



October 4th, 2026

The Open and Empty Tomb

John 20:1-18

1. Why is the bodily resurrection of Jesus essential to the Christian faith? What would Christianity lose if Jesus' body were still in the grave? (see 1 Corinthians 15:14–19)
2. Peter and John see the evidence of the empty tomb, but verse 9 says they “did not understand the Scripture, that he must rise from the dead.” What does this teach us about the relationship between evidence, Scripture, and faith?
3. The Heidelberg Catechism lists 3 benefits of the resurrection. Which of those three benefits do Christians most easily overlook? Why?

Question: How does Christ's resurrection benefit us?

Answer: First, by his resurrection he has overcome death, so that he might make us share in the righteousness he won for us by his death. Second, by his power we too are already now resurrected to a new life. Third, Christ's resurrection is a guarantee of our glorious resurrection.

4. Jesus says in John 11:25, “I am the resurrection and the life.” How does the resurrection change the way Christians should think about physical death? What fears about death, suffering, aging, loss, or the future are challenged by the truth that Jesus has already gone through death and come out the other side?

5. Jesus tells Mary, “go to my brothers and say to them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’ ” What does the resurrection mean for the disciples' relationship with Jesus? How does “my brothers” strike you in light of their abandonment and failure?

6. Mary leaves Jesus as a witness to the resurrection, going to tell the disciples “I have seen the Lord.” What makes Christian proclamation fundamentally different from simply telling people about a helpful philosophy or moral system?