



Resurrection

AND EASTER FAITH

JesusWalk® Bible Study Series

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Parallel Accounts of the Resurrection (NIV)

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Though some have been able to produce a harmonization of the resurrection accounts

(<https://www.jesuswalk.com/resurrection/resurrection-harmonization.htm>) from the four gospels,¹ there seem to be some differences in the accounts. For example:



(<https://www.jesuswalk.com/resurrection/images/fra-angelico-resurrection-women695x800.jpg>).

Fra Angelico (1400-1455), "Resurrection of Christ and Women at the Tomb" (1440-41), Fresco, 189 x 164 cm, Convento di San Marco, Florence. [Larger Image](#)

(<https://www.jesuswalk.com/resurrection/images/fra-angelico-resurrection-women695x800.jpg>).

1. In the Synoptic Gospels, Mary Magdalene and other women go to the tomb. In John's account, Mary Magdalene goes alone.
2. In Matthew, the Jesus appears to the women before they tell the disciples. In John, Jesus appears to Mary Magdalene first (also in the longer ending of Mark) -- *after* she reports to the disciples.
3. In Matthew and Mark one angel appears; in Luke and John there are two angels.
4. In Matthew, the women tell no one of what they had seen.

Historically, the church hasn't viewed these discrepancies in the accounts as evidence of error, but as evidence of authenticity because these represent different traditions based on eyewitness accounts. We know that eyewitness accounts in court often differ in details. These four accounts differ in a few details, but are remarkably united on the main points. The following parallels are from the New International Version.

Matthew 28:1-10	Mark 16:1-8 and 9-14 (longer ending)	Luke 24:1-44	John 20:1-29
¹ After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb.	¹ When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices so that they might go to anoint Jesus' body. ² Very early on the first day of the week, just after sunrise, they were on their way to the tomb	¹ On the first day of the week, very early in the morning, the women took the spices they had prepared and went to the tomb. ~~Mary the mother of James, and the other Mary went to look at the tomb.~~	¹ Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb

	³ and they asked each other, "Who will roll the stone away from the entrance of the tomb?"		^{1b} and saw that the stone had been removed from the entrance.
² There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. ³ His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. ⁴ The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men.			
	⁴ But when they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had been rolled away.	² They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, ³ but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus.	
	⁵ As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man dressed in a white robe sitting on the right side, and they were alarmed.	⁴ While they were wondering about this, suddenly two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning stood beside them. ⁵ In their fright the women bowed down with their faces to the ground,	
⁵ The angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. ⁶ He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay.	⁶ "Don't be alarmed," he said. "You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who was crucified. He has risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid him.	^{5b} but the men said to them, "Why do you look for the living among the dead? ⁶ He is not here; he has risen!	

		^{6b} Remember how he told you, while he was still with you in Galilee: ⁷ 'The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, be crucified and on the third day be raised again.'" ⁸ Then they remembered his words.	
⁷ Then go quickly and tell his disciples: 'He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him.' Now I have told you."	⁷ But go, tell his disciples and Peter, 'He is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you.'"		
⁸ So the women hurried away from the tomb, afraid yet filled with joy, and ran to tell his disciples.	⁸ Trembling and bewildered, the women went out and fled from the tomb. They said nothing to anyone, because they were afraid.	⁹ When they came back from the tomb, they told all these things to the Eleven and to all the others. ¹⁰ It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the others with them who told this to the apostles. ¹¹ But they did not believe the women, because their words seemed to them like nonsense.	² 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!"

⁹ Suddenly Jesus met them. "Greetings," he said. They came to him, clasped his feet and worshiped him.

¹⁰ Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid. Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me."

⁹ When Jesus rose early on the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had driven seven demons. ¹⁰ She went and told those who had been with him and who were mourning and weeping.

¹¹ When they heard that Jesus was alive and that she had seen him, they did not believe it.

¹¹ but Mary stood outside the tomb crying. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb ¹² and saw two angels in white, seated where Jesus' body had been, one at the head and the other at the foot.

¹³ They asked her, "Woman, why are you crying?" "They have taken my Lord away," she said, "and I don't know where they have put him."

¹⁴ At this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not realize that it was Jesus.

¹⁵ "Woman," he said, "why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?"

Thinking he was the gardener, she said, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him."

¹⁶ Jesus said to her, "Mary." She turned toward him and cried out in Aramaic, "Rabboni!" (which means Teacher).

¹⁷ Jesus said, "Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet returned to the Father. Go instead to my brothers and tell them, 'I am returning to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'"

¹⁸ Mary Magdalene went to the disciples with the news: "I have seen the Lord!" And she told them that he had said these things to her.

(vss. 11-15, guards report to the chief priests and are bribed to lie)

		¹² 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.	(skips here back to verse 3 for parallel) ³ So Peter and the other disciple started for the tomb. ⁴ Both were running, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. ⁵ He bent over and looked in at the strips of linen lying there but did not go in. ⁶ Then Simon Peter, who was behind him, arrived and went into the tomb. He saw the strips of linen lying there, ⁷ as well as the burial cloth that had been around Jesus' head. The cloth was folded up by itself, separate from the linen. ⁸ Finally the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went inside. He saw and believed. ⁹ (They still did not understand from Scripture that Jesus had to rise from the dead.) ¹⁰ Then the disciples went back to their homes,
		Jesus' appearance on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-35)	

	³⁶ While they were still talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you." ³⁷ They were startled and frightened, thinking they saw a ghost. ³⁸ He said to them, "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts rise in your minds? ³⁹ Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself! Touch me and see; a ghost does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have." ⁴⁰ When he had said this, he showed them his hands and feet. ⁴¹ And while they still did not believe it because of joy and amazement, he asked them, "Do you have anything here to eat?" ⁴² They gave him a piece of broiled fish, ⁴³ and he took it and ate it in their presence. ⁴⁴ He said to them, "This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms."	¹⁹ On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" ²⁰ After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord. ²¹ Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." ²² And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³ If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven."
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		²⁴ Now Thomas (called Didymus), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. ²⁵ So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord!" But he said to them, "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe it." ²⁶ A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" ²⁷ Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe."
		²⁹ Then Jesus told him, "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

1. George Eldon Ladd, *I Believe in the Resurrection* (Eerdmans, 1975), pp. 91-93.

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