

The Village Church – Rancho Santa Fe
Week #21 – Adult Bible Study – 2025 & 2026

Discovering the Bible

March 3 & 4, 2026

Review – The Crucifixion

1. Here we have news that is perhaps some of the most well-known in the Church today – the story of Jesus’ suffering, trial, and crucifixion
2. Of note, on the one hand, are the various details about the people, the events, and the places of this final scene of Jesus’ earthly life – all of them filled with meaning
3. On the other hand, aside from the “earthly” elements of the story, there are the cosmic and theological elements. In this story we are told of the great battle between good and evil, the result of human sinfulness, and the self-sacrifice of God that was required
4. While Protestant Christians (rightly) employ “empty” crosses as their major symbol of faith, Roman Catholic (and other) Christians (equally rightly) employ the crucifix – with the Crucified Christ – as their major symbol of faith.

The Resurrection

1. General Thoughts
 - a. Eight passages in the Scriptures repeat the testimony/witness of those who experienced/saw the resurrected Jesus
 - b. No one witnessed the resurrection itself – only the presence of the resurrected Jesus
 - c. The resurrection is the hinge upon which the whole story of the Bible turns
 - d. Every Sunday morning is a celebration of the resurrection; and Easter is the most important celebration of the Christian year
2. Matthew 28:1-10
 - a. Here are some of the key elements of the story:
 - i. The women closest to Jesus go to anoint his body
 - ii. They find the empty tomb
 - iii. They encounter a heavenly being(s)
 - iv. They encounter Jesus himself
 - v. They are mystified and afraid
 - b. In this telling, the women are present when the stone “door” of the tomb is rolled away
 - c. There were guards present, but they were powerless to prevent what happened
 - d. Note that Jesus “was raised” – he did not raise himself, but as the human being that he was, he was at the mercy of God for what his fate would be
 - e. Fear – and the reassurance that we should not fear – is shot through the whole story
3. Mark 16:1-8
 - a. Some of the details of this account differ from the others, but the essential story is the same
 - b. The stone is rolled back, a heavenly messenger is present, and Jesus is gone
 - c. The women are terrified and amazed, but they are told not to be fearful
 - d. Jesus does not appear here, but his resurrection is attested by a “young man” – understood to be an angel
 - e. The women are instructed to tell the other disciples
 - f. They are also told that Jesus will meet them – in Galilee
4. Luke 24:1-12
 - a. Again, the essential facts are the same
 - b. Of note is the message from the two “men” – a message that explains to the terrified women what has happened
 - i. Jesus is alive, not dead, for he has risen
 - ii. Jesus predicted all of this:
 1. He would be turned over to sinners (given over to the forces of destruction and death)
 2. He would be crucified and die
 3. He would rise again
 - c. Added to the story here is the response of the men (apostles)

- i. Peter responds first (not surprisingly!)
 - ii. The men do not believe the women, and must go look for themselves
 - iii. He (and the other men?) are “amazed”
 - d. Note: the tomb is empty, with only the burial shroud (cloths) left behind
- 5. John 20:1-18
 - a. John’s account (probably written much later than the other 3) adds more detail, and somewhat differs
 - b. Only one woman goes to the tomb, sees the rolled-away stone, and reports this to the men
 - c. Peter (and the “loved” disciple – John?) go see for themselves, and they enter the tomb, thereby seeing the absence of the body, with only the cloths left
 - d. The men leave, but Mary Magdalene stays behind
 - e. At this point, two angels appear
 - f. Then, Jesus himself appears
 - g. Mary does not recognize Jesus at first (a common response), but when he calls her by name, she recognizes him
 - h. Jesus indicates that later he will ascend “to the Father”
 - i. Mary Magdalene then reports this to the other disciples
- 6. Matthew 28:11-15 – the Guards’ Report
 - a. Here is an explanation of a “cover up” of the story, with the priests paying the guards to lie and say that Jesus’ body was stolen (not resurrected)
 - b. This story was apparently accepted by many – understandably so!
- 7. Luke 24:13-35 – the Walk to Emmaus
 - a. Two disciples, later on the same day, are going to Emmaus, along the way Jesus joins them
 - b. The two recount the events of the past few days to Jesus (as yet unrecognized)
 - c. Jesus explains – using the scriptures – what has happened and what it means
 - d. It is only when Jesus breaks bread with them (akin to the “last” supper just a few days earlier) that the disciples recognize him
 - e. The two return to Jerusalem, and report their experience to the Eleven apostles
- 8. Luke 24:36-53 – Jesus Appears & Commissions
 - a. Following directly upon Emmaus, Jesus comes to the gathered Eleven, who are afraid
 - b. Jesus proves himself – and indicates that he is “flesh and bone”
 - c. Jesus eats
 - d. The disciples both “wonder and disbelieve” – the fact of the resurrection takes some getting used to!
 - e. Jesus teaches the disciples about who he is and what his resurrection means
 - f. Jesus commissions them to share the news about him, and then departs
- 9. John 20:19 - 21:25 – More Appearances
 - a. In the evening of the same day, Jesus appears, and sends the disciples out, with the gift of Holy Spirit and the authority to forgive
 - b. The disciple Thomas – absent during this above event – asks for more proof of Jesus’ resurrection
 - c. A week later, when Thomas is there, Jesus shows up again, and offers proof
 - d. Note: Jesus often begins his appearances with a pronouncement of “peace”
 - e. Those who believe without seeing are lifted up for special mention
 - f. Jesus appears as well by the Sea of Tiberias
 - g. The disciples go fishing, Jesus shows up, they catch lots of fish, and Jesus has breakfast with them
 - h. Jesus and Peter have a telling interchange, during which Peter is restored to fellowship with Jesus, in effect reversing Peter’s earlier 3-fold denial of Jesus
 - i. The mysterious “disciple whom Jesus loved” shows up, and Jesus indicates that this disciple will remain until Jesus comes back – a meaning not entirely clear
 - j. It is this disciple who has written the account now known as the Gospel according to John
 - k. John’s final note: There is more to tell about Jesus!

Questions for Your Life Today

- A. What does the resurrection of Jesus mean to you?

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Primary Source: Discovering the Bible: A New Generation, published by The Kerygma Program, Pittsburgh, PA. Boyd Lien, author.