

Embrace the Wonder of the Empty Tomb

Luke 24:1–3 (ESV)

Student Devotional

Early Sunday morning, the women arrived at Jesus' tomb with heavy hearts, fully expecting to find a cold, lifeless body. What they discovered wasn't just an empty grave—it was the **launch of a new era**. In that single moment, **heaven's victory** collided with earth's despair, rolling away not only the stone but also the finality of death.

Over these five days, we'll dive into Luke 24:1–3 and see how this **unprecedented moment** still transforms us today. Each day will help you reflect on **why** the resurrection matters and **how** it can reinvigorate your walk with Jesus.

Day 1: A New Dawn

Reading:

“But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they went to the tomb, taking the spices they had prepared.” (Luke 24:1)

Think About It:

They rose **before sunrise**, carrying **burial spices**—a tender act of devotion, yet drenched in sorrow. If you've ever woken up extra early for a big event (maybe a flight or a road trip), you know the mix of **drowsiness** and **expectation**. But for these women, there was no excitement—just the weight of loss.

- **The First Day:** This wasn't just another Sunday. In Jewish culture, the “first day” signaled a fresh start, echoing **creation** in Genesis. On that morning, **God was re-creating** something new, turning the page from the despair of crucifixion to the hope of resurrection.
- **Spices and Sorrows:** Think about the times you've prepared for **the worst**, assuming heartbreak or defeat is inevitable. These women's devotion was admirable, but it also reflected a mindset that **God's plan had ended** at the cross. They were about to find out He had so much more in store.

Where in your life do you feel the finality of “night”? This story reminds us that **dawn** is on its way—**God** might be orchestrating a miracle we haven’t dared to hope for.

Pray It:

Jesus, thank You that Your story didn’t end on Friday. Help me trust that after every dark season, You have a **new dawn** waiting. Let me see my struggles in the light of **Your resurrection** rather than just my fears.

Do It:

Identify **one challenge** in your life—maybe it’s a tense relationship, a personal failure, or a problem that seems unsolvable. Write “**New Dawn**” next to it in your journal or phone notes, symbolizing your choice to **trust God** for a fresh beginning, even when it feels hopeless.

Day 2: Expectations vs. Reality

Scripture:

...they went to the tomb, taking the spices they had prepared. (Luke 24:1)

Think About It:

They came with **spices** to **treat a dead body**—an expression of love, yes, but also finality. Their entire plan revolved around **the assumption**: “*Jesus is gone, we’re here for closure.*”

- **Grief’s Blindfold:** When we’re hurting, it’s easy to forget Jesus’ promises. These women had heard Jesus predict His resurrection, but pain **shuts out** hope sometimes. Consider times you’ve been so **overwhelmed** that you **miss** God’s repeated assurances in Scripture.
- **Limited Horizon:** We often operate within the **limits of what we think is possible**. But the resurrection defies every boundary we set. If God can overcome death, He can handle our lesser obstacles.

Think about an area where you've been **only preparing for the worst**—you keep your “spices” ready for a funeral rather than expecting a **miracle**. The empty tomb proves God loves to **exceed** your most careful, “realistic” plans.

Pray It:

Lord, sometimes I approach You with **low expectations**, prepared for disappointment. Show me how You delight in **doing the impossible**. Expand my faith beyond what I see.

Do It:

Ask yourself: “*Where am I bringing ‘burial spices’ in my life?*” (i.e., expecting only gloom.) Each time you catch that thought, **counter it** with a **faith statement** like: “*I serve a God who raised Jesus from the dead—He can do more than I imagine.*”

Day 3: The Stone Rolled Away

Scripture:

And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb... (Luke 24:2)

Think About It:

Stones in front of tombs were massive, final, **unmovable** by average means. The women probably worried: “*Who will roll away the stone?*” (Mark 16:3). But **God already handled** that hurdle before they even arrived.

- **God’s Preemptive Grace:** Before you even see the obstacle, God is at work. Like a protective parent who sets up everything for a child’s birthday **before the child wakes up**, God arranges solutions ahead of time.
- **No Barrier Too Big:** The physical stone wasn’t just an object; it symbolized **finality**. Maybe you feel blocked by a seemingly **unbreakable** barrier—health issues, financial crisis, or relational wounds. If God can move the **tomb’s stone**, He can move yours.

