**The Final Days of Jesus: SUNDAY**

Sunday, April 4, 2021

**Text:** Matthew 28:1–7

Based on *The Final Days of Jesus: The Most Important Week of the Most Important Person Who Ever Lived,* © 2014 by Andreas J. Köstenberger and Justin Taylor. Published and used by permission of Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers, Wheaton, IL 60187, [*www.*crossway.org](http://www.crossway.org/).

In this sermon series, we have been focusing on Jesus’s final week.

*After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb.*

*2There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. 3His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. 4The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men.*

*5The angel said to the women, “Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. 6He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. 7Then go quickly and tell his disciples: ‘He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him.’ Now I have told you.” (Matthew 28:1–7)*

Jesus raises himself up from the dead, bringing immediate hope to his disciples but also to us, centuries later.

1. Jesus fulfills his promise and rises from the dead. This day starts off at dawn with some women going to the tomb to anoint Jesus’s body, in keeping with the Jewish tradition (Matthew 28:1–7; Mark 16:1–7; Luke 24:1–7; John 20:1). When the ladies arrived, they were frightened by an angel who walked out of the tomb to let them know that he was not there, because he was risen. By this point, the guards had been so scared, they were as dead men, and then they would end up fleeing the scene (who could blame them?).
2. Human experience has taught us that death is final. But death is not irreversible. No matter how many times Jesus told his disciples he would rise from the dead, it still seemed like an impossibility—even though they witnessed Jesus bringing others back to life. The young son of the woman from Nain (Luke 7), Jairus’ daughter (Luke 8), and Lazarus (John 11). We oftentimes trust in our own life experiences rather than the Word of God. God says one thing and our experience and intellect say another, and for some reason, we often choose to believe ourselves instead of the God of the universe.
3. At this point, the women are fearful yet hopeful and leave the garden to tell the disciples what has happened (Matthew 28:8–10; Mark 16:8; Luke 24:8–11; John 20:2). It’s “likely that Mary Magdalene either goes to the tomb alone before the others, sees the stone rolled away, assumes the body had been stolen, and rushes to tell Peter and John. Alternatively, she initially goes along with the other women, dashes off to tell Peter and John while the other women remain and encounter the angels in the tomb” (*The Final Days of Jesus*, 181). In either case, John 20:2 leads us to believe Mary Magdalene believed the body was stolen and rushed to tell Peter and John. Peter and John then race to the tomb (Luke 24:12; John 20:3–10) and find nothing but linen cloths and a face cloth folded nicely. It was be obvious at this point that Jesus’s body was probably not stolen; what corpse thief would take the time to do this? Something miraculous had happened, and they were about to find that out. Mary then returns to the tomb later and runs into Jesus there (John 20:11–18). What a joyous moment!
4. Luke alone records an appearance Jesus made to two disciples as they walked to the village of Emmaus, seven miles from Jerusalem. Jesus walked along with these heartbroken followers, talking about what had happened in the city. He explained to them from the oldest prophecies that what had occurred HAD to occur. The two invited Jesus to stay with them, and when He took bread, broke it, and gave thanks, they recognized Him immediately and Jesus disappeared. They made a lightning fast trip back to Jerusalem to tell the others what they had experienced. Mourning into joy, just like that!
5. After the Emmaus experience, Jesus appears Sunday evening to the ten disciples minus Thomas in a house in Jerusalem (Luke 24:36–43; John 20:19–23). The disciples were not immediately convinced. At first, they thought Jesus was a spirit. To help them out, Jesus tells them to touch his hands, then he eats with them, showing further that he has a physical body. It seems like Jesus went out of his way to ensure that we would know without a doubt that he rose bodily from the dead.
6. When Jesus appeared to the disciples and appeared to the travelers on the Emmaus road, he displayed his love and patience for his own. He spent extra time explaining to everyone what had happened. He ate with both groups of people and took time to elaborate on that they just witnessed, making the Old Testament and the new covenant make sense. While they were worried sick just hours previously, they are now at peace with their Master once again. They now are beginning to understand what Jesus was talking about before he died. Hope is back again. Jesus’s resurrection brings hope not only to the disciples at the time but to us today in the twenty-first century.

Jesus is so patient that he’s willing to sit down with us to dispel fears and explain his purpose.