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Bible Studies

# **What Difference Would it Have Made?**

The Resurrection of  
Jesus, the Christ.

30AD

*You will see, as you go through this short Bible Study, how the four Gospel accounts are different, and yet there are no inconsistencies, no contradictions, only gaps in some Gospel accounts which are filled in by the others.*

A few years ago, my husband, Ken, had a business acquaintance ask him: "What difference would it have made if Jesus had never risen from the dead?" Jack and Ken had worked together on many projects, and been friends over the years. When he asked Ken this question it was because he knew he didn't know God at all...and he was wondering how to go about it.

Ken was only too glad to sit down with Jack that day, answer his question, and also tell him how to come to faith in Jesus. By the time Ken did his best to help Jack understand the truth about Jesus, Jack was ready to put his faith in Him for all eternity. Together they prayed as Jack talked for the first time to His Savior and Lord.

I'd like to challenge you to **read and think through the four resurrection accounts in the Gospels**, and then answer Jack's question...**"What difference would it have made if Jesus had never risen from the dead?"**

Here are the four Gospel accounts of Jesus' resurrection:

- Matthew 28:1-20
- Mark 16:1-20
- Luke 24: 1-53
- John 20:1-31

1. What day of the week was Jesus resurrected?
2. Who was the first to come to the empty tomb on that day?
3. What time of day did they come?
4. What did they see when they approached the tomb?
5. How had the stone been moved?
6. What else happened at the tomb at that time?
7. What did they do after they realized what had happened?
8. What happened to them on the way to tell others?
9. Which disciples responded by running to the tomb?

10. What did those disciples see on arriving at the tomb?
11. Which disciple believed right away?
12. Who stayed at the tomb, crying, after the disciples went away?
13. Who did Jesus appear to after His resurrection?

Now....using anything you have just read from the four resurrection accounts to answer the question: **"What difference would it have made if Jesus had not risen from the dead?"**

*Answers are on the following pages*

1. What day of the week was Jesus resurrected?

Sunday (Matt. 28:1, Mark 16:1, Luke 24:1, John 20:1)

2. Who was the first to come to the empty tomb on that day?

At least three women came...Mary Magdalene, Mary mother of James (the other Mary), and Salome. (Matt. 28:1, Mark 16:1, Luke 24:1, John 20:1)

3. What time of day did they come?

Very early in the morning, at dawn, while it was still dark (Matt 28:1, Mark 16:2, Luke 24:1, John 20:1)

4. What did they see when they approached the tomb?

That the stone had been rolled away from the entrance to the tomb. (Mark 16:4, Luke 24:2, John 20:1)

5. How had the stone been moved?

An violent earthquake had shaken the place, and an angel of the LORD rolled back the stone. The guards present at that time were so afraid they shook. (Matt. 28:2-4)

6. What else happened at the tomb at that time?

Mary Magdalene ran to tell Peter and John that something had happened...she didn't yet know what. (John 20:2)  
The other women went in the tomb and did not see the body of the LORD Jesus... and saw two angels, one of whom informed them that Jesus was raised from the dead. He told them to go and tell the disciples about this. (Matt 28:5-7. Mark 16:5-7. Luke 24:4-8 )

7. What did they do after they realized what had happened?

The other women ran from the tomb to tell the disciples, afraid to speak to anyone else on the way. (Matt 28:8, Mark 16:8)

(In the meantime, Peter and John ran to the tomb, along with Mary Magdalene, and Mary Magdalene saw Jesus outside the tomb. (Mark 16:9, John 20: 10-17)

8. What happened to them on the way to tell others?

First, they were met by Jesus (Matt. 28:9&10) , then they were joined by Mary Magdalene (who was on her way back from the tomb the 2<sup>nd</sup> time), and they all together alerted the rest of the disciples. (Mark 16:10, Luke 24:9&10, John 20:18)

9. Which disciples responded by running to the tomb?  
After the initial group of women left the tomb, on their way to tell the disciples, apparently Peter & John arrived, having been alerted by Mary Magdalene. Mary Magdalene followed them there. (John 20: 3&4)

9. What did those disciples see on arriving at the tomb?

John reached the tomb first and looked in. Peter went in first and saw the burial strips, but no body. John finally went in, too, and realized Jesus was actually gone. Remember, they had heard from Mary Magdalene that someone had stolen the body of Jesus – they did not yet know He had raised from the dead. (John 20: 3-8)

10. Which disciple believed right away?

John did. But what he believed was that the body of Jesus was gone. He did not yet know He had been raised from the dead. (John 20:8&9)

11. Who stayed at the tomb, crying, after the disciples went away?

Mary Magdalene. Remember, at this time she still did not know Jesus was raised from the dead. She had seen the rolled-away stone, and run to tell Peter & John that someone had stolen the body of Jesus. She had not stuck around to see the angels and get their explanation. Now...as she stayed crying, she saw Jesus. Then she joined the other women on their way to tell the disciples. At that point all the women

knew the whole story. None of the disciples did. (John 20:10-18)

12. Who did Jesus appear to after His resurrection?

First, Mary Magdalene (Mark 16:9)

The other women (Matt. 28:9&10)

Two on the road to Emmaus (Mark 16: 12&13, Luke 24:13-35)

The eleven disciples Sunday night at dinner (Luke 24: 36-49, John 20:19-23)

Thomas (John 20:24-29)

Now, using anything you have just read from the four resurrection accounts, answer the question: **"What difference would it have made if Jesus had not risen from the dead?"**

My Thoughts:

- Even His followers did not at first believe...their incredulity turned to belief after they actually saw Him. If He had not risen from the dead, the disciples themselves would never have believed that He was truly God. His resurrection was final proof that He was God.
- If He was simply a great man He might have died to keep someone else from dying. But only God could raise again from the dead...to keep everyone from dying.
- The resurrection gives us hope that everything Jesus said was true. He said if we would believe in Him we would never die.

When Jack realized all that Jesus had done for him, and that Jesus was without a doubt God Himself, and that He had raised from the dead and was alive today, Jack gave his heart and life to Jesus Christ. Two years later Jack died...but didn't. His body is in the grave, but Jack went to be with His Lord, and someday Jack's body will be resurrected, just like Jesus.



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