



**BELIEVERS CHAPEL**

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The Sermons of Mark Newman

Luke 24: 1-12

Spring 2026

"Christ Resurrected"

TRANSCRIPT

So good to see all of you here. Turn in your Bibles to Luke 24...and with tears in our eyes, we have come to the last chapter of the Gospel of Luke.

We have been following along in the Gospel with Luke's narrative of events taking place toward the end of Jesus' earthly ministry. They're each wonderful in their own way.

The meeting in the Upper Room,  
and Christ's agony in Gethsemane and arrest.  
His illegal trial and sentencing,  
followed by His crucifixion.

And then, as we saw in our last lesson, His burial in the tomb of "the rich man", Joseph of Arimathea.

Now we come today to Luke 24, and his account of the resurrection of our Lord, the critical capstone of all the redemptive events Jesus our Savior voluntarily endured.

All four Gospels, as you know, each contribute their individual accounts of the resurrection and each of them contributing in individual ways to our understanding.

We'll make reference to those today, but our focus will be on the contribution that Luke made here in the first 12 verses of chapter 24.

So, let's read them, (and off course, I forgot my glasses). That signifies two different problems: one, your eyes, and the other one ... well. But I think I can read it.

**24** But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they came to the tomb bringing the spices which they had prepared. <sup>2</sup> And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb, <sup>3</sup> but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. <sup>4</sup> While they were perplexed about this, behold, two men suddenly stood near them in dazzling clothing; <sup>5</sup> and as *the women* were terrified and bowed their faces to the ground, *the men* said to them, "Why do you seek the living One among the dead? <sup>6</sup> He is not here, but He has risen. Remember how He spoke to you while He was still in Galilee, <sup>7</sup> saying that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again." <sup>8</sup> And they remembered His words, <sup>9</sup> and returned from the tomb and reported all these things to the eleven and to all the rest. <sup>10</sup> Now they were Mary Magdalene..., (*I'm not going to say very much about these women...I'll mention them but*), ...they were Mary Magdalene and Joanna and Mary the *mother* of James; also the other women with them were telling these things to the apostles. <sup>11</sup> But these words appeared to them as nonsense, and they would not believe them. <sup>12</sup> But Peter got up and ran to the tomb; stooping and looking in, he saw the linen wrappings only; and he went away to his home, marveling at what had happened.

Luke 24: 1-12

*(Message)* The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the tomb where He was laid is creditably speaking the most important event in human history. The New Testament scholar, William Lane, was right when he wrote, "Were it not for His resurrection, Jesus of Nazareth might have appeared as no more than a line in Josephus' *Antiquities of the Jews*, if He were mentioned at all."

But His resurrection proved that He was who He had said He was. And as we convene here this morning, some two-thousand-plus years later, we may say with no fear of dispute from unbelievers that Jesus Christ is the most important historical figure

who has ever lived. The reason for that, in large part, is that God raised Him from the dead.

There are those, of course, who dispute the biblical accounts. They offer various other explanations for what happened to the body of Jesus after He had been lain in the tomb by Joseph of Arimathea, (and we could spend our time here discussing those various views and attempting to answer them, and I do intend to mention them in passing). But the method the Gospel writers chose in reporting the event does not project the burden of trying to prove something. They're presented rather, in the matter-of-fact way of someone reporting what really happened. One student of the passage labeled them, "Models of an indirect and discreet way of describing something that can only be described by relating what actually occurred."

Using the passage we just read as an example, we see that it was early, "on the first day of the week", (*v1*), when Mary Magdalene and some other women made their way to the tomb they had seen just a short time before, in order to complete the anointing of the body of Jesus. But arriving there, they found that the stone covering the tomb had been "rolled away", and entering in they discovered the body was not there.

But their perplexity was soon replaced by terror, when two angels appeared to them and assured them that what had taken place was exactly what Jesus had told them was to happen when they were all in Galilee. He had risen from the grave, just as He had said, and then they "remembered", (*vs8*), those words and returned, as would be expected, to report it all "to the eleven" disciples who, as equally expected, refused to believe them—thinking the very idea to be nonsense.

