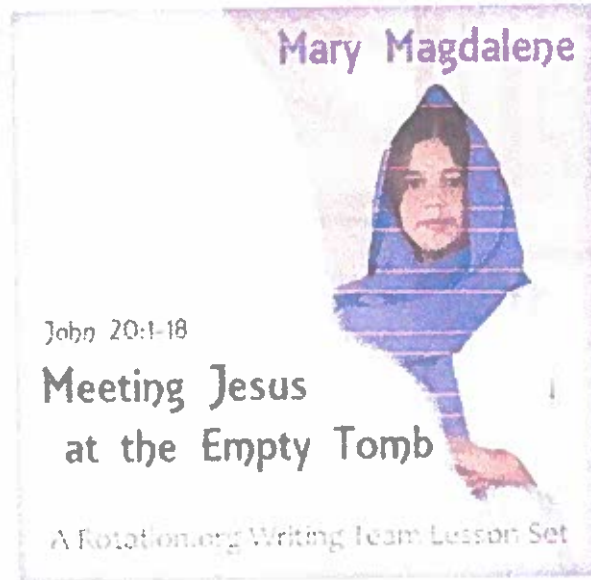


# Mary Magdalene: Meeting Jesus at the Empty Tomb

## Lesson Set Objectives and Bible Background



### Scripture

Bible Story: [John 20:1-18](#)

### Key/Memory Verse

"Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, 'I have seen the Lord', and she told them that he had said these things to her." John 20:18 (NRSV)

## Lesson Objectives

- Teach John's version of the Empty Tomb story into memory, helping students understand how John's version differs from other Gospel stories of the empty tomb.
- Place ourselves at the Empty Tomb and understand how Mary's encounter with the risen Christ is similar to our own --that it can be unexpected, personal, and life-changing.
- Consider ways we are called to respond to the good news that "He is risen."
- Rescue Mary Magdalene's reputation from the misrepresentations that evolved over the centuries in the Church and media, and restore her to her rightful place as a dear disciple of Jesus who was honored to be the first person to whom Jesus appeared at his resurrection.

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## Bible Background

### What does Mary Magdalene's story mean?

**John's version of the Empty Tomb story is unique**, and like so many other things in John, it points to a deeper meaning and reality which younger children may find hard to grasp. Thus, **our first task is to teach the story so that it can unfold its meaning as they grow.**

**Mary went to the Tomb in grief and returned with faith. How did that happen?** It happened because Jesus speaks his resurrected presence to us. Like every single one of us, at first Mary Magdalene didn't recognize Jesus, and even when she did *according to John*, she wasn't allowed to physically touch him (for a reason beyond our comprehension). And yet the encounter was so real that it changed her life and compelled her to share the amazing news with others. This is the life-changing presence we too hope to experience *or have already experienced*. And yes, to some extent we can prepare to encounter the Risen Jesus, and all the confirming encounters to come.

- Mary was acquainted with his voice; are you?
- Mary went to the cross and tomb; have you?
- Mary turned when she heard him call and reached out to embrace him; how are you doing that?
- And Mary taught others to look for him, believe, and continue his mission. How can you do that?

### Who was Mary from Magdala?

- Most significantly, she was a beloved friend and faithful follower of Jesus,
- She is the only person mentioned at the Empty Tomb in all four Gospels.
- According to John, she was the first person to whom Jesus appeared after the resurrection.
- According to John, she was the first to share the Good News of Jesus' resurrection — earning her the title, “Apostle to the Apostles.”

The word “Magdalene” tells us that Mary was from the village of Magdala, a community on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee, near Capernaum. The fact that she is named in this way, instead of referencing a husband's name, may indicate that she had never married or perhaps her husband had died. This village is not far from Capernaum, so it is also possible that she had family ties to one of the male disciples, or perhaps Jesus himself.

