
1. They were ordained by the will and commandment of God (I Cor 1:1; I Tim 1:1).
 2. They were to complete the reformation of worship to God (John 4:20-24; Heb 9:10).
 3. They were to write N.T. epistles with final revelation (II Ti 3:16-17; II Pet 1:16-21).
 4. The chain of command from heaven to us – God to Jesus to apostles to end of world.
 5. Like their Lord, they would be successful in only a small percentage of the hearers.
 6. Jesus warned about their ministry of reproof in context of persecution (Jn 16:1-11).
 7. Faithful ministers will follow the ministry of Jesus Christ tempered by Paul's own.
- B. Paul said later about apostolic ministry – *Who is sufficient for these things* (II Co 2:16)?
1. He defined apostolic preachers as earthen vessels with treasures in them (II Cor 4:7).
 2. They would turn the world upside as He foretold (John 12:31-3; 16:7-11; Acts 17:6).
 3. They taught truth and wisdom unknown to natural man (I Cor 2:1-16; Ac 17:22-31).
 4. The secrets of hidden wisdom ... <http://www.letgodbettrue.com/pdf/mysteries-of-hidden-wisdom.pdf>.
- C. His commission here is more of Pentecostal prophecy rather than immediate actuality.
1. The three things listed – commission, Spirit, authority – occurred more fully later.
 2. However, His words were more than only prophecy, for they did understand more.
 3. We look at these three verses as confirmation and tokens of His intentions for them.

***** *Ten Apostles See Jesus – Jesus Gave Them the Spirit – Verses 22-23* *****

22 And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost:

And when he had said this.

- A. The token gift of the Holy Ghost here is mainly due to His commission of the apostles.
1. What had Jesus just said? *As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you* (Jn 20:21).
 2. He had told them before of worldwide ministries, but they now knew their weakness.
 3. They had just failed miserably, how could they take on the world without their Lord?
 4. So along with charging them, He opened their understanding of scripture (Lu 24:45).
 5. We call this measure of the Holy Ghost a token or earnest in light of Pentecost power.
 6. For reasons given shortly in notes on this verse, this is not the full gift of the Spirit.
 7. Ministers know authority and power come by knowing they have a divine message.
 8. Without the power of Christ by His Spirit, no apostle or minister can know anything.

9. We must pray for others and ourselves for God's blessing by His Spirit and word.
- B. Jesus could not and did not begin His ministry without the Spirit, same with the apostles.
 1. Jesus' ministry began with baptism, when the Holy Ghost descended and remained.
 2. The Spirit led Him into the wilderness to be tempted and prove superiority to Satan.
 3. When Jesus returned from the planned lesson, He preached mightily (Luke 4:14-15).

He breathed on them.

- A. God once breathed into Adam's nostrils the breath of life, and he became a living soul.
- B. The breath of God, closely connected to His Spirit, is powerful (Job 33:4; Psalm 33:6).
- C. The Spirit is like a breath – we are dead when our spirit escapes our body like a breath.
 1. We could look at words like inspiration, which may be understood as God-breathed.
 2. Jesus breathed on them symbolically giving some Spirit and promising much more.
 3. Benny Hinn is a blasphemer when he presumes to blow his anointing on his groupies.
- D. Jesus breathed on the apostles to share His infinite supply of the Spirit to them (Jn 3:34).
 1. They had seen Jesus with power, truth, and wisdom totally unprecedented in extent.
 2. They knew He had the Spirit without measure by John's words and by His ability.
 3. They would need tremendous Spirit power to compensate for their great weakness.

And saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost.

- A. Jesus clearly gave the apostles a further ministry of the Holy Spirit for their ministries.
 1. What day is it? The first day of the week ... the Lord's Day ... His resurrection day.
 2. The power of the Lord's resurrection already did much, but here is even more power.
 3. What they got here on resurrection Sunday was merely a token of what would come.
- B. This gift of the Holy Ghost needs to be limited to its role and explained better by Luke.
 1. The apostles were born again, so they had the regenerating presence (Jn 3:5; Tit 3:5).
 2. The apostles did miracles, so they had some sign and wonder power (Lu 10:17-20).
 3. But the real gift of the Holy Ghost could not occur before Pentecost (John 7:37-39).
 4. Jesus must ascend to God and receive gifts from Him to give (Ps 68:18; Ep 4:8-11).
 5. Peter clearly preached that Pentecost was the outpouring of the Spirit (Ac 2:33-38).
 6. Therefore, what was this gift of the Holy Ghost, since it was not *the gift* of Him?
- C. Luke helps us define this gift by limiting the effect to understand scripture (Luke 24:45).
 1. The same event, at evening, when Jesus first appeared to the apostles, is the context.
 2. John admitted that the apostles did not understand resurrection scripture (John 20:9).
 3. Peter showed new knowledge of scripture to lead the apostolic business of Acts 1.
 4. Jesus said His gift to know scripture was to preach forgiveness (Luke 24:45-47), which is the exact context here by the next verse. These verses explain each other.
 5. Let us never neglect either – the Spirit without scripture, or scripture without Spirit.
- D. Thus, John's short record of the Holy Spirit was an earnest and a confirmation of more.
 1. The Lord's greatest promise between supper and arrest was the gift of the Comforter.
 2. Before His arrest, Jesus gave many Holy Spirit promises; see John chapters 14-17.
 3. Jesus promised He would be with them by the Spirit, thus it was expedient He left.
 4. The Comforter or Holy Spirit would provide all the power and truth they would need.