Only Peter, (and we know also, John), went to the tomb to check out their story, and finding it to be so, was still at a loss. It would take a minute for 'the fog to clear' for all of them.

The proof that Jesus *died* was that He was buried, (we studied that in our last lesson from the final verses of chapter 23).

The proof that His death was *acceptable to God and accomplished His purpose in it*, was that God raised Him from the dead.

And that was the essence of Paul's message in Romans that Dan brought to us last Sunday. Jesus was delivered over to death on account of our sins... our transgressions—and then He was raised on account of the *justification* that His death accomplished for us.

It was not as if He hadn't predicted it...and that is part of what makes the account so believable. The Scriptures of the Old Testament taught, and Jesus Himself had taught, that the Messiah must first suffer and be delivered into the hands of His enemies, and they would kill Him and God would raise Him up...He would defeat death.

In Luke's Gospel alone, we've read on three separate occasions of how Jesus had explicitly told His disciples that. In chapter 9, verse 22, again in chapter 9, verse 44—and again in chapter 18, verses 31 through 33, He said in the last case most specifically, these words; "Look, we're going up to Jerusalem, and all things which are written through the prophets about the Son of Man will be accomplished. For He will be handed over to the Gentiles, and will be mocked...and spit upon, and after they have scourged Him, they will kill Him; and on the third day He will rise again." (ibid.)

He could not have been more specific! And as we read it, we marvel at how accurate He was in predicting what actually happened. But what makes it so believable is that none of those closest to Him seems to have heard it or understood it. (And we have talked about this over and over as we've gone through the Gospel, 'How could they have missed it?!')

The content of what He was saying simply did not fit the expectations they had for Him. The only ones, it seems, who attached much importance to Jesus' predictions of resurrection, were His enemies. In Matthew's account, he reports how the Jewish leaders remembered the enigmatic statement He had made, "Destroy this temple, and

in three days I will raise it up." Now, that statement is found in John's Gospel, (John 2:19), and John provided there the editorial comment, you'll remember, that Jesus, "...was speaking of the temple of His body." (vs21), But it was the reason that, "the chief priest and the Pharisees" went to Pilate to ask for a guard for the tomb, to make sure no one by deceit removed the body of Jesus from the tomb in order to perpetuate a thing, (they thought), was an impossibility. (*Matt 27:61-66*)

They needn't have worried. If there is one thing evident as one reads the accounts in all four of these Gospels of the death of Christ and how all His followers reacted to it, it is that they were, to a person, utterly dismayed and completely devoid of any consolation that would imply they believed He would rise again from the grave. Any hope they had once possessed had vanished into thin air.

As chapter 23 came to a close, the stalwart followers of Christ, His disciples, had all fearfully scattered...and the women, who had followed Him from Galilee, on their way to the tomb that early Sunday morning appear as having no inkling of anything other than that they wished to complete what had been left undone in the burial preparations of Jesus' body. Their biggest concern was the stone rolled against the entrance to the tomb. They had seen it, they saw the stone, and knew it was too large and heavy for them to move, and they were in a quandary over who could help them with it so that they could enter in.

Even when they found the stone already moved and the tomb empty, and the angels explained to them what had happened and they went to the disciples to excitedly tell them, (the "Lordly disciples" as Leon Morris labeled them), reacted in disbelief. The last thing anyone was anticipating, it appears, is that for some reason the body would not be there. Across the board, of both Christ' enemies and His friends, considered that His death was the end of the game. His enemies were rejoicing, and His followers were dejected; that's the scene as we arrive at our passage.

Early in his ministry, Billy Graham told the story of two men standing in front of a painting called *Checkmate* in an art gallery. In the painting, a man is playing chess with the Devil, and the Devil is grinning ear to ear because he has the man cornered. The title of the painting, *Checkmate*, indicates that the game is over and the Devil has won...his opponent has no more moves.

