

1. The Discovery of the Empty Tomb (1-2)

- a. On the first day of the week – Day 1 of the new creation
 - i. The narrative moves quickly from the crucifixion to the resurrection.
 - ii. The resurrection of Jesus is the sign that Jesus prophesied (2:19).
 1. The resurrection is the seventh and ultimate sign of Jesus' deity.
 2. The preceding signs were the turning of water into wine (2:1-11), the healing of the nobleman's son (4:43-54), the healing of the lame man (5:1-18), the feeding of the multitude (6:1-15), the healing of the man born blind (9:1-41), and the raising of Lazarus (11:1-57).
- b. Early, while it was still dark
 - i. Before the sun can rise, Jesus has already risen from the dead!
 - ii. 1:5 "And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not"
 - iii. 13:30 "He then having received the sop went immediately out and it was night"
 - iv. With Jesus' resurrection, the light dawned on this sin darkened world!
- c. Mary Magdalene's discovery
 - i. She came to the tomb early while it was still dark.
 - ii. She saw the stone had been taken away from the tomb.
 1. We know that Jesus did not need the stone to be removed to leave it; He would later visit His disciples by walking through a locked door.
 2. The stone was rolled away for the benefit of the eyewitnesses.
- d. Mary's witness (2)
 - i. Mary ran to Peter and the Beloved Disciple.
 - ii. "They have taken away the LORD out of the sepulcher."
 1. Mary is likely referring to the Jews
 2. The Jews had accused Jesus and sought the death penalty (19:7).
 3. The Jews petitioned Pilate to have their legs broken (19:31).
 4. Joseph of Arimathea feared the Jews (19:38).
 5. It was the Jews that arranged for a Roman guard (Matthew 27:62-66).
 - iii. "We know not where they have laid him"
 1. Mary reveals that she was accompanied to the tomb.
 2. Mary is concerned about the location of Jesus' body despite Jesus' repeated teaching.
 - a. 13:33 "Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you."
 - b. 14:28 "Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I."
 - c. 16:5 "But now I go my way to him that sent me; and none of you asketh me, Whither goest thou?"
 - d. 16:16 "A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father."
 - e. 16:18 "They said therefore, What is this that he saith, A little while? We cannot tell what he saith."
 - f. 16:28 "I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father."
 3. Mary did not realize that Jesus was now closer to her than He had ever been prior to His resurrection! Jesus' resurrection has made possible intimate communion with Him!

2. The Race to the Tomb (3-7)

- a. Peter and the Beloved Disciple left for the tomb (3).
 - i. The Beloved Disciple was not only an eyewitness of Jesus' betrayal, trial, and crucifixion; he was also an eyewitness of Jesus' resurrection.
 - ii. The disciples were so disoriented and discouraged that none of them were present to embalm Jesus' body; they were not at the tomb; instead they were hiding away, likely in the upper room.
- b. Both ran to the tomb (4).
 - i. The Beloved Disciple outran Peter.
 - ii. The Beloved Disciple arrived first.
- c. The Beloved Disciple stopped short of entering (5).
 - i. He stooped down and looked in.
 - ii. He saw the linen grave clothes lying.
 - iii. He didn't go in.
- d. Simon Peter went into the tomb (6-7).
 - i. Peter was first to enter the tomb.
 - ii. Peter also sees the linen grave clothes laying there.
 - iii. Peter sees the napkin that wrapped the head, wrapped and set apart separately.
 1. The Jews embalmed the corpse with tightly wrapped linen shrouds from head to toe.
 2. The head was also tightly wrapped to keep the mouth closed.
 3. The grave clothes are another evidence that the body was not stolen; thieves would not go through the effort of removing the shrouds, much less folding them and placing them neatly.
 4. When Lazarus was raised from the dead, he had to be freed of the tightly wrapped grave clothes.
 5. The grave clothes are another proof of Jesus' resurrection and power over death.

3. Belief in the Resurrection (8-9)

- a. The Beloved Disciple begins to believe (8).
 - i. He goes from peering in to entering in.
 - ii. He goes from seeing to believing.
 - iii. He begins to realize that he's witnessing evidence for Jesus' resurrection.
- b. Their understanding was incomplete (9).
 - i. Their heart was being prepared by what they witnessed, but they still did not understand the Scriptures that pertained to the resurrection.
 - ii. The Scriptures are always the basis of saving faith (cf. 2:18-22).

4. The Need of the Disciples (10)

- a. The disciples returned to their own homes.
- b. They were beginning to believe in the resurrection, but their understanding of the Scriptures was still incomplete.
- c. The disciples needed to be taught the Scriptures for their faith to grow strong.

Conclusion:

1. Jesus proved that His payment for sin is complete by rising from the dead! He has defeated sin, death, and hell for all who believe on Him! Have you believed in Him?
2. Jesus rose again to offer you intimate fellowship with God. Are you enjoying an ever-deepening fellowship with Him?
3. Do you find your faith wavering? Are you cowering in fear? In what areas do you need to seek out training in the understanding and the application of the Scriptures?