5. They would be filled with His peace and nothing could alter His divine use of them.
 6. They knew they had failed miserably, so they needed confirmation of the Holy Spirit.
 7. They had heard Mary say Jesus was ascending to God, so they needed reassurance.
 8. They had no comfort of the scriptures, so Jesus gave them a token of understanding.
 9. In these senses we understand Jesus giving the Holy Ghost 47 days before Pentecost.
- E. There are many operations of the Spirit ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/holy-spirit-in-ephesians.pdf>.
- F. His commission here is more of Pentecostal prophecy rather than immediate actuality.
1. The three things listed – commission, Spirit, authority – occurred more fully later.
 2. However, His words were more than only prophecy, for they did understand more.
 3. We look at these three verses as confirmation and tokens of His intentions for them.

23 Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.

Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them.

- A. The RCC and others love this verse to justify their sacrament of confession or penance.
1. They first claim the apostles had authority to forgive sins by this mandate to them.
 2. They then claim this apostolic authority was transferred to their popes and priests.
 3. They then invented the confessional for auricular – priest’s ear only – confessions.
 4. They then invented penance, which is prescribed rituals to obtain God’s forgiveness.
 5. They then made this one of their seven sacraments necessary to obtain eternal life.
 6. The sacraments: baptism, confirmation, penance, mass, last rites, matrimony, orders.
 7. The confessional booth has been a tremendous corrupter of women through the ages.
 8. Such confessions give the priest and the church great leverage over the souls of men.
 9. Some antichrist errors of the RCC ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/is-catholicism-christian.pdf>.
- B. Jesus Christ did not give antichrist or the man of sin any such authority to forgive sins.
1. Like all heresies, they violate basic rules of hermeneutics for the sound of a text.
 2. For example, they use our Lord’s metaphor, *This is my body*, for transubstantiation.
 3. For example, they use Jesus’ words, *Upon this rock*, to teach Peter’s papal primacy.
 4. They reject overall Bible teaching, context, rightly dividing, and figures of speech
- C. Jesus did not transfer divine authority or privilege from God or Himself to mere men.
1. Sin is the transgression of God the Creator’s law; another creature cannot forgive.
 2. It was a right assumption of Jews that only God could forgive (Mark 2:7; Luke 5:21).
 3. Jesus only could say directly and personally, *Thy sins be forgiven thee* (Matt 9:1-8).
 4. Popes steal this divine prerogative to fulfill prophecy of being like God (II Thes 2:4).
- D. Only God forgives sin authoritatively and directly, even if taught by prophet or apostle.
1. The study here ignores small sins against others (I Sam 2:25; Pr 19:11; Matt 18:15).
 2. The most-loved verse for forgiveness is all about God Himself forgiving (I John 1:9).
 3. There are principles or promises of God’s forgiveness (Job 33:26-28; Prov 28:13).
 4. There are examples to illustrate God’s forgiveness (II Sam 12:13; Psalm 51:1-19).
- E. Jesus here described apostolic duty to teach the doctrine of forgiveness by divine rules.
1. What did the apostles know as Jews? Levitical priests forgave sins by animal rites.