The first man looking at the painting wants to move on to other paintings in the gallery. (Isn't that how we do it when we go to a museum or a gallery? You start together, and pretty soon you're strung out all along, and your wife is in the other room and, "Where is she?" He wants to move on.)

But the second man, an international chess master himself, wants to look at the painting longer, so he waves his friend on and tells him he'll catch up later. The chess champion stares and stares at the chessboard in the painting when suddenly he steps back, flabbergasted. "It's wrong!", he exclaims, "There is one more move!" He runs to his friend, and together they look at the painting. "We have to contact the painter.", the champion says. "It's not checkmate. The king has one more move."

From the beginning of history, when the serpent in the garden induced Adam and Eve to sin, the Devil has had mankind in what has seemed to be a checkmate. You may have experienced that at one time or another in your own experience.

But at no time did that seem more to be the case than on that Friday evening of Luke 23, when Joseph of Arimathea hurriedly took Jesus' bloodied and beaten corpse down from the cross, wrapped it in linen wrappings, and buried it in his tomb.

But, 'the King had one more move'. It was not as if the prophetic word had not anticipated it. Think about David's Psalms. In David's Psalms, he often spoke prophetically, and nowhere more significantly than in Psalm 16, the Psalm in which he testifies, (in verses 9 and 10), that his LORD will securely preserve both his flesh and his soul, saying, "You will not abandon my soul to Sheol, nor will You allow your Holy One to undergo decay." (vs10).

That he spoke prophetically of 'the greater Son of David to come' was punctuated after Jesus ascended into Heaven, when on the Day of Pentecost, the Apostle Peter boldly declared to an audience of skeptics that Jesus had been "...nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death." (Acts 2:23). —But it was according to the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, testifying then to His resurrection saying, "But God raised Him up again, putting an end to the agony of death, since it was impossible for Him to be held in its power." (Acts 2:24).

Then, Peter quoted from the verses we just read in Psalm 16, concluding, "Brethren, I may confidently say to you regarding the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day." (Acts 2:29).

And so, because he, (*David*), was a prophet and he knew that God had sworn to him with an oath to seat one of his descendants on his throne, he looked ahead and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that 'He was neither abandoned to Hades, nor did His flesh suffer decay.' (Acts 2:27). "This Jesus God raised up again, to which we are all witnesses." (Acts 2:32).

The death of God's Son on the cross, bearing the sins of His people, in His sinless and infinitely valuable person, had completely satisfied our Holy God. It had exhausted His justice, death was defeated, and therefore God raised Him up out of the grave to reign forever the Triumphant King of the Ages. We know that today—we who are in this room, we know it.

But Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, (and the other women with them, pictured here in the first verse of Luke 24 going to the tomb of Jesus and carrying the spices they had purchased and prepared for the body), were yet to find that out. The Sabbath had come to an end the night before, but it would have been too dark to have gone to the tomb then. But it appears from Mark's Gospel, in Mark 16:1, that they were able to purchase the spices for their task of completing the burial of their

Lord, and then, at early dawn the next morning, as Luke describes it in our text, they had begun to make their way to the tomb.

You know this, but each Gospel writer describes that morning from his own perspective: Matthew, (28:1), says it, "was the beginning of dawn";

Mark, (16:1), "when the sun had risen";

Luke, (24:1), as we've read, "early dawn"; and

John, (20:1), says it was, "while it was still dark".

These apparent discrepancies are easily explainable. The women departed for the tomb at the very instance of dawn, while it was still dark—and then by the time they arrived the sun had peaked above the horizon, and there was enough light that they could see clearly...the sun had risen. Their intent was not in any way to try to preserve the body, but merely to attempt to offset the stench of the decomposition. That was a common practice in a place and at a time when corpses would begin the process of decay quickly. It was an act of love and devotion, typical of the things people do for loved ones who have died. We gather flowers together, we get a decent casket, all these things—it was an act of love.