Both Luke and Mark tell us that Mary was healed, presumably by Jesus, of seven demons --which we today understand may reference a host of medical conditions. The Gospels tell us that she was part of the group of women who followed Jesus from Galilee and that they “provided for” Jesus and the disciples “out of their resources” (Matthew 27:55-56, Mark 15:41, Luke 8:2-3). These other women included Jesus' mother, Mary the wife of Cleopas, Joanna, and perhaps others. Though often portrayed as a younger woman, we simply don't know how old she was, and she may have been an older woman given that it did not raise eyebrows that she was in the company of men.

Interestingly, Mary Magdalene is not mentioned in the Book of Acts, but then neither are several other Disciples. Did she pass away? Travel to spread the word? Or was she just a victim of the male-centric tendencies of Early Church writings? Writing some 40 years later in the Book of Acts, Luke does write about another woman, Lydia, but does not relate the fate of Jesus' mother or the women so prominently described in his gospel. We are left to assume, that like Paul and many others mentioned in scripture, we simply do not know what happened to them.

### **What was her role?**

Mary was one of the earliest followers of Jesus, and one of several women who often traveled with the disciples, learning from him, and likely taking care of the group's daily needs and acting as an extension of Jesus' care for others. Mary was there in Jerusalem for the last days, and thus it is likely that she helped prepare, serve, and clean up the Last Supper, and perhaps participate in it. Only Mary Magdalene is present at the Empty Tomb in all four Gospels, which is surely a confirmation of her importance among the group, her faith in Jesus, and Jesus' faith in her.

**In John, the male Disciples did not see Jesus at the Empty Tomb.** That honor was reserved for Mary Magdalene. The significance of Jesus bestowing such an honor on a woman in that day and age cannot be understated and is in keeping with Jesus' vision of a new Kingdom where the old attitudes and ideas of worth no longer apply.

## The Story in brief according to John

1. Mary Magdalene goes to the tomb, sees the stone rolled away, and then runs to tell Peter and John.
2. Mary returns with Peter and John who see the rolled up linens and then leave.
3. In her grief, Mary stays behind, and then suddenly sees two angels sitting inside the tomb.
4. The angels ask her why she is crying, and she replies that they have "taken her master."
5. She turns around and Jesus asks her why she is crying -but she thinks he's the gardener!
6. Mary asks the gardener where they have taken him.
7. Jesus says to her, "Mary!" and she replies, "Teacher!"
8. Jesus immediately tells her do not touch me, go and tell the others.
9. Mary returns to the disciples and says, "I have seen the Lord."

Note that John is the only Empty Tomb account that includes male disciples at the tomb, but they do not encounter Jesus until the upper room.

## The Other Gospels

### Matthew 28:1-10

Two women: Mary Magdalene and *the "other" Mary*. No men. There's an earthquake, an angel sitting on the rolled-away stone, and terrified guards. The angel says, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples." Jesus speaks to the women as they are leaving.

### Mark 16:1-8

Three women: Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome (who actually may be the same person as Mary the mother of James). No men. The stone is rolled away. A young man wearing white is in the tomb. He says, "He has risen; He is not here; behold, here is the place where they laid Him. Go tell his disciples."

### Luke 24:1-10

Three women: Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Joanna. No men. The stone is rolled away when they arrive. They enter the tomb and suddenly two angels

appear. "Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is risen." The women leave to report to the male disciples.

It's a common misconception that Mary the Mother of Jesus was one of the Mary's at the empty tomb. Three of the Gospels mention "Mary the mother of James" ...also known as "the other Mary." This is James the disciple, the "Son of Zebedee," and not Jesus' brother James of later prominence. This other Mary may be the wife of Clopas (Cleopas) of Emmaus Road fame. Interestingly, in John 20:2, Mary says "**we do not know where they have laid him,**" though the rest of the story emphasizes it was just Mary M. present.

### **Why are the accounts so different?**

People have been debating this question since the 1st Century. Time, distance and memory can do strange things to verbal accounts, especially in a pre-technological age. It is likely that Matthew, Luke, and John were not acquainted with each other's gospels. But they all agree on these things: Mary Magdalene was there, messenger(s) from God were present, the tomb was empty, and the good news had to be shared.