2. They would declare a new and greater forgiveness of sins to a far greater audience.
 3. Luke's version of their authority identifies it as apostolic preaching (Luke 24:45).
 4. He had just commissioned them as He had been sent, and He forgave men (Jn 20:21).
 5. John already connected the Spirit (John 20:22) to reproving the world (Jn 16:8-11).
 6. Recall the important distinction of doctrinal or mental grace or falling (Gal 5:1-4).
 7. Notice for this description of ministry Peter has no preeminence over other apostles.
 8. Jesus gave the apostles POA to declare and dispense His kingdom rules about sin.
 9. Jesus promised apostolic inspiration to know the divine conditions and details of it.
- F. We clarify and confirm what Jesus meant by closely looking at the apostles' ministries.
1. Did they authoritatively and absolutely forgive men by their discretion? Never at all.
 2. Consider the apostles had the gift of discerning spirits; they did not judge arbitrarily.
 3. Did they ministerially teach forgiveness by God's honor of proper repentance? Yes!
 4. Luke's account of this charge was to preach repentance and remission (Luke 24:47).
 5. Mark's account of a similar apostolic charge is God's terms of salvation (Mk 16:16).
 6. Peter did this on Pentecost to Jews (Acts 2:38) and later to the Gentiles (Acts 10:43).
 7. Paul, also an apostle, taught the doctrine and terms of forgiveness (Acts 13:38-39).
 8. Paul wrote the nature and terms of reconciliation and condemnation (Rom 5-8; etc.).
 9. Paul wrote church rules for exclusion and restoration (I Cor 5:4-5; II Cor 2:6-11).
 10. Paul wrote a severe censure on any that did not love the Lord Jesus (I Cor 16:22).
 11. The apostles were charged and inspired to teach Jesus' commands (Matt 28:18-20).
 12. The apostolic epistles declared who and on what terms forgiveness could be had.
 13. The apostles identified special situations of damnation (Hebrews; I John 5:16-17).
 14. Irremediable judgment of Israel ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/hebrews-irremediable-chart.pdf>.
- G. Two other similar statements by Jesus should be identified and rightly divided as well.
1. Matthew 16:19 is assignment of Peter to preach the gospel to Jews and to Gentiles.
 2. Matthew 18:18 is authority of any local church to rule in small matters (I Co 6:1-8).

And whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.

- A. See commentary notes above for the first half of the verse to explain this second half.
- B. For an example of this half, consider Paul's warnings of irremediable judgment on Jews.
 1. Paul put Israel under a curse for unbelief (Heb 2:1-4; 6:4-6; 10:26-31; 12:25-29).
 2. Irremediable judgment of Israel ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/hebrews-irremediable-chart.pdf>.
- C. His commission here is more of Pentecostal prophecy rather than immediate actuality.
 1. The three things listed – commission, Spirit, authority – occurred more fully later.
 2. However, His words were more than only prophecy, for they did understand more.
 3. We look at these three verses as confirmation and tokens of His intentions for them.

24 But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came.

But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus.

- A. All scripture, including this, is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for much.
 - 1. Every word of God is pure; man shall live by every word; all scripture is profitable.
 - 2. These appearances by Jesus to His apostles were essential to the gospel (Acts 1:3).
 - 3. Do you believe like John (John 20:8), Peter (Luke 24:12), or Thomas (Jn 20:24-29)?
 - 4. Do you love like Mary (John 20:1,11), Peter (Jn 21:15-17), or Demas (II Tim 4:10)?
 - 5. You already believe Jesus rose ... but do you believe God is in charge of all, that He loves you in spite of circumstances, and that He has given you power to do anything?
 - 6. Are you dull about Jesus, obsessed about Him, and/or fervently zealous for Him?
 - 7. Are you with or against Thomas, that losing your life for Christ will find it for you?
 - 8. You can examine yourself before you read about Jesus confronting Peter in John 21.
- B. Thomas was his name in Hebrew; in Greek it was Didymus; both names mean a twin.
 - 1. The gospel lists connect him with Matthew (Matthew 10:3; Mark 3:18; Luke 6:35).
 - 2. Luke's account after our Lord's ascension connects him with Philip (Acts 1:12-14).
 - 3. Tradition has him going east and dying either in Persia (Iran) or India by a lance.
- C. He made a rash statement when Jesus chose to return to Judea for Lazarus (John 11:16).
- D. He was honest and transparent to admit his ignorance to Jesus about the Father (Jn 14:5).
 - 1. It is better to ask a 'stupid' question than to not ask questions and remain ignorant.
 - 2. Such questions of confusion or to learn more are not foolish and unlearned questions.
- E. Ten apostles were there; grasp the general term *twelve* (Acts 6:2; I Cor 15:5; Rev 21:14).
 - 1. Jesus originally ordained twelve apostles; this number remained in use (Mark 3:14).
 - 2. This is one of those places in the Bible to remember to combat ignorant literalists.
 - 3. The general term *twelve* was used for the apostles in general in various combinations of the 15 or so actual and identified apostles of Jesus Christ (John 6:70-71; Acts 6:2).
 - 4. The general term *twelve* tribes was used for Israel in general in various combinations of 14 names that were used e.g. Dan, Levi, Joseph, Manasseh, Ephraim (Rev 7:4-8).
 - 5. We need not identify the ten nations of the little horn of Rome – all know it as ten.
 - 6. We need not identify the exact start or end of 1260 years; all know the Dark Ages.