The last thing, apparently, that was on their minds was any thought of a resurrection. They knew nothing of the guard that had been posted, according to Matthew. (That's evident from the concern they showed for the heavy stone that had been rolled in front of the opening to the tomb. Typically, tombs of this type were sealed off by a large disk-shaped stone rolled into a slot cut out of the rock, so that it was easier to roll it into place than to force it back up and out of the way of the entrance of the tomb. The other Gospels describe it as 'an extremely large stone', so the women felt they couldn't move it by themselves.)

As I had already said, and we know, the women knew the location of the tomb exactly, and as they neared the tomb they found the stone rolled away. Luke doesn't explain how it had happened, but we know that it was because of a supernatural

occurrence that took place. Matthew records and explains in Matthew 28:2, (in a kind of 'flashback' for Matthew), says, "Behold, a severe earthquake had occurred, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled away the stone and sat upon it."

The women didn't see that happen, (they weren't around when the earthquake took place). All they knew was that the tomb of their Lord was now open, that someone had removed the stone; it was gone, it was moved. That would have been alarming enough—but as they entered into the tomb they discovered that the body of the Lord Jesus was no longer there.

Later they would realize that was the reason the stone had been removed. Not so that Jesus could come out of the tomb, (He could pass through rock as easily as He could through the walls that separated Him from that room where his disciples were gathered in John 20), but it was so that the women could enter in and see that the tomb was empty.

That was the important thing, the tomb was empty. That was what was essential for them to discover and to tell the others. They could see it with their own eyes... (it helps to see things with our own eyes...if somebody tells us something and we don't believe them, it helps to see it with your own eyes.)

Well, I want you to notice this, Luke very subtly carries us forward to the import of the event in his reference to, "the body of the Lord Jesus". (vs3). Believe it or not, this is the first and only time in the Gospel that Jesus is referred to as "the Lord Jesus". Yet he, (*Luke*), will come to use that precise phrase 18 times in the Book of Acts...(Luke's 'vol. 2'), but in his Gospel, only this one time. Notably, in the Book of Acts Luke uses the phrase "Savior Jesus" only two times, but "Lord" approaching 92 times in the Book of Acts. For Luke, the resurrection was obviously proof of Jesus' true identity and it altered the way he referred to Him.

Well, he captures the women's discombobulation in verse 4. [I tried to figure out a way to get that word *discombobulation* into the lesson.] But he captures it in verse 4, "They were perplexed" ...filled with confusion. The New English Bible translation has that they were "utterly at a loss". The idea of resurrection was completely absent from their thinking.

Spurgeon captured the unseen irony of the moment. He said, "They might have been much more perplexed if they had found the body of Jesus there, for then His promises would not have been fulfilled, and all their hopes would have been blighted forever. Unbelief is often the mother of needless perplexity. The resurrection of Christ is plain enough to us now, but to those who had seen Him die and whose faith was so very weak, it was a cause for perplexity that His body was not there."

But then suddenly, before they even had time to gather themselves, "...behold...", Luke writes, "...two men suddenly stood near them in dazzling clothing; and as *the women* were terrified and bowed their faces to the ground, *the men* said to them, 'Why do you seek the living One among the dead? He is not here, but He has risen. Remember how He spoke to you while He was still in Galilee, saying that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.' " (vs4-7).

Luke describes the two messengers as "men". But that they were angels is made clear by both Matthew and John, who described them as angels—and also by their raiment. According to Matthew, they were 'clad in white', and their appearance was "like lightning". (*Matt 28:3*). Angels are often described in the Bible as being clad in white. Luke describes their clothing as "dazzling". That's a term that you'll find the same root used in the accounts of the Transfiguration, about the two heavenly figures who appeared there with Jesus on the mount; they radiated the splendor of God.

But, surprisingly, Luke reports in verse 5 how the women were terrified and bowed their faces to the ground. It was a combination of fear and respect. That's the effect that angels have on people. (I don't know that firsthand, but I can imagine.) That's what happens when you read about it in the Bible, when an angel appears. They are powerful creatures, and awesome in effect, (not cute little cherubs that cover Hallmark cards and little girls' stationery).

