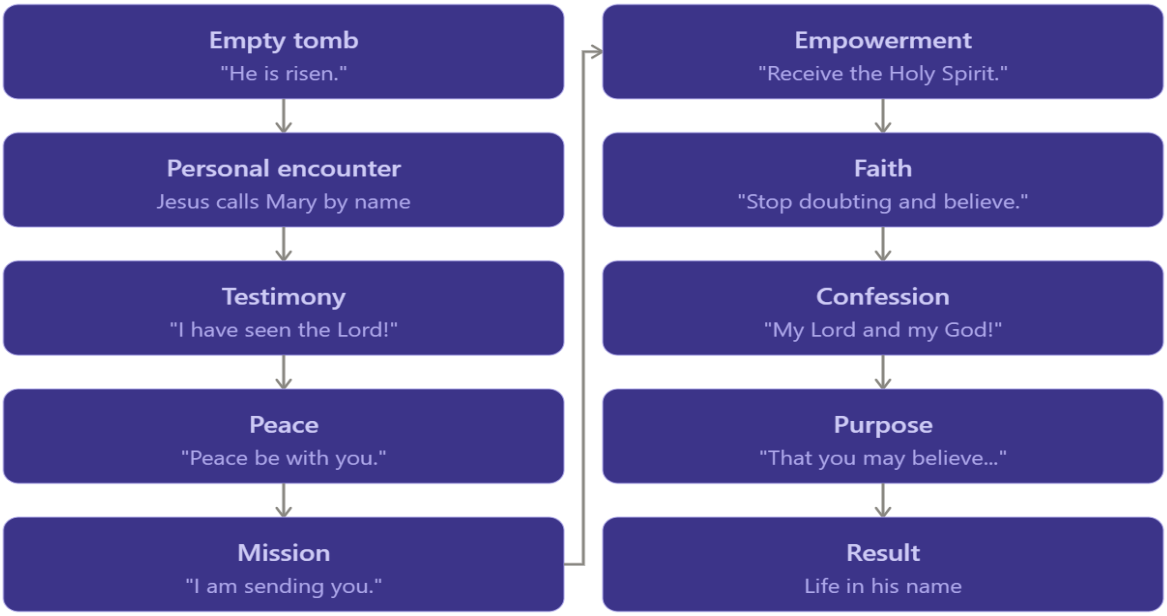
AGAPE HOUSE OF WORSHIP – BIBLE STUDY
Study Series: That you May Believe: A Journey Through The Gospel of John

Part 33: Resurrection & The Purpose of the Book – Believing without seeing; sent on Mission
Wednesday, September 23, 2026
Text: John 20: 1-31 **Teacher: Pastor Yewande Efodili**

Q: If you had been one of Jesus' disciples after His crucifixion, what emotions do you think you would have experienced? Fear? Confusion? Grief? Disappointment? Doubt?

Introduction: From the Empty Tomb to a Living Faith
John 20 brings us to the defining moment of the Christian faith—the **resurrection of Jesus Christ**. The One who was crucified, buried, and mourned is now alive! But this chapter is not only about an empty tomb; it is about what happens when people **encounter the risen Jesus**.
We see Mary move from **weeping to witnessing**, the disciples move from **fear to peace and mission**, and Thomas move from **doubt to declaring, "My Lord and my God!"** Jesus then gives a powerful word to every generation that would follow: **"Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed" (John 20:29).**
John concludes by telling us why he wrote his Gospel: **that we may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing we may have life in His name (John 20:31).**
As we study John 20, let us consider three personal questions: **Do I truly believe? How has the resurrection changed the way I live? And where is the risen Christ sending me?**

Key thought: *We encounter the risen Christ, believe in Him, receive life through Him, and are sent to tell others about Him.*
The chapter opens with the fact of the resurrection and moves inward — from an empty grave to a woman hearing her own name, then outward again as that encounter turns into testimony and, ultimately, a commission. Here's where the second half of the chapter takes it, from empowerment through to the Gospel's own stated purpose:



1. **The Empty Tomb — The Resurrection Changes Everything:** John 20:1-10. Why is resurrection important to Christian Faith? How should knowing that Jesus conquered death affect the way we face fear, suffering, and uncertainty?

2. **Mary Magdalene — From Weeping to Witnessing:** John 11-18. In John 10:3-4 "*He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out… his sheep follow him because they know his voice."*
   Mary's Transition from **grief → encounter → recognition → faith → witness. Q Why do you think Mary initially failed to recognize Jesus? What does this teach us about Christ's personal relationship with His followers?**
3. **Jesus Meets the Disciples in Their Fear:** John 19-20. **Q:** ***Why were the disciples hiding behind closed doors?***
   What "**locked doors**" do Christians sometimes hide behind today? **Resurrection changed fearful disciples into courageous Witnesses.** Rom.8:37 "*we are more than conqueror through Christ*"
4. **Believers are sent and empowered by the Holy Spirit:** John 20:21**-22. Explain v23 "***If you forgive anyone's sins, their sins are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven." NIV read TPT.*
   Jesus is giving His disciples authority to **proclaim the Gospel of forgiveness**.
   They do not personally have the power to forgive sins—God alone forgives sin Mark 2:7. Rather, as Christ's representatives, they can confidently announce that those who repent and believe in Jesus receive forgiveness Acts 10:43.
   The Church is sent to proclaim God's forgiveness through Jesus Christ.
5. **Thomas: From Doubt to Declaration:** John 20:24-28 "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands… I will not believe." Jesus said, "Put your finger here; see my hands… Stop doubting and believe." Notice Thomas transformation from doubt to **"My Lord and my God!"**
   Q: Why do you think Thomas struggled to believe? Is asking questions always the same thing as unbelief?

6. **Believing without seeing:** John 20:29 What does **"believing without seeing" mean? "*Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."*** 1 Peter 1:8 **"***Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him…***" Q:** why is it difficult to believe without evidence? 2 Cor.5:7 "we live by Faith not by sight" explain. What is Faith? **Our faith rests upon God's character, God's Word, Christ's resurrection, and the testimony of those who witnessed Him.**
7. **Why Did John Write His Gospel?** John 20:30-31"*But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name." v31 NIV; TPT says "But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.* John wrote so that people will **Know who Jesus is → believe in Jesus → receive life through Jesus.**
   John 1:12 "*Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God."*
   John 3:16 "*For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."*
   John 5:24 "*Whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life…"*
   John 10:10 *"I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full."*

   Jesus was revealed so that we might believe, and through believing we might have life.

Conclusion:

What Does John 20 require from us? It demands a response. John 20 begins with disciples searching for Jesus and ends with Jesus sending disciples. That is significant. **We come looking for Him, encounter Him, believe in Him—and then He sends us.** Resurrection is therefore not merely something **to celebrate**. It is something **to live**.

Because **He is risen, we can believe.** Because **He is risen, we have life.** Because **He is risen, we have peace.** Because **He is risen, we have hope.** And because **He is risen, we have been sent.**

Rom.10:9"*If you declare with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.*"