### **What does it matter to us as teachers?**

Students will eventually hear the different gospel accounts and may be confused. It's not helpful to homogenize what God has preserved as unique accounts. Each tells us something different about the nature of the Resurrection and how we might experience Christ, and they remind us that the Gospels are not histories in the conventional sense, but a joyful truth to be pondered.

### **What does it matter to us as students?**

The risen Jesus appeared many times after the Empty Tomb was discovered, and he still "appears" to be alive to many today. Furthermore, the empty tomb was not proof to Mary or to Peter. It was the presence of the Risen Christ which rekindled their faith. Thus the question can be asked:

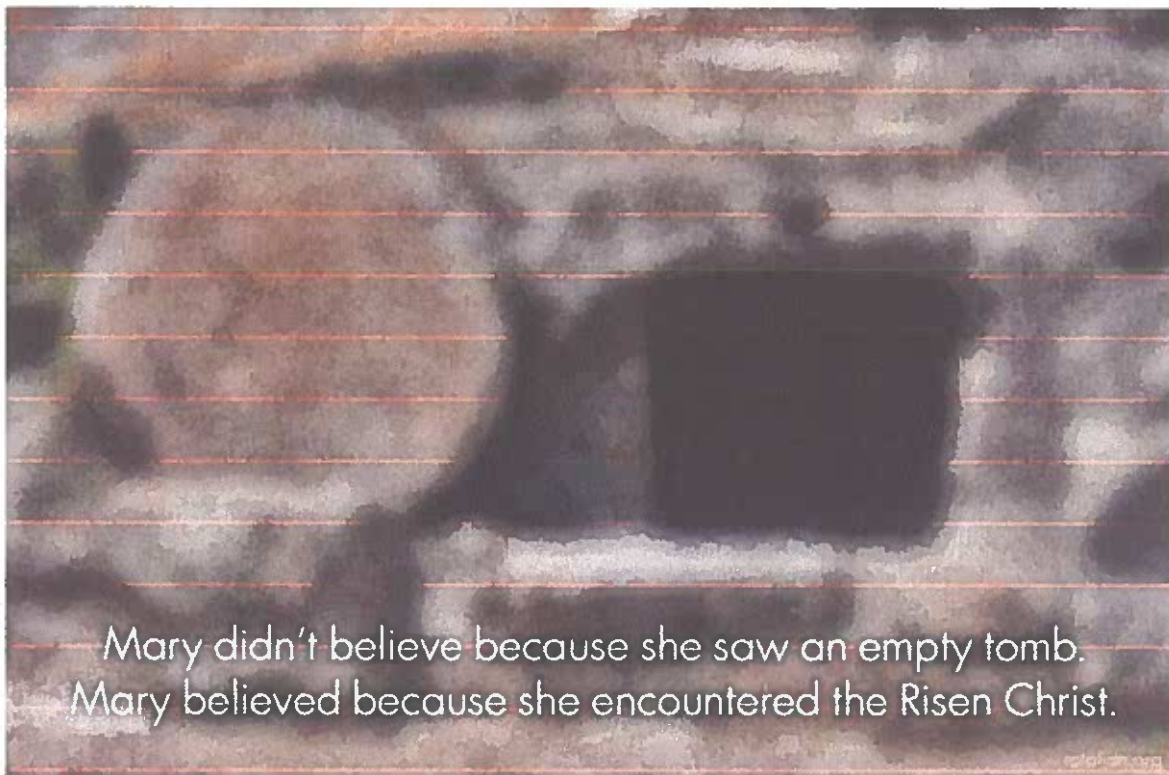
1. Has he appeared to you? And How does he "appear"?
2. Do you believe it?
3. What does it mean that Jesus is alive? ...to you, to the world?
4. And what are you going to do about this wonderful news?

*(See more discussion questions below.)*

### **If the Bible accounts don't agree on the "facts" does this mean these are just "stories"?**

A dead body rising from the grave is beyond the idea of "facts" and history as we

commonly think of them. And the empty tomb itself was not the "fact" which engendered faith in anyone. Mary saw the emptiness and still thought they had stolen his body. The reality and message of the empty tomb only becomes a "fact" when we experience the Risen Christ and choose to believe.



