

Some Deeper Bible Study Questions

- A) Why is the resurrection of Jesus Christ the single most important issue in Christianity? Read 1st Corinthians 15:1-28 with your small group (or friend, spouse, etc.). What jumps out at you from this selected passage -- what is important?
- B) Here's the big question... How does a person become a Christian? Sometimes you hear that by saying a certain prayer or feeling a certain way, you become a Christian. Still others would say that becoming a Christian has nothing to do with the person, it is God's choice exclusively. Is it accepting Christ, or is it Christ accepting us?
- C) The Bible says (Romans 5) that when we respond in faith to the life of Jesus Christ, we are "justified." What does being "justified" mean and why is "justification by faith" an important point for Christians?
- D) Ephesians 2:8-10 points out that there is nothing we can do (works) to earn our salvation. In fact, 2nd Corinthians 5:21 says that salvation actually transfers the "righteousness" of Jesus Christ to us! From God's view, you and I are like His Son Jesus -- perfect in every way. So... Why should we "strive" to be better Christians (Colossians 1:28-29)? Who cares? If we sin or if we are righteous, does it really matter (Romans 6)?
- E) For the past month, we have been building toward Easter Sunday. We began at the Lord's Supper with Christ washing feet. Then it was on to the Garden of Gethsemane, witnessing His agony and His betrayal. We took a look at the overall Passion Week of Christ, walking through the week with Him and experiencing the crucifixion. On Good Friday we were confronted with Judas & Peter, their betrayals and responses to Jesus Christ. Finally on Easter, we witnessed the empty tomb and considered the central significance of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. How has this month impacted you? How can you live in light of the Passion of Jesus Christ on a regular basis? Share your victories and needs with your group and spend some time in prayer with (and for) each other!

He Is Risen!

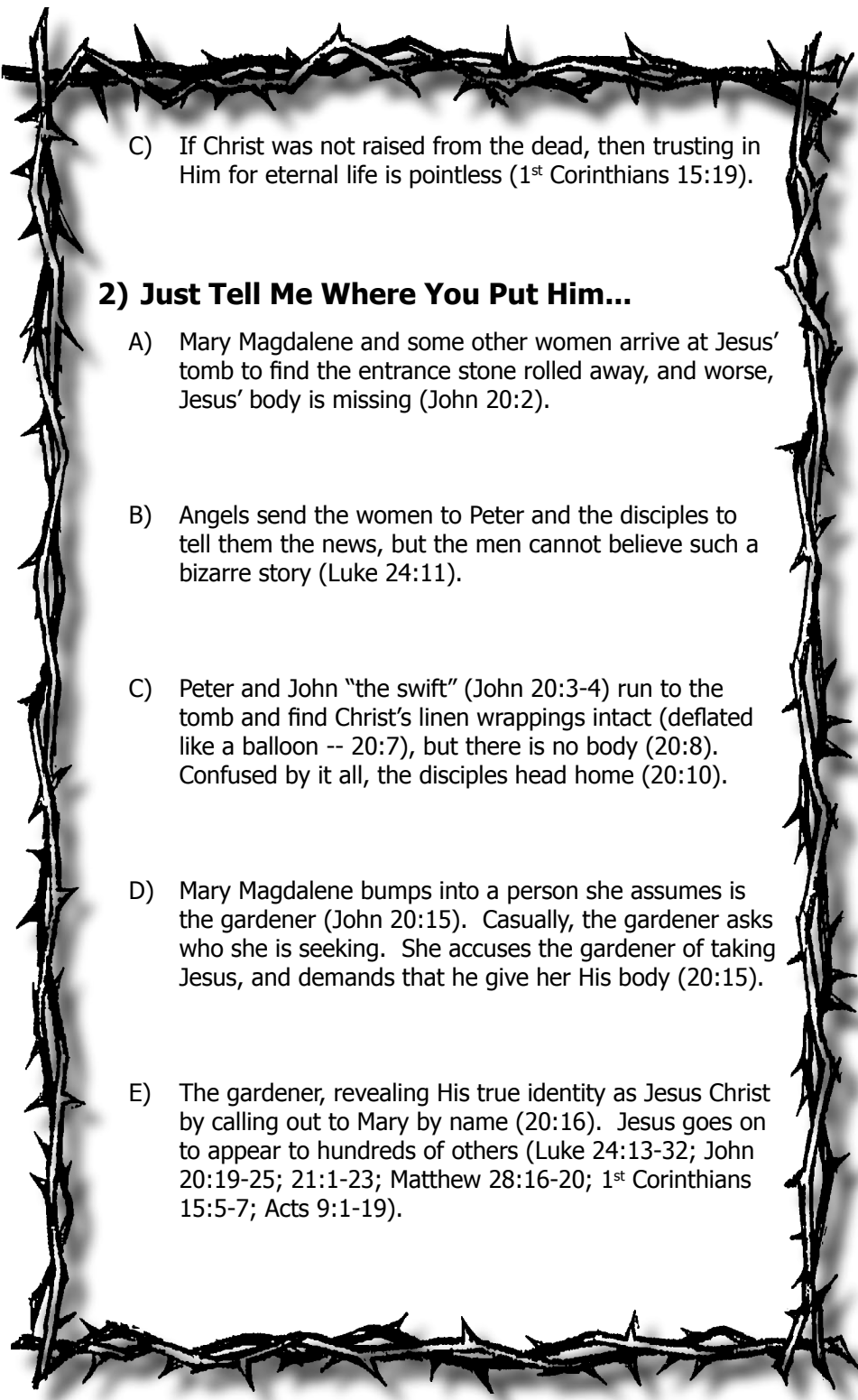
Long Bench Alliance Church • March 27th, 2005 • Easter Sunday • Pastor Chris Lankford



