

EASTER

Brought to You By Andy Stanley

Scripture: John 20:1-2; Luke 24:10-12; Acts 3:13-15; 4:8-10, 12-13

Idea: The message of Christianity is not that Jesus **lived**. It's that he **lives!** You can respect, appreciate, and even follow the teachings of Jesus without believing that he arose from the dead. But people who brought us the story and the teachings of Jesus wouldn't recommend that. Their message was clear: he arose from the dead. He is Savior and Lord. Today, we want you to step across the line and receive him as such.

Introduction

John 20:1-2

Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the entrance.

*[Mary was a woman Jesus had healed. She became his **most famous female follower**. She was extraordinarily grateful. Like you, she believed he was teacher, rabbi, wonder worker, friend of sinners, and sent from God. **But she believed he was dead. And, like all of his followers, she believed he would stay that way.**]*

[On Easter morning, she believed about Jesus what perhaps you do.]

[As you know, Jesus was crucified and taken down from the cross on a Friday afternoon. Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea begged/bribed Pilate to let them bury the body; otherwise, it would have been dumped in a public grave, as was the case with victims of crucifixion.]

[They did their best to wrap him in grave clothes and prepare him for burial before sunset, which marked the beginning of the Sabbath. The body would stay there a couple of years until there was nothing left but bones. Someone would gather the bones, put them in a bone box/ossuary, and put it on the mantle.]

[Graphic: picture of an ossuary]

[Mary was going to un-embalm and then re-embalm his body. It had been done hastily by a couple of men just before sunset on Friday, indicating the beginning of the Sabbath. This would not be a pleasant task. But there was a love for the man, Jesus, which compelled her and those with her.]

[What would compel you to touch a corpse that had been crucified and left in a tomb for two nights and a day, thus violating Jewish law? Who would you do that for? Kids? Spouse? Sandra says, "No, Andy. Once you are embalmed, even if it was done poorly, we are just going to go with that. No re-dos." (A period of mourning, then shopping.)]