## Rescuing Mary of Magdala from a False Reputation

**Centuries of salacious and misleading Church innuendo and artwork about Mary Magdalene have finally come unraveled.** Modern Biblical scholarship and a purging of past anti-female bias in interpretation have restored Mary Magdalene's deserved reputation. There was a time when some in The Church portrayed her as a prostitute. Unfortunate teachers supposed her to be the fallen woman Jesus saved from stoning, or the woman who washed Jesus' feet with her hair --without a shred of evidence from the Bible itself. In fact, the only reference to her past is that she had been cured by Jesus of "seven demons" (and we know today that "demon" can mean illness). Luke, who uses Mark as a source, repeats that story, but given that Mark's reference is vague and second-hand, the only thing we can say for sure about her past is that Jesus healed her, welcomed her discipleship, and specifically spoke to her at the Empty Tomb.

## Resurrection Theology

We cannot teach this story without teaching the meaning of Christ's resurrection. Short of writing a library of words, we can say this:

- The Resurrection of Jesus is God's confirmation of Jesus' identity and authority as the Son of God.
- The Resurrection confirms Jesus' teachings, especially those about of the Kingdom, and continues the transformational work of the Kingdom.
- The Resurrection of Jesus invites us to look, listen, and expect the Risen Christ in our own life. And to be ready to respond with faith and sharing to promote his Kingdom.
- The Resurrection of Jesus tells us that our own "tombs" can be opened, that God can roll away the stone that's keeping us buried in trouble and grief.
- The Resurrection of Jesus tells us that physical death is not the end for us either.
- The Resurrection of Jesus teaches us that we can begin to experience the life-changing joy of resurrection starting today.

### **Mary's experience at the Empty Tomb as a guide to our own**

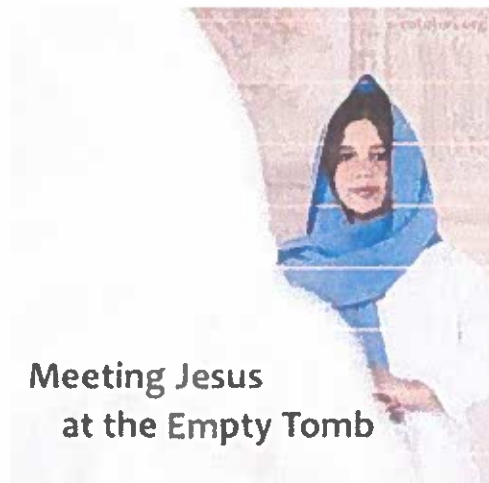
- We can share Mary's love for Christ by seeking Jesus. Have you walked with him, and gone to the cross and tomb?
- We can recognize that our grief and confusion (and a whole host of other problems) can keep us from seeing the Risen Lord.
- We can identify and hear the messengers he sent to the tomb and still sends to us today.
- We can seek to know his voice and respond to it when he calls our name.
- Without expecting his physical presence, we can learn to embrace him with our hearts and service.

### **A Few Questions for Children**

1. If you had been with Mary Magdalene at the tomb, what would you have said to comfort her in her grief?
  2. What questions would you have asked Jesus if you had seen him there at the empty tomb? (You can ask him these questions today, by the way!)
  3. What are you doing to learn more about Jesus so that you will recognize his presence and the sound of his voice when he reveals his presence in your life?
  4. What was Jesus raised to do?
  5. In what ways, people, things, places, and experiences does Jesus speak and act to and through us today?
  6. How are you "announcing" the good news to others of Jesus' living and life-changing presence?
-

# Mary Magdalene: Meeting Jesus at the Empty Tomb

## Video Workshop



## Summary of Activities

Students will watch a video clip from the Gospel of John (Visual Bible). Then, after studying Mary Magdalene's reaction and Jesus' words to her, they will videotape and view their own reactions to seeing the Risen Christ and the questions they might have asked him.