THE ANGEL SAID TO THE WOMEN, "DO NOT BE AFRAID; FOR I KNOW THAT YOU ARE LOOKING FOR JESUS WHO HAS BEEN CRUCIFIED. "HE IS NOT HERE, FOR HE HAS RISEN, JUST AS HE SAID. COME, SEE THE PLACE WHERE HE WAS LYING. ~MATTHEW 28:5-6 (NASB)

1) Why Is The Resurrection Important?

- A) If Christ was not raised from the dead, then He doesn't really have power over sin (1st Corinthians 15:17).
- B) If Christ was not raised from the dead, then when you die, there is no Heaven or Hell (1st Corinthians 15:18).

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- C) If Christ was not raised from the dead, then trusting in Him for eternal life is pointless (1st Corinthians 15:19).

2) Just Tell Me Where You Put Him...

- A) Mary Magdalene and some other women arrive at Jesus' tomb to find the entrance stone rolled away, and worse, Jesus' body is missing (John 20:2).
- B) Angels send the women to Peter and the disciples to tell them the news, but the men cannot believe such a bizarre story (Luke 24:11).
- C) Peter and John "the swift" (John 20:3-4) run to the tomb and find Christ's linen wrappings intact (deflated like a balloon -- 20:7), but there is no body (20:8). Confused by it all, the disciples head home (20:10).
- D) Mary Magdalene bumps into a person she assumes is the gardener (John 20:15). Casually, the gardener asks who she is seeking. She accuses the gardener of taking Jesus, and demands that he give her His body (20:15).
- E) The gardener, revealing His true identity as Jesus Christ by calling out to Mary by name (20:16). Jesus goes on to appear to hundreds of others (Luke 24:13-32; John 20:19-25; 21:1-23; Matthew 28:16-20; 1st Corinthians 15:5-7; Acts 9:1-19).



3) What About All Those Guards?

- A) The guards, who were the only witnesses of the actual resurrection moment, run to the chief priests and told them what had happened (Matthew 28:2-3, 11).
- B) The guards were paid off to give a different account* of the resurrection story, creating a "stolen body" theory which kept the guards and Jewish leaders off the hook of responsibility with the Romans (Matthew 28:11-15).

4) The Significance Of The Resurrection

- A) Jesus' resurrection demonstrates His power over death and sin -- He is the "first fruits" (1st Corinthians 15:20). Sin results in eternal death (Romans 3:23); but faith (trust) in Jesus results in eternal life (Romans 5:18-21).
- B) We know Jesus' sacrifice (death) was acceptable to God because Jesus came back from the dead (resurrection). The confirmation of Jesus as Savior, is found in the resurrection (Romans 1:4; Philippians 2:9-11).
- C) We experience victory over sin and death in our lives by receiving (accepting) God's gift to us by faith (Ephesians 2:8-9). Justification, being declared "right" by God, results from faith in Jesus Christ (Titus 3:4-7).

* There have been many different theories to explain away the resurrection of Jesus Christ. None have provided a plausible, scholarly or rational explanation against the historical facts. For a careful (and technical) study of the subject, I recommend "[Did Jesus Rise From The Dead?](#)" chapter six in *Jesus Under Fire*, edited by Michael J. Wilkins & J.P. Moreland. The book is a careful apologetic of the life and words of the Gospels & Jesus Christ. I recommend it heartily!