

BIBLE TEACHING AND WORSHIP GUIDE



FOR THE HOME-BASED CHURCH

Produced Weekly

Seeing and Believing
John 20:1-2, 11-29

Copy this sheet for the Gathering Time, Bible Study, and Worship Experience leaders for the next meeting of the church.

Leaders' Responsibilities:

Important: Each person who will be leading one of the three parts of a session during a series of sessions needs to have access to the "Introduction" article found at the beginning of each series (Bible Teaching #...). The weekly session "Background" located in the Teacher Preparation is much more specific to that day's study.

1. **The Gathering Time Leader** will gather all of the people together and help them prepare their minds and hearts for a wonderful worship experience before God. His/her responsibility is to introduce the congregation to the theme (content) and the Scripture that will be central to their worship experience for the day.

2. **The Bible Study Leader** will then help the people understand what the Scriptures have to say and teach us about the content of the study for the day. He/she will guide the people to make a general application of the study (ie: How does this Bible study apply to people today?)

3. **The Worship Time Leader** has the responsibility to use the theme and Scriptures to guide the congregation to make personal commitments to God's will for each one in regard to the study for the day. He/she will use others to lead in the music, taking the offering, ministry moment comments, and other activities and parts of the **Worship Time** that can aid in participatory worship.

Prior to this Coming Session:

Gathering Time Leader:

Copy the hymn **One Day** (available at the end of the Worship Time materials) and ask six different people to read the verses.

Bible Study Leader:

Make sufficient copies of the list entitled "Who Saw What" for all youth and adult participants in the Bible Study.

Write the references for the resurrection story on a white board or large piece of paper or make individual copies for each participant. Matthew 27:57-28:15; Mark 15:42-16:8; Luke 23:50-24:12 ; John 19:38-20:18.

Make a large poster or write on a whiteboard the following and use it as a focal point to gain attention of the group during the **Bible Study Time**.

Act 4: Scenes 1, 2

Worship Time Leader:

Music Sources:

He Is Lord, *The Worship Hymnal* #277; CCLI #5178348

Alleluia, Alleluia, *The Worship Hymnal* #272; CCLI #41903 Public Domain, 5463716
Public Domain

He Lives, *The Worship Hymnal* #269; CCLI #17597

There Is A Redeemer, *The Worship Hymnal* #279; CCLI #11483

1

Copy this section for the Gathering Time leader.

Gathering Time: (Suggested time: 15 minutes)

Seeing and Believing

Focal Text

John 20:1-2, 11-29

Background

John 20—21

Main Idea

Jesus' appearances and ministry after his resurrection confirm his identity as God's Son and commission us to be his messengers to the world.

Question to Explore

What does Jesus have yet to do for you to believe in him, serve him, and bear witness of him?

Teaching Aim

To lead those in the group who are not yet followers of Jesus to confess their faith in Him as Saviour and Lord—and to lead those who are believers to reconfirm their faith in Him and commitment to bear witness of Him.

Gathering together:

Sing: **He Is Lord**, *The Worship Hymnal* #277; CCLI #5178348

An old hymn tells the whole gospel message from Jesus' birth until his return to earth. Listen to the words as we prepare to rejoice in the story of the resurrection. (If possible, give a copy of the Chorus and the five verses to six different people to read.)

One Day

Verse 1

One day when Heaven
Was filled with His praises

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Seeing and Believing – 16-43-14-en

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One day when sin was
As black as could be
Jesus came forth
To be born of a virgin
Dwelt amongst men
My example is He

Verse 2

One day they led Him
Up Calvary's mountain
One day they nailed Him
To die on the tree
Suffering anguish
Despised and rejected
Bearing our sins
My Redeemer is He

Verse 3

One day they left Him
Alone in the garden
One day He rested
From suffering free
Angels came down o'er
His tomb to keep vigil
Hope of the hopeless
My Savior is He

Verse 4

One day the grave
Could conceal Him no longer
One day the stone
Rolled away from the door
Then He arose
Over death He had conquered
Now is ascended
My Lord evermore

Verse 5

One day the trumpet
Will sound for His coming
One day the skies
With His glory will shine

