

Daniel Perrin – Lesson 12: The Hour of Glory: The Cross and Resurrection – Wednesday, December 18: The Empty Tomb

1. The lesson authors had a purpose in choosing this title: “The Empty Tomb”
 - Not “The Risen Savior”
2. **John 19** ends like this: *Then they took the body of Jesus, and bound it in strips of linen with the spices, as the custom of the Jews is to bury.* ⁴¹ *Now in the place where He was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid.* ⁴² *So there they laid Jesus, because of the Jews’ Preparation Day, for the tomb was nearby.*
 - a. The tone is somber / Resigned
 - They haven’t given up on God – (Still keeping the Sabbath)
 - b. It’s late Friday, and they don’t have time for the proper actions with someone you love and respect
3. The world’s expectation of how this story should continue WOULD read like this
 - a. They buried their friend / They rested because they were physically and emotionally unable to go on
 - b. When they came back to show their respects, ... from a distance they could see that the grave had been ransacked and desecrated, the body dragged away – and their grief was indescribable
4. INSTEAD In the first 2 verses of **John 20**, Mary Magdalene – who is the FIRST to visit the tomb
 - a. sees the stone removed – GK. lifted up and carried off!
 - b. **Nothing about the moved stone made her think, “He’s alive.”**
 - Overwhelmed with emotion, she can’t even pause to think what that might mean.
 - She only sees evidence of insulting vandalism
5. Through inspiration, John carefully chose WHICH DETAILS to include and how to express them.
 - Responding to Mary’s report — Peter and John come RUNNING (in **V.3-4**)
 - a. John gets to the door of the tomb first and STOPS
 - **V.5** – *And he, stooping down and looking in, saw the linen cloths lying there; yet he did not GO in.*
 - b. Peter sees everything
 - **V.6-7** – *...he saw the linen cloths lying there, ⁷ and the handkerchief that had been around His head, not lying with the linen cloths, but folded together in a place by itself.*
 - c. Notice that at first the Empty tomb was NOT CONVINCING — It was Confusing
 - d. John admits in **20:9** – *For as yet they did not know the Scripture, that He must rise again from the dead.*
 - Referring to **Psalms 16:10** – *For You will not leave my soul in Sheol, nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.*
 - According to THEIR testimony, they didn’t see it coming.
 - e. LESSON: Not everyone believes IMMEDIATELY
 - Sometimes from our position of great knowledge, we look at others who are still putting the pieces of Bible truth together and we say too quickly, “IT’S SO OBVIOUS – WHY DON’T YOU SEE IT!”
 - The evidence is not at fault, our fault expectations are
 - Let’s be gentle with people who come across NEW Bible truth — and they didn’t see it coming.
6. John doesn't specifically describe WHY they believe when they saw the graveclothes, but that they SAW and BELIEVED
 - a. Progressing levels of investigation

- They see the stone moved – that doesn't fit what they thought they expected
- They look in the doorway – they still have big unanswered questions
- They enter the room — then EXAMINE the evidence Jesus left behind
 - If they had NOT entered the tomb, they would NOT have seen the grave clothes Jesus left for them to see
 - They LOOKED closely / They SAW and He THOUGHT about what he saw – and They believed
- No grave robber looking for treasure would take a decaying body, neatly and carefully wrap the blood-stained rags, leaving them respectfully behind

7. What to do when you hear Bible teachings on 3ABN that are new to you

a. I encourage you (like John and Peter) to approach God's Word and investigate:

- Don't run away from this unexpected information
 - Examine the evidence in God's word
 - Reach out to the pastoral Dept here
 - What comes from examining God's word with good intentions is a deeper understanding of God.
- **If Peter and John had only looked from a distance, their opinion about the empty tomb would not have turned to belief THAT DAY**
 - They eventually would see Jesus alive, but God have them THIS opportunity to exercise faith
 - Before they even see Jesus, they believe.

b. Do you have things that don't make sense to you, struggling to put together all the pieces?

- For the Disciples – Studying the Scriptures gave CONTINUAL CONFIRMATION

Great Controversy, 527.3 – *But faith is inspired by the Holy Spirit, and it will flourish only as it is cherished. No man can become strong in faith without a determined effort. Unbelief strengthens as it is encouraged; and if men, instead of dwelling upon the evidences which God has given to sustain their faith, permit themselves to question and cavil, they will find their doubts constantly becoming more confirmed.*