

# THE FIRST 15

Monday, May 27, 2024

Today is Monday, May 27 and we are studying the Gospel of John chapter twenty.

## OPENING PRAYER

*In the morning I praise you, Lord. You are the Living God, holy and mighty is your name. All honor and glory is yours, my risen Savior Jesus, redeemer and friend. As a new day dawns I pause to seek your face. I quiet the cares of my mind, slow my breath and still the concerns of my heart. Come, show me what it means to live the Resurrection life. Amen.*

## SCRIPTURE

***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. So she came running to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one Jesus loved, and said, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we don't know where they have put him!" So Peter and the other disciple started for the tomb. Both were running, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. He bent over and looked in at the strips of linen lying there but did not go in. Then Simon Peter came along behind him and went straight into the tomb. He saw the strips of linen lying there, as well as the cloth that had been wrapped around Jesus' head. The cloth was still lying in its place, separate from the linen. Finally the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went inside. He saw and believed.***  
**John 20:1-8**

## REFLECTION

It is the third day after Jesus' crucifixion, death and burial. According to John, Mary Magdalene arrives at the tomb alone and sees that the stone has been rolled away. In the darkness of confusion, Mary runs to tell Peter and John. She assumes that someone has taken the dead body of Jesus. She doesn't imagine that he was resurrected, even though he told his disciples multiple times that he would suffer and die and his resurrection would happen on the third day (Matthew 16:21, Matthew 17:22-23, Matthew 20:17-19).

In response to Mary Magdalene's astonishing news, a foot race ensues between the two disciples. Peter and John, young athletic fishermen, run in haste to see the sight for themselves. John reports himself being faster than Peter and arriving at the tomb first. Peter sees the grave clothes lying there, neatly folded to one side, without a body. Just a week earlier, Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, but when Lazarus emerged alive from the tomb he was wearing his grave clothes. The risen Jesus has no such clothing. The customary coverings used in ancient burials were set aside. John then joins Peter inside the tomb. He sees the empty burial spot for himself and notices the discarded grave clothes. The trappings of death have been overcome. He believes. Jesus has risen!

I find myself standing alongside Mary Magdalene, Peter and John. I enter the empty tomb. I see the grave clothes folded and neatly set aside. Jesus is not there. Death could not hold him. Evil

may think it won at the crucifixion, but Jesus was victorious on the cross. Jesus' willingly suffered and died and shed his blood for the sins of the whole world. His blood was the necessary atonement for sin and fulfilled God's redemption plan for humanity. His sacrifice opened the way back to an eternal relationship with the Father broken by the Fall of Adam. Now Jesus is alive. He conquered sin and death for all. He conquered sin and death for me. The power of the Resurrection is at work in the world and active in my life. Christ's Resurrection power gives me the power I need. Power to love and forgive and grow in holiness. Power to resist temptation, overcome sin and vanquish evil. The blood of Jesus continues to conquer all. I can put my faith and trust in that power.

**Ask:** Where in my life do I need to claim the Resurrection power of Jesus? When do I neglect to put my faith and trust in Jesus and instead trust in my own ability?

**Pause and Pray**

## **CLOSING PRAYER**

*Lord Jesus Christ, my blessed Savior, the grave could not hold you. You cast off those grave clothes and laid death aside. God's divine plan was complete and the world was forever changed. Thank you for going to the cross for the salvation of my soul. I praise you and worship you as my Risen Lord. I place my complete trust in you and invite you to work in my life for God's good will to be realized. Amen.*