Wonderful day
My beloved one's bringing
Glorious Savior
This Jesus is mine

Chorus 1

Living He loved me
Dying He saved me
Buried He carried
My sins far away
Rising He justified
Freely forever
One day He's coming
O glorious day

CCLI Song # 63596 Charles Howard Marsh | John Wilbur Chapman© Words: Public Domain Music:
Public Domain

The one day we are to focus on in study and worship today is the day of resurrection.
The hymn says:

One day the grave
Could conceal Him no longer
One day the stone
Rolled away from the door
Then He arose
Over death He had conquered
Now is ascended
My Lord evermore

He arose and over death He has conquered. This is the wonderful truth of the Gospel
and the particular truth we are to examine to day.

Closing the Gathering Time:

The traditional greeting for Christians on Easter Sunday is “Christ is Risen”. The
response is “He is risen indeed”. As we begin this morning let us participate in this
happy remembrance. It is appropriate on Easter Sunday or on any other day. Say to
one another “Christ is Risen” and respond “He is risen indeed”.

Take time at this point to mention items of prayer concern for the church, announcements of ministry or activities, and anything else that needs to be shared with or by the congregation. Pray for these needs. Remember to praise God in prayer.

Break time! Take five minutes between sessions. Encourage children to use the washroom so that they won't need to leave during the Bible Study time.

Distribute youth/adult Bible study outlines or paper for note-taking, if available.

Also hand out the activity sheets for preschool and younger children to use during Bible Study and/or worship.

2

Copy this section for the Bible Study leader.

Note to the Bible Study Leader: Suggested teaching time for the Bible study should be about 35 minutes. Use the “Teacher Preparation” for your personal study during the week before the session. Use the “Bible Study Plan” for the actual session.

Teacher Preparation

Seeing and Believing

Focal Text

John 20:1-2, 11-29

Background

John 20—21

Main Idea

Jesus' appearances and ministry after his resurrection confirm his identity as God's Son and commission us to be his messengers to the world.

Question to Explore

What does Jesus have yet to do for you to believe in him, serve him, and bear witness of him?

Teaching Aim

To lead those in the group who are not yet followers of Jesus to confess their faith in Him as Saviour and Lord—and to lead those who are believers to reconfirm their faith in Him and commitment to bear witness of Him.

Introduction to your personal study:

Any true follower of Jesus, the Christ: ***“My Lord and my God”*** as Thomas (Didymus) declared him to be—must, by his or her belief, object to some of the movies and plays that depict the life of Jesus Christ. The objection stems from the ending of several of those dramas. They too often end with Jesus' crucifixion—his murder. They do not go on to the ending of the story, his resurrection from his death by God and the final 40 days of his teaching and guiding his disciples that followed his resurrection. Only with that ending of the drama does it become our story as we look forward to all eternity with Him in Heaven.

Each writer of the Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John) had his own God-inspired purpose for writing his Gospel. They each tell the story of the life and ministry of Jesus. Each includes the wonderful miracle of the resurrection. Without that event and time, the story stops in the middle and has little purpose, a dark and depressing conclusion, and no joy or satisfaction at all. Thankfully, the real ending shines with Heavenly Glory.

As one reads each of the four narratives over and over again, the individual personality and their own place in the story begins to emerge for each Gospel writer named above. See Matthew 27:57-28:15; Mark 15:42-16:8; Luke 23:50-24:12; John 19:38-20:18.

Rev. Jack Conner sees enough difference in the manner, language, and purpose of each of those four Gospel accounts to have written a book presenting the whole story of Jesus' life and ministry in a chronological study of Jesus in the combined Gospels. As of 2015, you can find his book on this website, www.homechurchonline.com along with a guide for using Conner's work as an intensive, small group study.

John, the beloved disciple of Jesus, states his purpose for writing in a strongly worded statement:

But these (stories and facts) are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name. (John 20:31)

This must also be your purpose as you, as the leader of this Bible study, share with your church the story of the resurrection of Jesus and the events and teaching that follows until his ascension into Heaven to rule with our Father God.

As John has arranged his narrative, one can easily visualize a play, a drama in four acts. This week we will search the beginnings of Act 4, the triumph of eternal life over eternal death.