*Alternate videos suggested below.*

## Scripture

**Bible Story:** [John 20:1-18](#)

**Key/Memory Verse:** "Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, 'I have seen the Lord', and she told them that he had said these things to her." John 20:18 (NRSV)

✕ The recommended "Gospel of John" video says the words of scripture *word-for-word* (an illustrated Bible!). Thus, the lesson plan does not have a "now read the passage" step. If you need to do that, add it.

## Lesson Objectives

See the [Bible Background](#) at [rotation.org](#) for this set's complete list of objectives and additional thoughts and questions to share.

## Preparation and Materials

- Read the [Bible Background](#) and scripture.



Home / Sunday School Lessons and Resources / LESSONS: JESUS from PALM SUNDAY TO EASTER MORNING  
/ Writing Team Lesson Set: Mary Magdalene ~ Meeting Jesus at the Empty Tomb  
/ (WT) Mary Magdalene: Meeting Jesus at the Empty Tomb ~ Computer or Presentation Workshop

## **(WT) Mary Magdalene: Meeting Jesus at the Empty Tomb ~ Computer or Presentation Workshop**



**The Writing Team**  Fortifying our Supporting Members

**Rotation.org Writing Team**

**Mary Magdalene: Meeting Jesus at the Empty Tomb  
Computer or Presentation Workshop  
(or Bible Skills Workshop)**



## Summary of Activities

Students will use the Life of Christ software to explore the story of the Resurrection. They will use a specially prepared "parallel Gospel" reading to identify differences in the four Gospel Empty Tomb accounts. And then they will reflect by using Kid Pix software (or Pix illustrating) an image of the Empty Tomb as a metaphor for our own Christian renewal and resurrection.

## Scripture

**Bible Story:** John 20:1-18

**Key/Memory Verse:** "Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, 'I have seen the Lord', and she told them that he had said these things to her." John 20:18 (NRSV)

## Lesson Objectives

See the [Bible Background at rotation.org](http://Bible Background at rotation.org) for this set's complete list of objectives.

This lesson takes a different approach to the story than do other lessons in the Mary Magdalene ~ Empty Tomb lesson set. It begins with a retelling of the Resurrection story found in the Life of Christ CD (not from John 20). Then students see all

four Gospel versions of the Empty Tomb story, including John 20, laid side-by-side in parallel so that they can explore the differences in the Gospel versions and answer questions about them. In addition to sharing the story, the goal here is to help our students know that there are four versions of the Empty Tomb story with some interesting differences so that they are not confused when they hear these different stories in the future. Finally, through an illustrating exercise, the lesson takes a look at the familiar theological metaphor of the Empty Tomb as a place **Christ calls US out of** and calls us into the light.

## Preparation and Materials

- Read the [Bible Background](#) and scripture.
- Preview Lesson #34, [Life of Christ CD](#)  
**Update: Discovery Interactive's "Life of Christ" CD has gone out of print (its material has been turned into an online course). Learn more here!**
- Print the Parallel Gospels handout. Also, have an electronic copy loaded on your computer(s) for viewing. [Parallels PDF version](#) or [Parallels Word Doc version](#).
- Color markers, pens.
- Preview Kid Pix 4 Software (Update: Kid Pix 4 is out of print - you can purchase Kid Pix 3D at <https://www.mackiev.com/kidpix/>).
- Right click the following links and save the two Empty Tomb bitmap ("bmp") images. Take them to the computer where you have installed **Kid Pix 4** software. Students will further illustrate these images and add text to them per the lesson plan instructions. You can also save and print copies of the images for illustrating by hand. (Have color markers if the students will be hand-illustrating the image.)  
[EmptyTomb1.bmp](#) and [EmptyTomb2.bmp](#)

## Lesson Plan

**Note:** Both the *Life of Christ* lesson and the *Gospel Parallels* handout provide the scripture reading for this lesson. There is no separate "read the passage" step.

## Open

Welcome your students and explain how today's lesson will unfold. Dive right into the Life of Christ software presentation.

## View Life of Christ Lesson #34

Show Lesson 34 and answer the life application question at the end of it. Take the six-question quiz.

### View & Complete the Gospel Parallels Worksheet

The worksheet has all four Empty Tomb Gospel accounts on it, and ten questions about the differences among the accounts. Students are to look through the four accounts (with or without you) to answer the questions.