Was not with them when Jesus came.

- A. Thomas had been among the twelve, and he was again after this (John 21:2; Acts 1:13).
- B. We do not know why or how long he was not with the twelve. We trust what is written.
 - 1. Those that miss assemblies seldom know what they missed and its effect on them.
 - 2. See Thomas's obstinance against the eyewitness accounts of all the other apostles.
- C. Did Thomas get the Holy Spirit? Of course he did. What is an apostle without the Spirit?
 - 1. This event is not the full gift of the Holy Ghost anyway, which occurred at Pentecost.

2. Jesus' breath was a token for the future for all believers, even maids (Acts 2:14-18).
3. Thomas soon declared great faith by virtue of his fabulous confession (John 20:28).

25 The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe.

The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord.

- A. When Thomas reconnected with the apostles, they told him of Jesus' appearing to them.
- B. For men that had no other significant connection, the news about Jesus was very special.
- C. What is the bond of church members? It is Christ, and we ought to speak often of Him.
 1. Whenever we learn something of the gospel, we should want to share it (Jude 1:20).
 2. The purpose of the church is the benefit of serving society (Heb 3:12-13; 10:23-25).

But he said unto them.

- A. Before you criticize Thomas, recall the response of the ten to the women (Luke 24:11).
- B. We are all unbelievers by nature, even after regeneration, without the Lord and others.
 1. Paul warned, Christians can depart from the living God without work (Heb 3:12-13).
 2. He used David's example of the generation that came out of Egypt (Psalm 95:7-11).
 3. For this reason, assemblies and *one another* duties are important (Heb 10:23-25).
 4. For more of *one another* duties ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/bible/church/one-another/sermon.php>.

Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side.

- A. It is a shame when a man wants to be his own eyewitness and will not accept it of others.
 1. These were not just a few strangers, these were the other ten apostles, his brethren.
 2. The shame at missing a service or the shame of missing an event pricks human pride.
- B. God knows we readily accept the witness of others, but His witness of Jesus is greater.
 1. This is a basic axiom of faith written by this same writer (Jn 20:30-31; I Jn 5:6-10).
 2. You believe many things spoken or written by others, all of whom are liars (Ro 3:4).
 3. What men believe about things may change totally opposite in one generation e.g. red meat, coffee, cocaine, global warming or an ice age, sexual orientation, etc., etc.
- C. Do not be like Thomas and inordinately desire or expect your own sensual confirmation.
 1. Sensual confirmation uses the senses to confirm spiritual truth or divine revelation.
 2. The so-called *scientific method* requiring observation is worthless for spiritual truth.
 3. Its proponents believe evolutionary theory without any observable evidence at all.
 4. Its proponents believe evolutionary theory against the obvious of intelligent design.
 5. We do not need to find Noah's Ark to prove the Flood or even to increase faith in it.
 6. We do not need the Grand Canyon for proof of the Flood. It can be misunderstood.
 7. Faith by God's word is powerful substance and evidence of the unseen (Heb 11:1).

8. Preaching that tends toward natural evidence of spiritual truth is not spiritual faith.
9. We believe because God said it, and we do not need any further evidence for truth.
10. We believe because God said it, even against contrary evidence, due to divine power.
11. We walk by faith, not by sight, because sight is contrary to faith (II Cor 4:18; 5:7).

I will not believe.

- A. Thomas, for a few days, was foolishly stubborn like the ten had been against the women.
- B. Thomas rejected O.T. prophecies, Jesus' promises, independent eyewitness accounts.
- C. It has been well said of stubborn fools, *There is none so blind as those that will not see.*
 1. Peter mocked such Jewish scoffers about the second coming of Christ (II Pet 3:1-7).
 2. Willing ignorance – chosen idiocy – is stubborn rebellion we should totally reject.
- D. Let us say with the lunatic's father, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief (Mk 9:24).

***** *Doubting Thomas Sees Jesus – Jesus Appeared for Thomas – Verses 26-27* *****

26 And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you.

And after eight days again his disciples were within.