Background:

Please ask for and read the information contained in the “**Introduction**” article found at the beginning of this series (Bible Teaching #16) of Bible Study and Worship sessions. Whoever downloaded this session for you should have that material for you, as well.

We have now reached in this series that moment which appears to announce the high point, the summit, of the study of the Gospel of John. However, as we study through it, we find that, however wonderful the resurrection of Jesus from his death is—it is also simply a high view of the eternal mountains of God rising yet before us in breath-taking panorama. It is the beginning of all things wonderful, not merely the end of a magnificent story.

From this point to the end of the Gospel of John, it would take an entire book to cover all that takes place and the meaning of all that takes place. At a future date, a book, titled **The Dawn of a New, New Day** will be included on the website and offer a much more in-depth study of Jesus' final days on earth, from his resurrection to his ascension back to Heaven. For this series we are now studying, "**So That You may Believe**", we must content ourselves with only the first portion of John 20 and 21, the resurrection ministry of Jesus.

It is important that you, the leader of this study read all four Gospel accounts of the resurrection story before guiding the study for your group. The telling of the story by each writer is distinctly different. None are incorrect. Yet each one looks at the happenings, especially the open tomb, from a different perspective. If you have people in your group who are familiar with the account, there may come significant questions. The list to copy at the end of this session will be very helpful in making sense of who saw what, when, and where. Please do not try to be the expert. If you don't know, say so. It would take a lot more study of the accounts than most people have to "get it completely right".

Focusing on the Meaning:

Act 4, scene 1 – Dawn of the First Day (John 20:1-9)

John begins the post-resurrection account with a visually exciting moment. It seems almost as though he is opening the final act of a great play with no one, not even the actors, realizing what awaits them. All that has gone before has built slowly but progressively into a mighty crescendo ending with huge crashes of cymbals, drums, and pounding music that screams ~~death~~ out at the audience until there is suddenly an instant eerie silence, total blackness—and the curtain falls. The audience, that is you and I, are left to not even realize that we are no longer breathing and hardly know how to begin again.

V. 1. Then, after a pause and the night passes, once again the curtain rises. It is still dark. Only the faintest light begins to show itself in the background as dawn promises to unfold. Slowly we realize that along a path winding from Jerusalem to the tomb area, a woman, in company with other women (see Luke 24:1) arrives to finish the task of preparing the body of Jesus of Nazareth for final sealing of the burial vault, hollowed out from a mostly rock cliff face, belonging to another family, yet unused until the dead body of Jesus is carried there and laid inside, the heavy stone seal then rolled into the deep dip in the slot to cover the entrance.

Burial preparation of the body of a male should have been completed before burial by men. Because of having to remove and dispose of the body before Passover began on Friday evening, everything was hurried and the messy work of wrapping the corpse in linen strips soaked with various chemicals and perfumes had not been completed. Now, Sunday, the men would be going back to work. The women who were followers of Jesus would complete the task. Even they had to do it before their workday began.

Arriving at the tomb, Mary saw that the heavy stone set in the groove to seal the opening had been removed. The tomb was now open to robbers, animals, or tomb desecraters.

Vs. 2,3. John does not say specifically where he and Peter were when Mary ran to tell them that a person or persons had removed the body of Jesus. Verse one does not mention the loss of the body. Luke's narrative (24:1-10) confirms that the body was indeed missing.

In John's story, he and Peter run together to the tomb.

Vs. 4-7. John (who never uses his own name) tells us that he reaches the tomb first and looks in. He sees the linen wrappings now abandoned on the stone shelf where the body had been lain. Peter rushes by him and enters. Through v. 7, John now recalls for us that Peter also sees the burial cloth which had been wrapped around Jesus' head to cover it completely. It was apparently important to the story for John to say that the head cloth was "folded up by itself, separate from the linen. Perhaps it is John's way of emphasising to his readers that he really was there and he really did see clearly the details of the tomb.

Vs. 8,9. Now, John enters the tomb. We have no information from the New Testament as to the actual site of the tomb, the size or shape, or where it was or is located. In modern days, several sites contend with being the "real" tomb.