**If you are using printed copies of the Gospel Parallels worksheet**, pass them out and also hand out pens to answer the questions.

**If you have multiple computers**, have students OPEN the Gospel Parallels worksheet as a Word file. (It is provided as both a PDF and Word.docx format for you.) Students can ADD their answers directly to the document, or write them on a separate piece of paper.



**If you have one computer connected to a projector or large screen**, OPEN the Gospel Parallels worksheet and work through the questions together. Use the "highlighter" tool and/or other "bold" font tools to visually highlight to students the keywords and phrases that will help them answer the questions.

Here is an example of the worksheet with "highlighter" applied to the text by the teacher (using Word's highlighter tool) to help the class FOCUS on the key text that will help them answer question #1 about "*Who went to the Tomb?*"

<p><b>Matthew 28:1-10</b></p> <p>After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb.</p>	<p><b>Mark 16:1-8</b></p> <p>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. Very early on the first day of the week, just after sunrise, they were on their way to the tomb</p> <p>and they asked each other</p>	<p><b>Luke 24:1-44</b></p> <p>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</p> <p><i>(Verse 10 gives their names as: Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the others with them.)</i></p>	<p><b>John 20:1-29</b></p> <p>Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb</p> <p>and saw that the stone had</p>
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**After completing the worksheet, discuss the following questions:**

*(See the notes below for some answers to share about these questions.)*

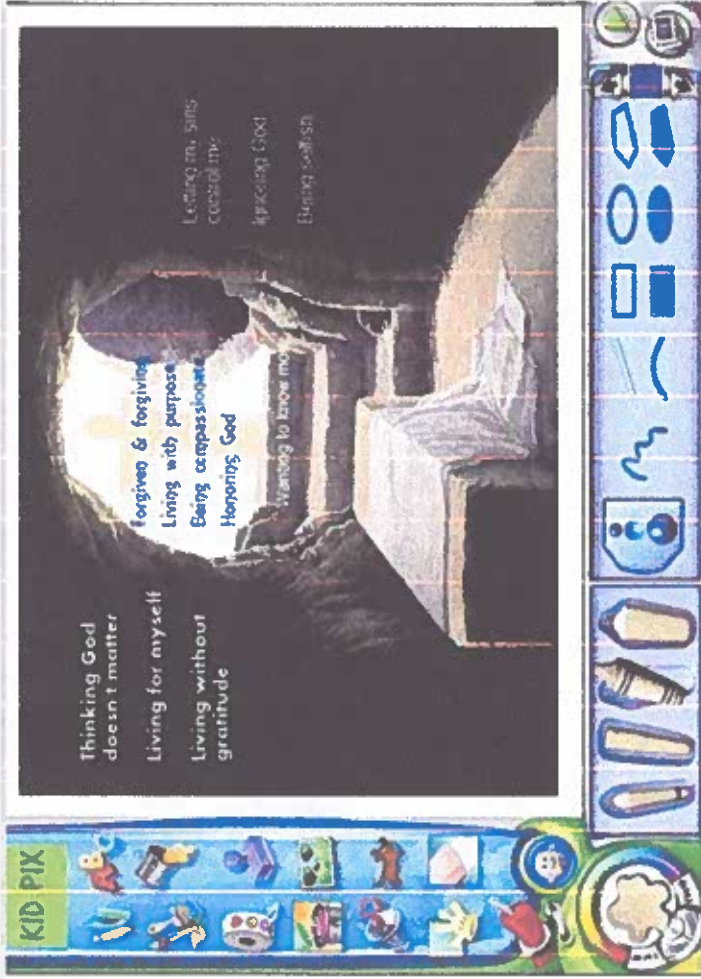
- Why do you think the four Gospels tell four slightly different stories about the Empty Tomb?
- If one is the "true" story, does that make the others "untrue" or "mistaken"?
- What's the most important "fact" of the Empty Tomb story that all the Gospels agree on?