- A. The ten disciples assembled again in a secluded location with the doors securely closed.
 1. We are not told what Jesus or the apostles did during that week between appearances.
 2. He had disappeared before with angels ministering to Him, like in His temptation.
 3. You should not presume that spiritual blessings one day must continue unabated.
- B. What will we do with the *eight days*? Are they inclusive, exclusive, or only arithmetic?
 1. If we make them inclusive, then the apostles met again on the first day of the week.
 2. If we make them exclusive, then the apostles met again on Tuesday and not Sunday.
 3. If we make them arithmetic, the apostles met again on Monday, a day after Sunday.
 4. To exercise yourself in these things, see a good Bible chronology for reigns of kings.
 5. We have a direct comparison of counting methods (Matt 17:1; Mark 9:2; Luke 9:28).
 6. We understand our text to be the next first day of the week by counting inclusively.
 7. We may also count whole days from resurrection morning to this Sunday's evening.
 8. Jesus honored the first day of the week by His first and second appearances to them.
 9. From this time, the apostles exalted the first day of the week over the Jewish Sabbath.
 10. The only time they kept Sabbath worship or used synagogues was for evangelism.
 11. The positive apostolic record is plain enough for Sunday (Acts 20:7; I Cor 16:1-4).
 12. The negative apostolic record is for Sunday (Acts 15:19-20; Col 2:16; Gal 4:9-11).
 13. For these reasons, this same writer identified Sunday as the Lord's Day (Rev 1:10).
 14. The Sabbath was Jewish only (Ex 31:12-18; Deu 5:15; Neh 9:13-14; Ezek 20:12,20).
 15. The RCC did not change the day: (a) they did not exist until 300+; (b) apostles did.

16. Sabbatarians stubbornly reject the Bible like teetotalers, which they usually are also.
17. Against the Jewish sabbath ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/sermons/heresy/sabbatarianism/sermon.php>.

And Thomas with them.

- A. Thomas had to suffer to some degree during this week while the others rejoiced greatly.
- B. Where two or three are gathered, Jesus is there; Thomas saw Jesus by being assembled.
- C. Sometimes, though very undeserved, God will kindly give confirmation for weak faith.
 - 1. Gideon is a Bible example needing repetitive assurance, yet he is in the Hall of Faith.
 - 2. The Bible illustrates and declares God's patience toward us (Ps 78:38; 103:13-14).
 - 3. How often has God put up with your weak faith and not cut you off from the Spirit?
- D. The Lord did exactly what He did the first time, though directly for Thomas this time.

Then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst.

- A. The Lord did exactly what He did the first time, though directly for Thomas this time.
- B. You can be sure to the extent of the first miracle, the apostles had told how Jesus arrived.
- C. Jesus walked on water before glorification in heaven, He now could walk through walls.
 - 1. It is a shame to read those that deny His ability to do this thing if He had a real body.
 - 2. A real body could not be suspended on water, if it was a real body with real mass.
 - 3. A real body could not levitate or elevate against gravity and disappear into clouds.
 - 4. Such skeptical and scornful questions do not deserve answers; those asking are fools.

And said, Peace be unto you.

- A. Jesus used the plural *you* for all eleven apostles, but surely Thomas needed it the most.
- B. In spite of our doubts, fear, and lack of faith, Jesus gives peace, remembering our frame.
- C. See the other times Jesus said the same words at His first appearing (John 20:19,21).

27 Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing.

Then saith he to Thomas.

- A. If you want to doubt, deny, or defy God, He has a way of humbling you in short order.
- B. Jesus did not address the ten or the eleven, He went directly after the doubting Thomas.
- C. If you choose to express your carnality in public, then Jesus may also correct it in public.

Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side.

- A. Did Jesus have a bloodless body? Did He have a bodyless body? Why stupid questions?
 - 1. Such questions are worse than Thomas, for they deny the truth and power of Jesus.
 - 2. Jesus came in the flesh and rose in the flesh and ascended in the flesh. Embrace it.
 - 3. The resurrection restored Jesus body with life, which is what resurrection is about.

4. Flesh destroyed was restored; blood lost was replaced; the wounds sealed as wounds.
- B. Jesus gave exactly what Thomas had stubbornly demanded, though not obligated to it.
 1. Jesus heard every word of unbelief and remembered them. Consider it well, reader.
 2. Jesus our Lord showed His great mercy and patience to Thomas and his lack of faith.
 3. Whether you were aware or not, He has also mercifully dealt with your lack of faith.
 4. You should consider others and bear their infirmities for edification (Rom 15:1-2).
- C. John openly declared to all that the apostles handled the Lord Jesus Christ (I John 1:1).
 1. A crucial fact in the apostolic age was to believe that Jesus Christ came in the flesh.
 2. To deny Jesus Christ came in the flesh was to be an antichrist (I Jn 4:1-3; II Jn 1:7).
 3. For more about Christ wars in apostolic times ... <http://www.letgodbetruer.com/pdf/christ-wars.pdf>.
- D. When we come to the Lord's Supper, we may view it as touching the wounds of Jesus.

