

# YOU

Bible Study

**Sermon Series: Essentials of Christianity**

**To be used with:** The Resurrection of Jesus

**Sermon Title Possibilities:** Risen to New Life

**Scripture:** John 20:3-29

**Connection with Unit Theme:** To complement the small group study “Essentials of Christianity,” this sermon explores verses in John 20 to highlight the importance of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Because Jesus is risen from the dead, we can also be raised to new life.

**Introduction:** There is a huge emotional difference when you attend, or lead, a funeral for a person who was a believer in Jesus Christ and a person who was not. With the funeral for the believer, there is grief but there is also a spirit of peace in the room because we know the loved one is in heaven with Jesus. With the person who is not a believer, a funeral is often accompanied by a deeper, painful level of grief and there are lots of questions about why and the room is filled with an empty despair. Why the difference between the two funerals? Because the first person experienced the reality that new life is possible when we trust in the risen Christ.

## **1. New Life Is Possible: The empty tomb is proof (v. 3-10)**

When Peter and John got to the tomb where Jesus had been buried, they were amazed to find the tomb empty. When they arrived, they found the linen burial cloths neatly folded and placed where Jesus’ body had been. The reported burial cloth, known as the Shroud of Turin, is a linen wrapping cloth 14 feet in length. The cloth bears the image of a man who appears to have been crucified. A cloth like this would have completely wrapped around the body of Jesus after His body had been prepared for burial after the crucifixion.

God the Father raised Jesus, His Son, from the dead. Jesus’ death on the cross was the acceptable sacrifice to God the Father for the sins of humanity. The empty tomb is proof that new life in Jesus is available for all.

[sources: <https://www.shroud.com/> and <https://www.history.com/news/shroud-turin-facts> ]

## **2. New Life Is Possible: The risen Jesus is proof (v. 11-23)**

After His resurrection, Jesus first appeared to Mary Magdalene in the Garden of Gethsemane. Overcome with grief at the death of her friend and the Messiah, she stood at the tomb in anguish and wept openly. When Jesus spoke her name, she knew the man to be Jesus. He was risen! He was alive! Mary knew Jesus so

well that she was not tricked. She immediately went and told the rest of the disciples that Jesus was alive.

Back in the upper room, after having heard from Mary, the disciples were gathered. They were behind locked doors because they feared a plot by the Romans to deceive the people and lie about the resurrection of Jesus. Through locked doors, Jesus appeared in their midst. He ate with them and talked with them. They all knew that it was Jesus come back to life. Again, they had spent so much time with Jesus over a three-year period that they were not mistaken. The resurrected Jesus is proof that new life is available for all.

### **3. New Life Is Possible: Believers are living proof (v. 24-29)**

Thomas, for whatever reason, was not with Jesus on the night He appeared to all of the disciples. For the entire week, Thomas certainly heard the story of how Jesus had appeared to the other ten disciples. He had seen how their countenance had changed from defeat and despair at the death of Jesus to being joyful and exuberant after seeing Him risen back to life. Thomas certainly felt left out.

When Jesus appeared to Thomas, Thomas still wanted proof. So, Jesus showed him the wounds and offered for Thomas to touch them. It was then that Thomas understood the reality of what he had seen in the others—Jesus was alive. Thomas believed and was blessed with new life in Jesus. But Jesus told Thomas that those who would believe in Him without seeing Him—all people today—would be blessed with that same new life. When we place our faith in the living Christ, we are blessed with the forgiveness of our sins and we receive the gift of abundant and eternal life.

**Conclusion:** In John 11:25-26, Jesus spoke these words to the disciples, “I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me, even if he dies, will live. Everyone who lives and believes in me will never die.” These verses are some of the most common used at funerals. The words are meant to give comfort and hope to the grieving family. But the truth of these verses is powerful and speak of the reality of the living Lord of life. The resurrection of Jesus is a fact and all who place their faith in Him have the promise of eternal life.

The reality of these verses can be a reality in your life as well. In John 20:29, Jesus said that anyone who believes in Him is blessed. We are blessed with new life. That new life includes the forgiveness of sin and the promise of eternal life in heaven with Jesus when we die. Your funeral doesn’t have to be filled with agony and despair—your funeral can be one of peace and hope because of what Jesus has done for you. That new life is possible when you put your trust in the risen Christ. Will you do that today?

*Author Bio: Rick Prall is a senior curriculum specialist with Ramsey Solutions and an ordained minister. He has served churches in California, Oklahoma, Texas, and Tennessee and has written Bible study curriculum material for over 30 years. Rick has been married to Helene for 37 years and they have two grown and married children and two wonderful granddaughters. Rick and Helene have a passion for international missions and have served in many countries together; they are members of Gladeville Baptist Church.*