

## That You May Believe: Our Evidence-Based Faith

1. Why do many Christian churches hold Sunday worship? (Look at verse 1 and also Acts 20:7 and I Corinthians 16:2.) Should this exclude worship on other days of the week? Explain.
2. There is no Biblical evidence to support the claim that Mary Magdalene was a prostitute. According to Luke 8:2, what do we know for sure about her? Why might Mary have been the very first person recorded here to whom Jesus revealed himself after His resurrection?
3. How was Jesus' resurrection different than the one described in John 11:44, as evidenced by the remaining grave clothes? (i.e., What specific physical evidences do we have that no struggle occurred and grave robbers did not hurriedly unwrap His body? After all, would grave robbers unwrap a dead body before transporting it? Why or why not?)
4. What can we deduce from verse 8 about the importance of basing our belief system (worldview) on solid evidence? Does our God demand we follow Him without asking questions, with a sort of "blind faith"? How do we balance belief and evidence with faith and incomplete knowledge?
5. What are some possible reasons Mary didn't recognize Jesus after His resurrection? Now look at Luke 24:16 and give one more reason. How does this demonstrate the sovereignty of God in human events?
6. What positive character traits did Thomas display? Negative? Do you ever display similar qualities? Explain.
7. Verses 30 and 31 sum up the entire purpose of this book; what is it? Have you taken this step in your relationship with God? Are you willing to share that with this class and others? (See Romans 10:9,10.)

<sup>1</sup>Now the first day of the week Mary Magdalene went to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. <sup>2</sup>Then she ran and came to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken away the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid Him."

<sup>3</sup>Peter therefore went out, and the other disciple, and were going to the tomb. <sup>4</sup>So they both ran together, and the other disciple outran Peter and came to the tomb first. <sup>5</sup>And he, stooping down and looking in, saw the linen cloths lying there; yet he did not go in. <sup>6</sup>Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb; and he saw the linen cloths lying there, <sup>7</sup>and the handkerchief that had been around His head, not lying with the linen cloths, but folded together in a place by itself. <sup>8</sup>Then the other disciple, who came to the tomb first, went in also; and he saw and believed. <sup>9</sup>For as yet they did not know the Scripture, that He must rise again from the dead. <sup>10</sup>Then the disciples went away again to their own homes.

<sup>11</sup>But Mary stood outside by the tomb weeping, and as she wept she stooped down and looked into the tomb. <sup>12</sup>And she saw two angels in white sitting, one at the head and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. <sup>13</sup>Then they said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?" She, supposing Him to be the gardener, said to Him, "Sir, if You have carried Him away, tell me where You have laid Him, and I will take Him away."

<sup>14</sup>Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned around and saw Jesus standing there, and did not know that it was Jesus. <sup>15</sup>Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?" She, supposing Him to be the gardener, said to Him, "Sir, if You have carried Him away, tell me where You have laid Him, and I will take Him away."

<sup>16</sup>Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned and said to Him, "Rabboni!" (which is to say, Teacher).

<sup>17</sup>Jesus said to her, "Do not cling to Me, for I have not yet ascended to My Father; but go to My brethren and say to them, 'I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God.'"

<sup>18</sup>Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that He had spoken these things to her.

<sup>19</sup>Then, the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them, "Peace be with you." <sup>20</sup>When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord.

<sup>21</sup>So Jesus said to them again, "Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you." <sup>22</sup>And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. <sup>23</sup>If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

<sup>24</sup>Now Thomas, called the Twin, one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. <sup>25</sup>The other disciples therefore said to him, "We have seen the Lord." So he said to them, "Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe."

<sup>26</sup>And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, "Peace to you!" <sup>27</sup>Then He said to Thomas, "Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing."

<sup>28</sup>And Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!"

<sup>29</sup>Jesus said to him, "Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

<sup>30</sup>And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; <sup>31</sup>but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.

Guest Speaker Jerry Woychik

## Read: John 21

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### Monday

**Matt. 28:7,16; I Cor. 15:6** — Jesus Christ's supreme post-resurrection appearance was in Galilee, where He was seen by how many people? It is probable that He arranged this meeting in Galilee because this was where most of His followers were? This seems the most likely location for the massive gathering of disciples He had influenced, and this is where the stage is set for John 21.

### Tuesday

**1,2** — Why do you think Simon Peter is usually mentioned first in lists of disciples? He was obviously very whole-hearted in his approach to life. Are we?

### Wednesday

**3,4** — While the disciples were waiting for Jesus to meet them in Galilee, was it logical that they would go fishing? Why? What are some reasons Jesus might have concealed His identity from them again?

### Thursday

**5-14** — What more do we learn about Peter's character? (Consider it was about 300 feet to shore.) What about Jesus' character? (He caused them to be able to catch a full net of fish, kept the net from breaking, and had breakfast ready for them.)

### Friday

**15-17** — When Jesus asked Peter if he loved Him, He used a word for love that signified total commitment: "agape." Peter responded with a word for that love that signified his love for Jesus, but not necessarily His total commitment: "phileo" (friendship). The essential message here is that Jesus demands total commitment from His followers. Do you verbally express your love for God, and when you do, does it express total commitment or merely friendship?

### Saturday

**24** — Who was this disciple? What was a condition of him being able to "testify" of what he wrote? Why are we able to trust this man?

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