Have you been stressing over how to roll away your own “stone”—that huge problem you think stands between you and God’s plan? Perhaps **He’s already** got it covered, waiting for you to **step closer** and trust Him.

Pray It:

God, thank You for the stones You’ve moved in my life—ones I recognized and ones I didn’t. Help me trust You’re **still** rolling obstacles away, even when I can’t see it yet.

Do It:

Make a quick list of **obstacles** you’re worried about. Pray over each one, **giving it** to God, and ask Him for the faith to believe He’s **working behind the scenes** just like He did on resurrection morning.

Day 4: Encountering Resurrection Shock

Scripture:

but when they went in they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. (Luke 24:3)

Think About It:

Surprise! The biggest twist in history: the **crucified Savior** was no longer there. The women went **inside the tomb**—the place of **death**—only to discover an **empty** space. For a moment, their confusion soared: *“Did someone steal His body?”* or *“Are we in the wrong tomb?”* or *“What is going on?”*

- **Divine Intervention vs. Human Logic:** When God acts beyond our comprehension, we often try to **explain it away**. But sometimes, **He does** the inexplicable—our only response is **worship**.
- **Lord Jesus:** Notice that Luke calls Him **“the Lord Jesus”**—His resurrection **cements** His authority. He’s not just a revered teacher or prophet; He’s **Lord of life and death**.

When God’s power interrupts your normal, it can feel **unsettling**. The question is, will you dismiss it or embrace it with **awe**?

Pray It:

Lord Jesus, when Your power **shocks** me, help me lean into wonder rather than running to explanations. Let me bow in reverence to You as **Lord**, not just a memory.

Do It:

Think about a time God answered a prayer or stepped into your life in an **unexpected** way—maybe a **miraculous provision** or a **perfectly-timed encouragement**. Share that story with a friend or family member this week, celebrating the fact that God still does the “**unexplainable**.”

Day 5: Living in Resurrection Reality

Scripture:

He is not here, but has risen. (Luke 24:6, from the broader Luke 24 passage)

Think About It:

That phrase, “**He is not here, but has risen,**” changes **everything**. If Christ is alive, then:

- **Death** isn't final, fear doesn't get the last word, and **guilt** can't hold you hostage.
- Every **promise** He made stands on the firm foundation that He overcame the grave.
- The **resurrection** is not just an event; it's a **lifestyle**—an invitation to live every day in the **victory** Christ secured.

Ask yourself: **Am I living like Jesus is still in the tomb**, weighed down by old defeats? Or am I embracing **resurrection reality**, stepping out in boldness, forgiveness, and hope because my Savior **truly** lives?

Pray It:

Jesus, thank You for **conquering death** and offering me a new way to live. Empower me to walk in that resurrection reality—**free** from fear and **filled** with hope.

Do It:

As a final step, try an **“Empty Tomb” challenge**: each day this week, thank God specifically for **one old mindset or sin** that no longer has a claim on you because **Jesus rose**. Maybe it’s shame, anger, or regret. Declare it **empty** in light of the resurrection’s power.

You’re Ready for Class!

We’ve walked through **the women’s early-morning trek**, their shocked discovery, and the **world-shaking truth** that **Jesus is alive**. As you head to class, reflect on which day’s lesson impacted you most. Did God prompt you to trust Him for a **new dawn**, roll away a **stone** you’ve been wrestling with, or stand in **resurrection hope** for the first time in a while?

Come ready to share your insights and let’s celebrate together the **wonder** of the empty tomb—**He is not here, but has risen**, and that **changes everything!**

Before We Gather

- How should the resurrection as the "first day of new creation" shape the way we live as believers today?
- What aspects of life might cause us to walk in fear and/or guilt even though Jesus has conquered sin and death?
- What are some “burial spices” we bring to Jesus today—things we hold onto because we struggle to trust in His resurrection power?
- What does it mean for us to truly live under the Lordship of Christ? How does confessing “Jesus is Lord” impact the way we worship, obey, and witness?