

# THE FIRST 15

Wednesday, April 3, 2024

Today is Wednesday, April 3 and we are exploring what the Bible says about the Risen Christ.

## OPENING PRAYER

*Holy and blessed Lord, I long for you to speak into my life and circumstances. As I begin this time of prayer, I still my body, quiet my mind and slow my breathing. I inhale the joy and peace of your loving presence. I exhale the worries and concerns I have carried with me. Give me ears to hear, eyes to see and a heart to understand the good message you have for me today as I study your Holy Word. Amen.*

## SCRIPTURE

***“He is not here; he has risen! Remember how he told you, while he was still with you in Galilee: The Son of Man must be delivered over to the hands of sinners, be crucified and on the third day be raised again.” Then they remembered his words. When they came back from the tomb, they told all these things to the Eleven and to all the others. It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the others with them who told this to the apostles. But they did not believe the women, because their words seemed to them like nonsense. Peter, however, got up and ran to the tomb. Bending over, he saw the strips of linen lying by themselves, and he went away, wondering to himself what had happened. Luke 24:6-12***

## REFLECTION

This week we are revisiting the story of the Risen Christ from the perspective of each Gospel writer. Today we read from the Gospel of Luke. Jesus told his disciples three times that he would be delivered into the hands of men who would kill him and on the third day he would be raised to life. Despite those clear predictions, when the disciples discovered Jesus' tomb was empty three days after the crucifixion, everyone was bewildered. The three women arrived at Jesus' tomb to find it contained nothing except two strange men dressed in clothes that gleamed as brightly as a flash of lightning. The angels spoke to the women in their fear. Then they remembered his words.

Jesus is risen. The tomb was empty. I contemplate how my life is different because of this truth. Am I like Mary Magdalene, Joanna and Mary, who need to be reminded of the words Jesus spoke that are recorded in scripture? What might jog my memory regarding his timeless teachings? Perhaps I am like the eleven disciples who will not believe the truth because it seems like nonsense. Or maybe I am like Peter, eager to get up, run to the tomb, bend over and peer into the empty darkness. The strips of linen once wrapped a dead body but now lie formless and alone. Peter wonders what happened even though Jesus himself predicted this exact thing.

I invite Jesus to speak to me in these accounts of the resurrection. I consider how these words of scripture inform the current state of my soul or a particular situation in my life. Perhaps God is

inviting me to take some action in order to experience the empty tomb for myself. Maybe God wants to open my mind to the unfathomable, extraordinary truth of the Risen Christ.

**Ask:** Where do I harbor doubt or disbelief about the Risen Christ? Am I willing to get up and run to the tomb and see for myself?

**Pause and Pray**

## **CLOSING PRAYER**

*Lord Jesus, forgive me when I do not remember your words and neglect my study of scripture. Forgive me when I doubt the testimony of truth and wonder what actually happened. Today I will not sit idly by and underestimate the glory of your resurrection. Alongside Peter, I get up and run to the tomb. Humbly, I bend low to peer into the place of death to see the grave clothes discarded and the miracle of life anew. Open the eyes of my soul so that I can see your truth. Let me peer into the emptiness and discover what you have discarded and left behind. Despite the testimony or questions of those around me, let me see and experience you for myself. Amen.*