And be not fruitless, but believing.

- A. Here is a wonderful use of *fruit*. We should benefit and grow from God's revelations.
 1. It is a great privilege to have a revelation from God (Psalm 147:19-20; Prov 29:18).
 2. God judged Israel severely for neglecting His revelation (Matt 21:33-46; 22:1-7).
 3. He foretold sending His truth to Gentiles (Is 6:9-13; John 12:37-41; Acts 28:23-29).
 4. God holds Gentiles without excuse for creation not changing their lives (Rom 1:20).
 5. Remember the four responses to the word of God being preached (Luke 8:4-18).
 6. Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God, so beware (Rom 10:17).
 7. When God reveals something, our response exposes or proves spiritual character.
 8. Peter closed out his epistles with an exhortation to grow in knowledge (II Peter 3:18).
 9. This is opposite the effeminate, fable-loving Christians today (II Tim 3:1-7; 4:2-4).
 10. While they fondle a Nephilim Q-tip, we should hate marriage with carnal Christians.
 11. Jesus exhorted His apostles to faith like a mustard seed (Mat 17:20). Will you do it?
 12. We do not want knowledge for faith only, or we are no better than devils (Jas 2:19).
 13. Paul goes so far as to rebuke the Hebrews for not being teachers (Hebrews 5:12-14).
 14. After a few years, you should be able to answer most questions by inquirers or youth.
- B. We stress each word of God; we want Him to know we trust His words more than others.
 1. We defend the KJV for the words of God, not a version agenda or church association.
 2. We love the commitment of Agur; we want to copy his inspired zeal (Prov 30:5-6).
 3. For our great love of every word ... <http://www.letgodbetruer.com/pdf/one-word-arguments-titus.pdf>.

***** *Doubting Thomas Sees Jesus – Jesus Blessed Unseen Faith – Verses 28-29* *****

28 And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God.

And Thomas answered and said unto him.

- A. Did Thomas make this glorious declaration about Jesus with or without touching Him?
- B. Many say Thomas went through with his faithless demand, but we do not believe such.
 1. We trust our Lord's following words that Thomas believed based on seeing Jesus.

2. Jesus only *showed* His wounds to the ten when He appeared to them (John 20:20).
3. It is extreme prejudice to think that Thomas seeing the wounds was not convinced.
4. As in most similar cases, the skeptic way overstates his doubt to make a strong point.

My Lord and my God.

- A. Let us be quick to forgive Thomas his doubt and disrespect to the ten by this confession.
 1. This confession exceeds any recorded declaration by the apostles before Pentecost.
 2. Who else, prior to Pentecost, agreed with John 1:1 and called Jesus of Nazareth God?
 3. Compare it to Peter's, *Thou are the Christ, the Son of the living God* (Matt 16:16).
 4. If it requires the Spirit to call Jesus Lord, what then of calling Jesus God (I Co 12:3)?
 5. We as Bible Christians embrace confidently both deity and authority of Jesus Christ.
- B. This has been and should be one of the plain proofs that Jesus of Nazareth is Jehovah.
 1. This is not Jesus addressing the Father, which violates every aspect of the context.
 2. This was not some mere form of public address, and it was spoken to Jesus Himself.
 3. Thomas was in the company of the other apostles, and they did not correct His words.
 4. Jesus was in direct dialog with Thomas, and Jesus did not correct Thomas's words.
 5. Thomas as a Jew had one God – the God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses – Jehovah.
 6. No one was confused about the intent or the integrity of the declaration by evidence.
 7. Jesus commended his faith in the matter as evidenced by his statement of confidence.
 8. John wrote this exchange the others ignored; it agrees with His opening (John 1:1).
 9. For much more about Jesus as Jehovah ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/jesus-is-jehovah.pdf>.
- C. Consider briefly the difference between owning Jesus as your Lord and as your God.
 1. We as Bible Christians affirm without a doubt the deity and authority of Jesus Christ.
 2. But we must do more than accept or confess doctrine; is Jesus your Lord and God?
 3. If Jesus is your Lord, ruler and king, then you will obey Him in every part of life.
 4. If Jesus is your God, a divine incarnation, you embrace His mystery and worship.
 5. If He is Lord, obey Him ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/sermons/christ/he-is-lord-of-all/sermon.php>.
 6. If He is God, know Him (slides) ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/sonship-simplified-slides.pdf>
 7. If He is God, know Him (outline) ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/bible/christ/sonship-of-christ.php>.