They serve their Master, and they do so in a mighty and spectacular fashion, and when they appear in their inherent majesty in the Scripture, they invariably astound those who confront them, or see them, or are confronted by them.

An empty tomb such as the women had come upon only invites the question, 'What happened?! What happened to the body of Jesus!?' In and of itself, the fact that the tomb was empty meant nothing apart from an explanation. There needed to be a word from God to interpret the meaning of the empty tomb, and the angels were God's faithful provision for that.

And so the angels announced to them what has happened. 'Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here, but He has risen.' According to Matthew, they invite them to look further and see, "Come and see the place where He was lying." (*Mat 28:6*). It was a gentle rebuke for their previous lack of faith and understanding; they shouldn't have been so surprised at the tomb being empty. Their well-meaning desire to honor their beloved would-be Savior, [who had clearly failed in His mission because He was dead], had ultimately categorized Him with all the other failed, mortal men whose frailties or deceit rendered them powerless to do anything lasting or anything effective.

But the reason His body was not now there was that, "He has risen"—He is no longer dead but alive. His beloved and now fully satisfied Father had *raised* Him from the dead. That's the sense of the somewhat hidden, passive voice in the verb. It wasn't just that 'He *arose*', (though that is true...'He arose') – it was that He had been raised, "He was risen".

‘The women were not at the wrong tomb’; that's not the explanation. ‘No one stole the body’; the guards would have prevented that. ‘The Lord had not, after swooning from pain, exhaustion, and loss of blood, revived Himself in the coolness of the rock tomb, regaining His strength enough to muster up and manipulate the huge stone from inside, and then stride out into the night, soon to appear vigorous and ready to perpetuate a gigantic lie’.

All of these desperate, alternative explanations of what happened to the body of Jesus, advanced over the years by cynics and enemies of Christianity, and each entirely dependent on the belief that hundreds of people conspired together to promulgate and maintain nothing but a tall tale, are discredited by the irrefutable truth of what eventually transpired—that multitudes of followers of Jesus Christ devoted their entire lives to Him and making personal sacrifices to advocate His title as ‘Lord and Savior’, even to the point of martyrdom. How absurd to believe that that could have happened, when the majority of them all the while knew the whole thing to be a great lie.

The only adequate explanation of the missing body of Jesus is the one the angels gave to them, "He is risen."

That was what the angels encouraged them with, the very thing the angels now remind them of in verses 6, ‘That Jesus, knowing all things that were going to happen to Him, spoke to them of it while He was with them in Galilee.’ It was then that they did “remember”, (vs8), that He had told them He would be delivered over to hostile enemies, crucified, and then, on “the third day rise again”. (vs7).

And so suddenly, the women reverse course prompted by this revelation—but also by the angels' instructions. Matthew 28:7 informs us that the angels told them to, "Go quickly and tell His disciples that He has risen from the dead; and behold, He is going ahead of you into Galilee, there you will see Him..."

Perhaps some of you are thinking at this point of the Apostle John's version of events and his early focus on Mary Magdalene, of whom Luke has already acquainted us

from the second verse of his eighth chapter. She was part of a company of women in Galilee who were following after Jesus and supporting Him from their own means. And Luke provides the note, remember, that she was one, "...from whom seven demons had gone out.", (*Luke 8:2*).

On this early morning, Mary Magdalene is described by John, in John 20:1, as 'having come early to the tomb', seeing the stone taken away and the Lord's body no longer there, and then running to find Peter and John to frantically inform them, (and you know what she said), "They have taken away the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid Him." (*Jhn 20:2*).

She obviously crossed paths with some of the other women. Her testimony to Peter and John was, "We do not know where they have laid Him."...but the story doesn't end there. Somewhere along the way, she decided to go back to the tomb, as you recall, and that is where she was prompted by the two angels to turn and see through her tears the risen Jesus, but thought He must have been the gardener. And you remember what happened then, the Lord addressed her by her name, "Mary!", (*Jhn 20:16*), and she responded enthusiastically, "Rabboni!", (*ibid.*), and embraced the Lord. She was the first witness of the resurrection, Mary Magdalene, she, from whom seven demons had gone out.

