

Remnant Life Church  
04.04.21  
Resurrection Sunday  
*Anticipation or Hesitation?*  
John 20:1-16

- Sunday morning to the disciples and followers of Jesus was a day of great contrast
  - Saturday, the Sabbath, has come and gone
  - They are still most likely in shock of the events they witnessed on Thursday night into Friday
    - The betrayal, arrest, fleeing into the night
    - The crucifixion on Friday morning into Friday afternoon
  - They are not only concerned, but they are still undoubtedly confused, but they are also afraid
    - Afraid enough to run away ([Matt. 26:56](#))
    - Afraid enough for Peter to have publically betrayed him 3 times ([Matt. 26:69-75](#))
  - But they also could very well have been trying to encourage each other with a glimmer of hope
    - Had he not said many times that He would rise again? ([Matt. 16:21](#); [Mark 8:31](#); [Luke 18:31-33...](#))
    - Someone else may have even remembered that he said He would appear in the sky ([Matt. 24:30-31](#))
  
- John gives us the account of that Sunday morning

**READ** – [John 20:1-9](#) (keep this place)

- According to John, Mary Magdalene had gone early to the tomb while Matthew, Mark and Luke record multiple women going (proper, safety) only to find the stone rolled back ([20:1](#))
  - Do not see this as error
  - It is perspective and choice as to the amount of detail given
- In John's account, Mary rushes back to the disciples to tell them what she has seen ([20:2](#)) – most likely, she is greeted with some skepticism
  
- But Peter and John immediately run to the tomb ([20:3](#))
- Running in the same direction but likely with very different feelings
  - Peter is certainly running with a guilty heart
    - The last contact He had with Jesus was as one who had denied Him ([John 18:27](#))
    - Peter ran but perhaps half-heartedly at first, not sure what to expect
  - John (although admittedly younger) was running with an expectant heart
    - He is the only disciple identified in the scripture as having been at the foot of the cross during the crucifixion ([John 18:26](#))
    - John is running with great anticipation

- But also with a measure of skepticism
- He witnessed the gruesomeness of that Friday
- When they arrive at the tomb, they approached the entrance in very different ways
- Not only that but they visually took it in very differently
- *The Bible uses three distinct Greek words for how they looked in-*
  - John arrives first but stops outside and “looks” in (20:5)
    - The word “look” is translated as to clearly see something but not necessarily in its entirety
    - John was focused; tunnel-vision
    - What he saw, all that he saw, was the body linen lying in place
  - Peter arrived and rushes fully into the tomb (20:6)
    - He “saw” meaning to closely scrutinize
    - Peter got right up on the clothes and face cloth
    - That allowed him to see that the grave clothes were orderly and neat - an unusual event
    - This would have eliminated a hasty robbery that would have thrown off the grave clothes
  - John finally enters (20:8)
    - He also “saw” but this means he not only visually took it in but comprehended or fully grasped the meaning and believed
    - John now knew and was convinced what had taken place not just through the physical evidence but with belief in his heart
- You can see something without taking it all in and without fully understanding what you are looking at, or what it means
  - I think the improvement of our spiritual vision is a sign of spiritual growth and maturity
  - Do you see beyond the natural when circumstances are difficult or your subject to a time of anguish?
  - Do you go to God first rather than trying to figure things out and solve them yourself?

**READ – John 20:10-16a**

- Now John and Peter leave, but Mary remains, she looks in, and encounters two angels (20:10-11)
  - Note that she is so overcome with grief that she can have a rather calm conversation with 2 angels
  - It is the same grief that keeps her from recognizing Jesus a moment later
  - One angel sits at the head and the other at the feet where Jesus lay
    - The head to the feet posture is a symbolic notation of totality, of fullness and completion

- The other gesture is that of the grave clothes
  - In particular, within the far eastern culture, the face napkin
  - (Varying measures of strength in this) Wadded vs folded
  - A wadded napkin left at the bottom or foot of a guests plate at a meal meant “I’ve left temporarily, but I will return”
  - A napkin folded neatly at the top or head of the plate meant “I am finished”
  
- Note how the Priests explained what had taken place?
  - The Jewish leaders too had heard these wild predictions of Jesus claiming He would rise from the dead
    - It is why they posted the guards and sealed the great stone – not in belief but in a political move
    - But now they needed to come up with an explanation
  
  - **Matt.28:11-15** tells us what took place
    - The soldiers reported the empty tomb to the chief priests
    - The priests bribed them and demanded that they lie about what they saw
    - Consider then what the religious leaders did and their efforts to rid themselves of Jesus
      - They used treachery to arrest Him
      - They resorted to illegal tactics to try Him
      - They used slander to accuse Him before Pilate
      - They used bribery to try and silence the truth when Jesus did exactly what He said He would do
  
  - The enormity and impact of what they had seen (perhaps the actual resurrection?) was so great that the Roman soldiers were willing to agree to say that they had fallen asleep on their watch
    - If this were true how would they have known specifically that the disciples had stolen the body?
    - By the way, to fall asleep on watch was a severely punishable offense even to death.
    - Every one of these efforts failed because the truth will ALWAYS win out over lies and deception
  
- John and Peter both came rushing to the empty grave with very different expectations
  - John stopped
  - Peter rushed in even though the last thing he had done was deny Jesus
  - Both men wanted to know the truth, but only one was willing to put himself all the way in to find it

**This resurrection morning 2021, who are you? John or Peter?**

- Will you be content, like John, to stand at the entrance?
- Or are you willing, like Peter, to go all the way into a relationship with Jesus Christ to learn, know and understand the truth of your life?