29 Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.

Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed.

- A. Here is immediate contextual evidence Thomas believed the risen Christ by sight only.
- B. Many say Thomas went through with his faithless demand to touch, but we reject it.
 1. We trust our Lord's words right here that Thomas believed based on seeing Jesus.
 2. Jesus only *showed* His wounds to the ten when He appeared to them (John 20:20).
 3. It is extreme prejudice to think that Thomas seeing the wounds was not convinced.
 4. As in most similar cases, the skeptic way overstates his doubt to make a strong point.

- C. To see Jesus was a blessing – He appeared to few; to believe by it proves regeneration.
 - 1. Unless a man is born again, He cannot see (Jn 1:12-13; 3:3; 5:24,40; 8:43,47; 10:26).
 - 2. His spiritual perception is totally corrupt (Rom 3:9-18; 8:7-8; I Cor 2:14; Ep 2:1-3).
 - 3. For more against man’s spiritual ability ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/total-depravity.pdf>.
- D. Thomas had been privileged to see, but what of the rest of the world for evangelism?

Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.

- A. The blessing here is restrained to this clause, for it was not part of the previous clause.
 - 1. By our Lord’s comparison and the nature of the comparison, these are more blessed.
 - 2. It is greater to believe by eyewitness reports than to have to be your own eyewitness.
 - 3. The N.T. has all the eyewitness accounts and doctrinal proofs to believe (I Tim 3:15).
 - 4. We have the complete revelation of God for faith (I Cor 13:8-10; II Tim 3:16-17).
 - 5. Compare another priority and value of charity over apostolic gifts (I Cor 12:28-31).
 - 6. If you can be greater than an apostle by love, then be greater as well by unseen faith.
 - 7. Compare another priority and value of scripture over exalted visions (II Pe 1:16-21).
 - 8. Reader, let thy faith excel by confidence in God’s words without physical evidence.
 - 9. Faith is eyes for seeing the invisible (Heb 11:1-3,27; II Cor 4:18; 5:7; Rom 8:24-25).
 - 10. Let us take this lesson one step higher – do you love what you cannot see (I Pet 1:8)?
- B. Other than 520 chosen eyewitnesses of the risen Christ, the rest would get it from others.
 - 1. The apostles presented the CSI evidence, their eyewitness testimonies, and miracles.
 - 2. The apostles appealed to O.T. prophecies, Jesus’ promises, and the necessity for it.
 - 3. We have never seen an apostolic sign and wonder, but we believe by their writings.
- C. Do you believe? How can you tell? Does your life beat Thomas in worldly sacrifice?
 - 1. Since Jesus identified degrees of faith here, let us strive to have the greatest faith.
 - 2. We qualify by virtue of having only half of the evidence of first century Christians.
 - 3. We can then proceed upward from there by degree of joy, love, confession, and zeal.
 - 4. From there we follow the apostles in losing our lives for His sake and others’ sakes.
- D. The connection of this verse to the next two is good – Jesus and John working together.
 - 1. Jesus declared those blessed who believe without seeing (but by hearing or reading).
 - 2. John declared he had carefully selected sufficient content for faith without seeing.

***** *Why John Wrote John – He Could Have Written More – Verse 30* *****

30 And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book:

And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples.

- A. We assume John’s words here to apply exclusively to those miracles in this chapter.
 - 1. The point under consideration is faith in the resurrected Lord Jesus (John 20:24-29).
 - 2. The apostles did not have to strain for evidences of resurrection; there were many.

3. He was among them for forty days and gave them many infallible proofs (Acts 1:3).
4. The four Gospel writers used different events in different words not used by others.
- B. This point is important to John and the Spirit, since he wrote it twice (John 21:24-25).
 1. He wrote humbly, thus his anonymous self-references, so he admitted a short epistle.
 2. He wrote to build faith in Jesus, so He wanted readers to know there was much more.
 3. If he had not written this here, some would naturally think this was all the evidence.
 4. The Jews required signs (Deut 18:21-22; I Cor 1:22), so Jesus gave them very many.
 5. They had false prophets, but His were a million-fold better in quantity and quality.
- C. Jesus did many other signs to prove He was from God before His arrest and crucifixion.
 1. Jesus told His hearers to believe Him for His works (Jn 3:2; 5:36; 10:37-38; 14:11).
 2. The apostles could appeal to many works sufficiently known (Acts 2:22; 10:37-39).
 3. We may read four Gospel accounts and then the epistles and know there was more.
- D. Jesus did many other signs to prove He was alive from the dead after His resurrection.
 1. Luke wrote of many infallible proofs over the forty days after He rose (Acts 1:3).
 2. We assume John's words here to apply exclusively to those miracles in this chapter.
 3. Jesus appeared miraculously to the twelve twice, offering His body for examination.
 4. The other miracles Jesus did in His life were usually not limited to the disciples only.
 5. Mark recorded the miracle He did by ascending to heaven from them (Mark 16:19).
 6. Luke recorded the miracle He did with the two going to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-35).
 7. Luke recorded His miracle of eating broiled fish and honeycomb (Luke 24:41-43).
 8. Peter told Cornelius how Jesus had proven His resurrection to them (Acts 10:40-41).

