

Peter And John Visit Jesus' Tomb

John 20:1-10

MEMORY VERSE

MARK 9:31

For He taught His disciples and said to them, "The Son of Man is being delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill Him. And after He is killed, He will rise the third day."

WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

A stop watch or timer and as small prizes (stickers, pencils, erasers, etc.) as the number of children in your class.

An object for hiding.

ATTENTION GRABBER!

The Crab Crawl

Select some student volunteers to participate in a "crab-crawl" race, a race on all fours with their front-sides facing up. Create a course with masking tape and time the participants to see who is first, who has the best time, etc. Allow several students the chance to see who has the fastest time.

Explain that in today's lesson there will be two disciples that raced to reach the empty tomb first.

Allow the child with the fastest time to pass out the small prizes.

LESSON TIME!

Many religions today try to tell us that Jesus was just a good man, a teacher, or just a prophet. But Jesus is much more than that. He is the Messiah, the only Son of God. He is God come in the flesh. Today we will learn that Jesus not only has power over life but also over death. Even the grave could not hold Him.

Our lesson today begins on the third day after Jesus was crucified on the cross. He was wrapped in strips of cloth, with costly spices and a burial cloth put over His head. He was placed inside a hillside tomb with a large, heavy rock covering the opening. He was dead for three days.

His disciples had thought that He was the Messiah, but since the High Priest and Jewish leaders had killed Him, they were feeling disappointed and disillusioned. What were they going to do now?

Jesus had tried to tell them several times that He would die and rise again, but they never understood what He meant. They thought He had come to establish His earthly kingdom, and you cannot have an earthly kingdom without a king. But what they did not realize was Jesus had come to establish a heavenly kingdom by preparing a way for everyone to go to heaven. He did this by dying for our sins and rising again. **Jesus conquered death.** Let's see what happens.

JOHN 20:1

On the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb.

Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the entrance. Mary went to the tomb to complete the process of preparing Jesus' body as the initial preparation had been cut short due to the coming Sabbath. It was unlawful to work during the Sabbath, so Mary was coming to complete the burial process. When she arrived, she saw that the grave was open. **Jesus conquered death.**

What do you think was going through Mary's mind? She loved Jesus very much, but now His body was gone. Do you suppose she may have been fearful?

JOHN 20:2

Then she ran and came to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken away the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid Him."

She came running to Simon Peter and the disciple John, and said, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we don't know where they have put him!" She ran to Peter and John to tell them that the grave was open and that Jesus' body was gone. She thought that someone had stolen the body.

JOHN 20:3-4

Peter therefore went out, and the other disciple, and were going to the tomb.

So they both ran together, and the other disciple outran Peter and came to the tomb first.

So Peter and John started for the tomb. Both were running, but John outran Peter and reached the tomb first. Peter and John ran to the tomb, because they wanted to know who had removed the large stone and the body of Jesus. They wanted to find out what was happening and where Jesus' body was. They still didn't understand at this time that Jesus was going to rise again from the dead.

JOHN 20:5

And he, stooping down and looking in, saw the linen cloths lying there; yet he did not go in.

John arrived first. He looked inside and saw the strips of linen that had been wrapped around Jesus' body. He didn't go inside, perhaps because Jewish law said that to go into a burial tomb made a person ceremonially unclean and prevented them from worshipping in the temple.

JOHN 20:6-7

Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb; and he saw the linen cloths lying there,

and the handkerchief that had been around His head, not lying with the linen cloths, but folded together in a place by itself.

Simon Peter, who was behind John, arrived and went into the tomb. He saw the strips of linen lying there, as well as the burial cloth that had been around Jesus' head. The cloth was folded up by itself, separate from the linen.

When Peter arrived, he was so excited that he couldn't stay outside. He ran right into the tomb. The body was really gone. Was Jesus' body stolen or could it really be possible that Jesus did rise again, like He said He would? **Jesus conquered death.**

The burial clothes were lying right where the body had been, just like Jesus had come right through them.

Now You See It, Now You Don't!

Have all of the children in your class hide their eyes while a volunteer hides an object in the room. Before the children open their eyes, distract the volunteer while your aide removes the object from the hidden place. Have your class begin to look for the hidden object. When the item is not found in the original hiding place, the volunteer will be surprised.

Explain to your class what has happened. Ask the volunteer to tell how it felt to find the object was no longer hidden. Compare this feeling to how the disciples must have felt to discover that Jesus was no longer in the tomb.

JOHN 20:8

Then the other disciple, who came to the tomb first, went in also; and he saw and believed.

Finally, John, who had reached the tomb first, also went inside. He saw and believed. John couldn't stay outside. Imagine the excitement He must have felt as He saw the tomb empty where Jesus had been laid. He saw and believed. Jesus wasn't there; He had risen! **Jesus conquered death.**

JOHN 20:9

For as yet they did not know the Scripture, that He must rise again from the dead.

Now, finally, Jesus' words began to make sense. Jesus was going to rise again from the dead! What a wonderful realization it must have been for Peter and John to now understand that their Lord and Savior had risen from the dead!

What an important fact for us to know and understand. **Jesus conquered death** and because He did we can have eternal life with Him. He took care of our sins and He has also taken care of death and its effects upon us.

Not only did they misunderstand what Jesus said about His resurrection, they also did not understand from the Scriptures that Jesus had to rise from the dead. Until then, the disciples hadn't realized that the scriptures in the Old Testament had prophesied that He would come to life again. As believers in Jesus we don't just believe in stories that someone made up, these are very real facts that can be proven through time to be true.

JOHN 20:10

Then the disciples went away again to their own homes.

They went home to tell the other disciples what they had seen. They were marveling over what they were hearing and seeing with their own eyes. They saw and believed that Jesus had risen and was truly the Messiah. Jesus had proven beyond any doubt that He is both human and divine, the very Son of God! Even death could not hold Him! **Jesus conquered death.**

Just a Man?

Tell your class that you are going to describe different characteristics. Instruct them to stand if they are characteristics of God or to sit if they are characteristics of a man.

After several moments of up and down, explain to your class that all of these characteristics are the characteristics of Jesus, who was so much more than a man.

What about each of you? Have you come to the point in your life that you understand, like the disciples did, that Jesus died for your sins and has risen again to show you the way to eternal life? Jesus loves you and wants you to have a relationship with Him. Ask Him to come into your heart; He will make a wonderful difference. **Jesus conquered death.**

PRAYER

Lead the children in a prayer of thanksgiving for the victory Jesus won over death, hell and the grave. If there are any children who have not yet responded to the gospel, give them an opportunity to do so.