Verse 8 is curiously worded. John states that he entered the tomb and "believed". In verse 9 he follows that word with a statement that grammatically says that "they" (Peter and himself?, the apostles?, all of the followers of Jesus?) **"...still did not understand from Scripture that Jesus had to rise from the dead."** This may be interpreted that even after visiting the tomb, they only believed that his body was missing. Or, it may mean that they finally did understand. Some point to the fact that when Jesus appears to the ten gathered apostles (and maybe others), they thought that he was a ghost until he proved otherwise to them.

Act 4, scene 2 – Jesus Appears to Mary Magdalene (John 20:10-18)

Again, it is important that you, as the leader, be familiar with this narrative from the viewpoint of the other Gospel writers.

Vs. 10,11a. John begins this part of the story by once again hinting that the women who followed Jesus in the Gospel story have more perseverance in staying with a difficult situation than the men. He does this several times in his Gospel. He includes himself in this admission. Peter and he return to their homes (in Jerusalem). Mary stays at the tomb, upset, confused, and grieving—but on site—still far too early for a woman to be out among the graves alone. He is, in this case, leading toward an

important and foundational principle of the Gospel of Christ, the last shall be first and the least important and most vulnerable believer on earth shall be the most important in His Kingdom.

Vs. 11b,12. Mary bends over to look inside the tomb once again. We don't know why except that she simply could not leave the situation alone. She surely did not expect to see the body reappear. But something drew her back to another encounter with the situation. In doing so, she sees two angels. They were dressed in white. Somehow, she must have known that they were angelic beings, who, by definition are God's messengers, because John states it as a fact and only she was there.

One angel is seated on the burial shelf at the head of where the corpse had been placed. (Remember that the "head cloths" were set apart from the linen body wrappings). The other angel sat at the foot of the body wrappings.

V. 13. No preliminary comments by Mary or the angels are indicated in the encounter. Surprisingly, no reaction to their sudden appearance out of "nowhere" is mentioned. They simply are there, inside the tomb, obviously not having entered through the opening. The tomb was basically a shallow cave carved out of rock on the side of a very solid hill. It only had one low hole through which one could enter.

John suggests that both angels in unison ask the simple question, "**Woman, why are you crying?**" The question must have been both rhetorical and leading. God always sends his messengers to deliver a message, not to ask questions unless those would lead to a more powerful response to the message. However, this time, God the Son, himself, was standing just behind Mary. His very presence would both answer her reason for crying while turning her tears to wonderful joy.

Mary replies, "**They have taken my Lord away,...and I don't know where they have laid him.**" Two words stand out. "Lord" implies the total commitment Mary still feels toward Jesus. "They" will be her final expression of her belief that Jesus is indeed dead and more than one strong man would be needed to carry the corpse.

V. 14. At this point Mary must have lifted herself back out of the tomb opening and turned around. John doesn't say why. Perhaps she wanted to see if she could see the culprits still among the tombs. Perhaps she heard or sensed a presence behind her.

V. 15. Note carefully Jesus' question to Mary. He calls her "woman", as did the angels. Some feel that Mary did not recognize Jesus because of her distress, her tears, and the still dim light. Others think that somehow Jesus' resurrected appearance had changed in such a way that she (and later the disciples on the road to Emmaus) could not recognize him. She addresses Jesus as "sir", thinking him to be the gardener of that garden and/or cemetery.

Again, John pulls us into the moment, forcing us to feel Mary's pain. Mary's statement that she will go and get the body is one of continuing emotional distress. Obviously, she

would have to go back into Jerusalem to get help. Jesus would now end that distress, once and for all.

V. 16. *Jesus said to her, “Mary”.* This very important phrase should not be passed over lightly in your leading the study. It was not only a call for her to recognize Jesus. It embodies the essence of John’s quest for us to hear Jesus call each and every one of us to Him. This is our call to believe in the resurrection as much as to Mary.

Now, with a living Jesus standing before her, raised to new life from a totally dead and buried corpse, Mary knows. Mary believes. And Mary responds with her declaration, “Rabboni”, meaning master teacher. This is how she has known Him and followed Him. It was the name she had called Him in every conversation with Him. John includes it to say that she really knew that her friend, her teacher, her Lord—was truly back from the dead and standing alive before her.