But we should note especially two things about the women's discovery and their attempt to notify the disciples. The first is simply to underscore the authenticity of the account by the response of the disciples....they simply would not believe—they thought the very idea was ludicrous.

But the second thing, and more important to consider, is that these were women who were the first witnesses to the empty tomb. (Now don't hold this against me, I'm just reporting about history.) In a day when the testimony of women was considered to be of no value, none of the four Gospel writers make any attempt to cover up the fact that the first and most important witnesses to the resurrection were, in fact, not men but women. Jewish law pronounced women ineligible as witnesses.

Critics, who would denigrate the historical fact of the resurrection by suggesting that it was entirely the made-up ruse of a handful of crestfallen disciples, can give no answer to, 'Why they would have, amidst all their lies and creative tall tales, failed to alter their story so that the primary testimony came from men who were known in the community, and not a proposition based upon the flimsy and worthless report of three or four women?' It's a major factor supporting the historicity of the biblical account.

Well, Luke closes his report of the resurrection by describing how Peter, upon hearing from Mary, (and perhaps others along the way, hearing about the empty tomb), ran there, and stooping and looking in, saw the linen wrappings only, and then went away to his home marveling.

This is the question you're asking, why Luke separated Peter out from his companion John; we can only speculate. We know from John's Gospel that they raced to the tomb in concert. John got there first, Peter came huffing and puffing up second.

There is much we could say about the linen wrappings they observed in the empty tomb, had we the time. (You've probably heard a lot about these linen wrappings.) They were "...lying there..." John tells us, "...and the face cloth, which had been on His head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself." (*Jhn 20:6b-7*). The language suggests that Jesus' resurrection body had simply passed through the physical grave clothes, much as He would later ignore material realities and pass through walls to enter in to be with His disciples. The weight of the spices, remember, about a hundred pounds' worth, would have led to the laden clothes collapsing, so that they lay there were Christ's body had once lain. At the very least, we can say that their presence in the tomb is evidence the body was not taken either by grave robbers or His disciples—or by His enemies who would not have taken the time to undress the corpse.

In the "Checkmate" story, 'of the king had another move', the details of that illustration are not provided to us. 'What did the chess master see?' In the case of the

crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus, the King's winning move was made possible only because of the obedience of the sinless Son.

In His deity, He is of infinite value,  
In His humanity, His perfect righteousness shone through,  
And combined, His atoning sacrifice was sufficient for Him to serve as the substitute for all those for whom He died.

And the resurrection of Jesus from the dead is a critical doctrine of our faith, for it is the evidence that God accepted His sacrifice and raised Him to be our *forerunner* by being who He is, by living as the man He is, by not deviating in any way from the Father's will for Him, but rather obeying Him to the point of death on the cross. He defeated the Devil, and conquered death.

"The resurrection was that conquest confirmed and announced.", that's how John Stott summarized it in his great work, *The Cross of Christ*. "We are not to regard the cross as defeat and the resurrection as victory..." he wrote, "...rather, the cross was the victory **won**, and the resurrection the victory *endorsed, proclaimed and demonstrated*. It was impossible for death to keep its hold on Him because death had already been defeated."

As another great author once wrote, "In the death of Christ, the death of death is achieved."

And we can say with Job, from Job 19:25-26;

"As for me, I know that my Redeemer lives,  
And at the last He will take His stand on the earth.  
Even after my skin is destroyed,  
Yet from my flesh we shall see God."  
Amen.

*(Closing prayer)* LORD, thank You for the resurrection. Thank You for the Person and work of our Lord and Savior, who gave Himself for us and satisfied Your perfect justice, propitiated us, redeemed us, atoned for our sins—and to such a degree and with such perfection that You raised Him from the dead and He lives today seated at Your right hand.

Individually, we give You our thanks, all the believers here in this room, that You loved us so much You gave Your only begotten Son that all who believe in Him should not perish but have life eternal—Because He lives.

We pray in His name.

Amen.

*(End of Audio)*