

Aim of lesson

For the class to consider the reality and importance of the resurrection.

Bible background

John 20 and 21

Outline of lesson

They have taken away my Lord

If you have six or more in your class, divide them into three groups to look at the experiences of Mary Magdalene, Thomas and Peter separately. If there are fewer than six, you may like to divide into two groups to consider Mary and Thomas and then all look at Peter together; or look at all three together. Ask the groups to read their appropriate section so that they can explain to the others what happens:

- Mary Magdalene: John 20:1-18 (also Luke 24:11)
- Thomas: John 20:19-29
- Peter: John 21:1-19 (or 22)

In the mouth of two or three witnesses

They should then plan what they think and should complete the section in their workbooks. They may need to use a larger piece of paper. Encourage the class to value the evidence of these witnesses. They were not expecting to see Jesus alive. They had seen him die. They touched him and ate with him. They knew that saying he was alive would be dangerous (John 20:19), yet their witness about Jesus spread throughout the world. Note that by A.D.63, Christians were blamed for the fire of Rome. The disciples could not have been mistaken in believing that Jesus was alive and they would not have made it up. The only alternative is that the Resurrection is true.

What a difference a day makes

Ask the class what difference the resurrection of Jesus makes to them, and have each include that in their workbooks.

Digging deeper

The risen Lord

This section explores how Jesus tells the disciples about his death and resurrection and how their sorrow will turn to joy. It shows how Gentiles and Jews were implicated in his death, but all can share in the joy of his resurrection.

Relevance to our lives

The disciples were changed by the knowledge of the resurrection. Even the Jewish leaders believed it, or they wouldn't have tried to cover it up. Is it possible that we can recognise the fact of the resurrection, but not allow it to change us?

The class may like to consider during the week whether the aim they put down in Lesson 91, "The Beginning" has been achieved. Similarly, they could consider if, for them, John's aim and God's aim have been achieved. For some aims you may need to discuss that God often works slowly in people's lives, and that change often happens over many years.

Prayer

Dear Lord God, thank you for raising the Lord Jesus from the dead. Thank you that we can have him as a friend and that we can be raised from death to meet him one day.

Other suggestions for activities

- If the class made a poster of the statements about the Lord Jesus in chapter 1, they may like to make a similar poster for chapter 21, now that Jesus has completed his ministry. Use the opportunity for the class to contrast the view of Christ in the context of eternity in chapter 1, with the view of Christ walking with one disciple in chapter 21. Point out that our perspective must similarly change from a distant Lord to a personal one-to-one relationship.
- The class could study chapter 21 in more detail, looking for 'fishing lessons' from the one who had called his disciples to be fishers of men.