V. 17a. *“...do not hold on to me, for I have not yet returned to the Father.”* Commentators, teachers, and preachers have made much to do regarding this statement. The mental image of Mary falling at the feet of Jesus and grabbing hold of his legs or, out of total abandoning to joy, flinging her arms around his neck have given opportunity to all kinds of comments. More “sober” scholars have written that it must have been a reference to the incomplete transition to a spiritual body from a purely physical one. Therefore, she must not impede that by touching Him.

Of course, later, that same day, Jesus would walk with people to another town and eat with them in their home. Then, he would both appear in a room without walking in through a door, while, at the same event, eat solid food, show his wounds, and invite his disciples to touch him. This strongly suggests that whatever form his body would have for the rest of his time on earth, took place in the act of the resurrection. (Luke describes all of this in much more detail).

V. 17b. Now comes the commissioning to **“Go tell...”** Perhaps millions of Bible studies and sermons have been built on this command to Mary. It does come with specifics. Jesus tells Mary:

1. To go.
2. To do that instead of “clinging” to him.
3. To whom to go.
4. Where to go. (Implied but obvious).
5. What to say when she gets there.

V. 18. Most interesting, John does not actually repeat the words that Mary was told to say to him and the other disciples when she arrives. Instead, John shares Mary’s own powerful and unforgettable opening line: **“I have seen the Lord!”**

So, John, in only three verses (as we have divided it up into verses), sums up the heart and purpose of the Gospel. First, to respond in belief to Christ’s calling our name; and

to share that response and belief in a living Saviour with everyone to whom Christ sends us.

Your Goal as the Leader of this Bible Study:

As you give guidance to the church in this study, help the participants to begin to see John 20 and 21 as fulfilling the purpose of the rest of John's Gospel. Help them to view the resurrection story as

For Personal Reflection:

What have I learned from this study?

What personal experience does this lesson bring to mind?

What is one action I will take this week to apply this Scripture passage to my life?

Bible Study Plan (Suggested time: 35 minutes)

Seeing and Believing

Regroup the church after the Gathering Time and break by singing a chorus that young children can relate to—or another praise chorus if your congregation does not have children. Children who go to their own Bible teaching session should stay with the group until after this song. Have the preschoolers and children accompany the hymn with rhythm sticks, maracas, bells, etc.

Begin by helping the group locate the Focal Text in their Bibles. Also, share with them the Main Idea to be learned from the Scriptures, and the Questions to be Explored by the group.

Focal Text

John 20:1-2, 11-29

Background

John 20—21

Main Idea

Jesus' appearances and ministry after his resurrection confirm his identity as God's Son and commission us to be his messengers to the world.

Question to Explore

What does Jesus have yet to do for you to believe in him, serve him, and bear witness of him?

Teaching Aim

To lead those in the group who are not yet followers of Jesus to confess their faith in Him as Saviour and Lord—and to lead those who are believers to reconfirm their faith in Him and commitment to bear witness of Him.

Connect with Life:

The Gathering Time asked participants to greet one another with “Christ is risen” and reply with “He is risen indeed”. A few minutes of awkwardness may have existed. Allow time for participants to be comfortable with this exercise or if this is not happening, transition into the Bible Study time.

Guide the Study:

Ask someone, or two or three, to read the complete Scripture passage to be studied today: John 20:1-18.

Have someone read John 20:31.

Ask: What was John's purpose in writing the book of John?

Comment: Each of the four gospels is different in the facts included about the trials, the crucifixion, and the resurrection. God inspired each writer to express those things which were important for us to know all these many years after the actual happening. Encourage the group to read the other Gospel accounts of the resurrection at home. These are found in Matthew 27:57-28:15; Mark 15:42-16:8; Luke 23:50-24:12. John 19:38-20:18. Write these references on a white board or give prepared lists to the group.

Call attention to the fact that these verses could be Act 4 of John's Gospel and be entitled "The triumph of eternal life over eternal death."

Have someone read John 20:1 and describe what the opening scene of the drama would be like.