Which are not written in this book.

- A. John wrote a gospel book for conversion, not a biography for historians or for scholars.
 1. Therefore, anyone that criticizes his choice of details to overlook others is a scorner.
 2. God need not multiply evidence; if you will not believe that given, you are a fool.
- B. We give thanks for each tidbit of doctrine and evidence, knowing we deserve none.
- C. Men write all they can to demand credibility, but God gives faith for what is written.

***** *Why John Wrote John – Enough Evidence for Faith – Verse 31* *****

31 But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.

But these are written.

- A. John wrote enough doctrine and evidence of Jesus Christ for regenerate men to believe.
- B. God inspired all written scripture, exactly what John included and what John excluded.
 1. There are precise purposes and profit for each and every word of inspired scripture.
 2. The Bible says all scripture is profitable and sufficient for perfection (II Ti 3:16-17).
 3. We may often wonder about and/or desire more details, but what is written is perfect.

4. If something is written, it is important; if it is not written, then it is not important.
 5. We submit mind and heart to what is revealed, and we ignore or reject anything else.
- C. The connection of this verse to two previous is good – Jesus and John working together.
1. Jesus declared those blessed who believe without seeing (but by hearing or reading).
 2. John declared he had carefully selected sufficient content for faith without seeing.
- D. John will add a glorious postscript of a third sighting and its details in the next chapter.

That ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ.

- A. Men write for all sort of other purposes – profane purposes in comparison to this one.
- B. Christ = Messiah, as the scriptures tell us quite clearly (Dan 9:24-26; John 1:41; 4:25).
1. God had promised and prophesied His anointed One, and we must believe it is Jesus.
 2. From Seed of the woman to Sun of righteousness, let us believe (Gen 3:15; Mal 4:2).
- C. From the first chapter, John recorded glorious conversions to this fact (John 1:41; 4:25).
1. He wrote again in his first epistle that this faith was his preeminent goal (I Jn 5:13).
 2. The apostles then took this message to the ends of the earth (Acts 8:37; 9:20; 18:28).

The Son of God.

- A. Not only is Jesus the Christ or Messiah of God, the anointed One, but also God’s Son.
- B. Peter’s glorious, inspired confession was both of these gospel facts (Matt 16:13-17).
- C. God gave great witness that Jesus was the Son of God for us to believe (I John 5:4-13).
- D. The incarnate sonship of Jesus Christ is a fundamental fact for us to believe (Acts 8:37).
- E. For the true sonship of Jesus Christ ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/sonship-simplified-slides.pdf>.

And that believing ye might have life through his name.

- A. As Jesus charged the apostles, faith is claim or evidence of salvation (Mark 16:15-16).
1. We lay hold of eternal life for assurance by faith in Christ (I Tim 6:12 cp 6:17-19).
 2. The gospel is not a savor of death unto life (II Cor 2:14-17; I Cor 1:18-31; 2:14-16).
 3. Paul endured what he did for conversion of elect only (II Tim 2:10; Rom 10:1-4).
 4. John knew faith was evidence of regeneration, not a condition (Jn 5:24; I Jn 5:1-4).
- B. John clarified his intent further by stating faith in Jesus Christ is evidence (I John 5:13).
1. Man’s total depravity requires salvation to believe (I Cor 2:14-15; Eph 1:19; 2:1-3).
 2. Faith in Christ is the first evidence of salvation (Jn 5:24; 10:26; Jas 2:5; II Pet 1:1).
 3. Saving faith in this sense must have works (I Thes 1:2-4; Jas 2:14-26; II Pet 1:5-11).
 4. For John’s grammar about faith ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/grammar-of-regeneration.pdf>.
- C. If you believe and obey the Man Christ Jesus, you will surely spend eternity in heaven.
- D. Do you believe Jesus of Nazareth is Christ and Son of God? Has it changed your life?