Explain: According to John 19:40, Joseph of Arimathea, and Nicodemus had taken Jesus' body and anointed it with spices and wrapped it in strips of linen. Mary and the other woman came to the tomb on the day following the Passover remembrances. They may have come to grieve or to complete the anointing of the body.

Have someone read Mark 16:1 and Luke 24:1.

Ask: Why would it be surprising that the stone was removed from the entrance. (The burial place was a new tomb which was probably a cave in the rock. It would have been sealed with a heavy stone which would take more than one person to move).

Comment: In the John account it is Mary Magdalene who is the focus of the discussion. Mary Magdalene would not have gone alone to the tomb and Luke 24:1 speaks of other women. In John 20:2 Mary Magdalene says to Peter "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb and we don't know where they have put him!" indicating that others are with her.

Have someone read John 20:2

Seek an answer: Who are the two disciples mentioned here? (Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one Jesus loved).

Have someone read John 19:26 for another passage in which John refers to himself as the disciple whom Jesus loved.

Have someone read John 20: 3-8.

Ask someone to describe the sequence of events:

- John reaches the tomb first.
- John sees the strips of linen lying there.
- Simon Peter goes into the tomb first.
- He saw the strips of linen and the cloth which was around Jesus' head folded up by itself and apart of the strips of linen.
- John went in and saw and believed.

Have the group share their ideas: How do you imagine the women and disciples to be feeling at this point of the narrative.

Follow with this question: What did John believe? (That Jesus had risen physically from the dead.)

Have someone read John 20:9.

Explain: This must mean that up to this point they had not understood that Jesus would rise physically from the dead. John apparently does now understand according to verse 8.

Add: However, there is still doubt among the disciples. John says that he, personally, now believed. However, he still includes himself as being confused as to how this resurrection could be. Mary would have one more indicator of a miraculous aspect of the situation, as we will see in a moment. But John and Peter had none other than the body was decidedly gone from the tomb.

Have someone read John 20: 10-18.

Explain: Note from the verses that the disciples leave, but Mary Magadene (and presumably other women as well) remain.

Ask: What does Mary see in the tomb that the disciples did not see? (Two angels in white are seated where Jesus' body had been, one at the head and the other at the foot. The angels not had entered the tomb through its only entrance which would have been the opening which the stone had covered).

Question: Why did Mary Magadene think Jesus was the gardener?

Explain as needed: We cannot really know but Jesus' spiritual body must have been different from his physical body in some way. However, Mary Magdalene was crying

and may not have looked carefully. Remember she had seen Jesus die; she was not looking for his live body. She was concerned about finding his dead body.

Allow someone to describe how Jesus identified Himself to Mary.

Have someone reread verse 17-18.

Seek an answer: What was Mary to do? (Share the good news about the resurrection).

Have a person read v. 17b.

Share: Now comes the commissioning to “Go tell....” Perhaps millions of Bible studies and sermons have been built on this command to Mary. It does come with specifics. Jesus tells Mary five things related to his command or commission for her.

Ask: What five things did He say or imply to her?

1. To go.
2. To do that instead of “clinging” to him.
3. To whom to go.
4. Where to go. (Implied but obvious).
5. What to say when she gets there.

Another question: What phrase summarizes Mary’s testimony? (“I have seen the Lord!”)

Ask the group to comment on how this story impacts them today. Encourage the group to understand that we are to be like Mary Magdalene in saying to others “**I have seen the Lord**”.

Encourage Application:

If you have two or more youth, this is the time to give them the **Youth!!! Take Ten** page and allow them to move away from the adults and apply the lesson by and for themselves.

Remind the group that these verses could be Act 4 of John’s Gospel and be entitled “**The triumph of eternal life over eternal death.**”

Conclude with this important declaration: This is the reality of our Christian faith. It is a story that we need to share with others. Especially if you are celebrating the Easter

season, encourage one another to use this time to affirm to friends and neighbours that you too have seen the Lord.

Take a five minute break to separate the Bible Study and Worship Time. Children may need to use the washroom again before worship.

YOUTH!!! TAKE TEN

Bible Study Application for Youth

You may wish to move away from the adults for the final five to ten minutes of the Bible study and help each other as youth to apply the lesson to your own needs.

Seeing and Believing

John 20:1-2, 11-29

A youth will lead the following activity and comments. No adults need to be present. If possible, teens should take turns in leading the application time.

**BIBLE STUDY APPLICATION
ON NEXT PAGE**

The various accounts of the empty tomb are found in Matthew 27:57-28:15; Mark 15:42-16:8; Luke 23:50-24:12; John 19:38-20:18.

Since you are limited in time, have the passages read silently by different ones. Comment on what information is given in one passage but omitted in another.



3

Copy this section for the Worship Time leader.

Worship Time (Suggested time: 30 minutes)

Seeing and Believing

John 20:1-2, 11-29

Beginning the Service:

Sing some of the following:

Alleluia, Alleluia, *The Worship Hymnal* #272; CCLI #41903 Public Domain, 5463716 Public Domain

He Lives, *The Worship Hymnal* #269; CCLI #17597

There Is A Redeemer, *The Worship Hymnal* #279; CCLI #11483

Offering:

Praying for the World:

If you have recently been privileged to observe the baptism by immersion of a fellow believer, pray for those who live in places where such an observance would could lead to death for both the one baptizing and the one being baptized. Meditate on the beauty of the symbolism of baptism – death to sin and rising to new life in Christ.

Sharing Guide:

This sharing guide is written to assist the person who directs the worship time to reemphasize the teaching for the day and help guide the congregation to respond to God's call and will for their lives in regard to the scripture studied. The leader may choose to follow the guide closely. Or, he or she may wish to only use it to give direction and a concept for preparing an original message. The leader is free to choose other ways to communicate and share the concepts presented here.

I Have Seen the Lord

We have rejoiced to study the passage in John 20 in which Mary Magdalene is privileged to see the risen Christ. She calls him “Rabboni!” (which means Teacher).

Immediately following this encounter she follows His instructions and returns to tell the disciples the news saying “I have seen the Lord”.

An amazing reality – the first one to see the risen Christ was one known to have been a follower of Jesus from whom seven demons had been cast. (Luke 8:2). She was a woman in a society where women had little value.

John emphasizes this important and foundational principle of the Gospel of Christ, the last shall be first and the least important and most vulnerable believer on earth shall be the most important in His Kingdom.

In John 19:25 we read “Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother, his mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.” It was probably these same women who came to the tomb on the day after the Passover to grieve and possibly to complete the preparation of the body for burial.

However, for some reason John focuses on Mary Magdalene. He speaks of her going to the tomb while it was still dark and discovering the stone removed from the entrance. It is Mary Magdalene who stands outside the tomb weeping and who sees the angels in the tomb.

She is one who is privileged to see Jesus and have him speak to her. He called her by her name, “Mary”.

She was given the privilege of carrying the good news to fellow disciples. She was the bearer of the best news in the world.

And she stated that news in simple terms, “I have seen the Lord”.

What did this news mean to the disciples who had left their homes and their livelihood to follow Jesus and were now contemplating their indescribable loss.

Christ overcame the enemy called death. He vanquished his foes. He brought bright hope through the darkness of the tomb. In his death, he secured our salvation and his resurrection confirms that we have hope in even the darkest night.

Mary and all the disciples passed through the dark night of incredible despair. But morning came and with the morning the appearance of Jesus to Mary Magdalene and eventually to His other disciples.

Risen with a spiritual body, Jesus spoke to His disciples and He still speaks to us today. He speaks to those whose life has been broken by sin, made unhappy by cynicism, and paralyzed by fear. He speaks to those who have suffered loss and illness. He speaks to us who live in a world where war is happening in more parts of the world than we can name.

He calls us by name. And our response can be like Mary –“Rabboni”. We ask the Teacher to teach us what we need to know to live in this broken and sinful world. We can do it because we testify as Mary did “**We have seen the Lord**”.

Call to Commitment:

Alleluia, Alleluia, *The Worship Hymnal* #272; CCLI #41903 Public Domain, 5463716 Public Domain

Concluding the Service:

Make a copy of the following (two pages) and cut it into six different parts. Give the parts to members of your group and ask them to read them in order during the Gathering Time.

One Day

Verse 1

One day when Heaven
Was filled with His praises
One day when sin was
As black as could be
Jesus came forth
To be born of a virgin
Dwelt amongst men
My example is He.

Verse 2

One day they led Him
Up Calvary's mountain
One day they nailed Him
To die on the tree
Suffering anguish
Despised and rejected
Bearing our sins
My Redeemer is He.

Verse 3

One day they left Him
Alone in the garden
One day He rested
From suffering free
Angels came down o'er
His tomb to keep vigil
Hope of the hopeless
My Savior is He

Verse 4

One day the grave
Could conceal Him no longer
One day the stone
Rolled away from the door
Then He arose
Over death He had conquered
Now is ascended
My Lord evermore

Verse 5

One day the trumpet
Will sound for His coming
One day the skies
With His glory will shine
Wonderful day
My beloved one's bringing
Glorious Savior
This Jesus is mine

Chorus 1

Living He loved me
Dying He saved me
Buried He carried
My sins far away
Rising He justified
Freely forever
One day He's coming
O glorious day

CCLI Song # 63596 Charles Howard Marsh | John Wilbur Chapman© Words: Public Domain; Music: Public Domain

Copy for each participant in the **Bible Study Time**.

Who Saw What?

Each Gospel writer chose a different view, separate vignettes, and different moments to tell the resurrection story. Ever since then, students of the Bible have tried to visualize just how it happened, chronologically. One logical way is as follows. Other sincere and believing scholars see it differently.

1. The Jewish priests request that Roman guards be stationed at the tomb in order to avoid the theft of the body of Jesus. Early on Sunday, they experience an earthquake. Then an angel with the appearance like lightning and clothes of pure white descends from Heaven, rolls the stone out of its slot and sits on it. No match for an Angel, the soldiers shake and then drop like dead men in a faint. Later, some of them arrive back in Jerusalem and report this to the chief priests.

-- Matthew 28:2-4, 12-15.

2. Mary M., the other Mary, and Salome (Sal-o-mae') purchase anointing spices after returning home on Friday evening. They pass Saturday, the Sabbath, at home and at the temple. Early Sunday morning, while it is still dark, they gather together and walk out of the old city to the tomb. When they arrive, the stone is rolled up from its slot and out on the ground.

-- Matthew 28:1,2. Mark 16:1-4. John 20:1

3. Mary M. leaves the other Mary and Salome and runs to tell Peter what they have seen.

-- John 20:2

4. Salome and the other Mary, while Mary M. is gone, enter the "porch" of the tomb and see one Angel, who commands them to inform the disciples that Jesus has risen. They then leave the tomb and return to Jerusalem. Whether and when they tell their story or not depends on the relation of this vignette and the groups discussed in numbers 9 and 10 below.

-- Matthew 28:5-8. Mark 16:5-8.

5. Mary M. finds Peter, who is with John, and tells them that the body of Jesus has been "removed".

-- John 20:2.

6. Peter and John run to the tomb, go inside, note the condition of the burial wrappings, and leave immediately to return to their own homes.

-- John 20:3-10.

7. Mary M. follows Peter and John back to the tomb. After they leave, she stands alone outside of the tomb, crying. By now, it has become light. She looks inside the tomb and sees two Angels who ask her why she is crying.

-- John 20:11-13.

8. Jesus appears to Mary. At first she thinks that he is the gardener for the cemetery. Then, she recognizes him. He tells her to go tell his brethren that He has risen and is on his way to the Father.

-- Mark 16:9. John 20:14-17.

9. On her way back to Jerusalem this second time, she meets up with the other Mary and Salome. Jesus appears to all three women. The three women return to Jerusalem where they proclaim that they have seen and talked to Jesus, alive.

-- Matthew 28:9,10. John 20:18.

10. A second group of women (from Galilee) arrive after everyone else has gone for the moment. They find the stone rolled out and on the ground. Two Angels appear to this group. The Angels tell them that Jesus has risen just as He said that He would.

-- Luke 24:1-9.

11. Peter possibly makes a second trip to the tomb. Paul later states that Jesus appeared to Peter after the resurrection. This might have been the time.

-- Luke 24:12.

Needless to say, it was a rather busy morning. And the day was far from over.