**Reflection Activity**

***The Empty Tomb as a Metaphor for our Resurrection and Renewal***

Either by hand-illustrating, or illustrating in Kid Pix software, students will add their thoughts to a graphic of the Empty Tomb expressing ideas about a popular church (and Pauline) metaphor of the Empty Tomb as "our" tomb, and that Jesus' resurrection is also our resurrection to new life. Jesus calls us out of our tombs. Jesus calls us to leave behind our old self, and become new. (Teacher: You will need to expand a bit on this idea of resurrection as a renewal now and not simply as a life after death subject.

Here is an example of the Kid Pix screen with one of the Empty Tomb illustrations in it, and various comments students could add. "Old-self" comments are in the tomb, "new" self or new calling comments are in the opening.



**Attached to this lesson are two different Empty Tomb graphics.** [EmptyTomb1.bmp](#) and [EmptyTomb2.bmp](#). These are for importing into Kid Pix software or for printing on paper for hand-illustrating. If printing, first center the graphic on your page -leaving room around all four sides to add text with markers. Be sure to select "color" printing.

Once imported into Kid Pix, students can modify the image, adding TEXT and additional illustrations, even themselves in the tomb, to design their own "message" about what the Empty Tomb means about their life.

Once the illustrations and text are done, students should share their work with the class, and then print their work if desired.



**To import the two attached Empty Tomb bitmap graphics into Kid Pix 4**, download them from this lesson plan, save them to a USB flash drive, then take and paste the two files onto the Desktop of the computer(s) where you have Kid Pix installed. Kid Pix can now see them when you click "ADD" then "Graphic" from the Kid Pix menu. Select "stretch to fit" option to get the image to fit the Kid Pix window perfectly. Students may select either illustration to work with. Note that one of them has Jesus standing in the opening of the tomb.

**What to write in the Empty Tomb illustration?** Prime the pump by making two columns on the board, one titled "Old Self, Old Life, Jesus is Dead" and the other titled, "New Self, New Life, Jesus is Alive." Then brainstorm attitudes, actions, beliefs for each column.

Old Self = Selfish, Sinful, Hopeless, Loving only those who love you, etc.

New Self = Forgiveness and forgiving, loving as Jesus loved. Compassionate. Walk with God, etc.

**Thoughts to Share:** The Bible often talks about those who live in darkness and those who live in light. The Bible describes living in sin as a kind of death. Resurrection --coming back to life by the power of God-- isn't something we just experience at the end of our lives, it's new life, a new way of living and walking close with God that we can experience now. When God opened Christ's tomb, he freed us from hopelessness, from the idea that "nothing really matters since we're all going to die." The Empty Tomb is God's promise that death is not the final answer, but that life and love, forgiveness and salvation will win.

## Adaptations

**For Younger Students:** You can skip the Gospel Parallels activity. If not using Kid Pix, you can turn the printable Empty Tomb graphic into a craft in this way: Cut away the white/door opening from the Empty Tomb graphic and lay the Empty Tomb graphic on top of another piece of paper. On one half of that other piece of paper, draw a dark stone that fills the Tomb opening when the paper is slid one way. On the other half of the paper, write statements that can be seen through the Tomb opening when the paper is slid the other way.

**If Short on Time:** Do the Gospel Parallels activity as a group. Do the Empty Tomb activity as a group: Print an empty tomb graphic in a large format and tape it to the board. Walk students through the "Old/New Self" ideas, having them write statements on post-its or slips of paper to be attached to the enlarged Empty Tomb graphic.

## Answer Key and Note for the Gospel Parallels Worksheet

1. Matt: Mary Magdalene and the other Mary. Mark: Mary M, Mary mother of James, Salome. Luke: Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the others with them. John: Mary Magdalene.
2. False. Mary the Mother of Jesus is not mentioned in the accounts. This is a common mistake. According to Bible scholars, the "other Mary" likely refers to the mother of one of the disciples or Cleopas' wife (who may have been related to Mother Mary).
3. Only Mark and Luke mention the spices to anoint his body.
4. Matthew is the only one to include these details.
5. Matthew and Mark = 1. Luke and John = 2.
6. John does not include the phrase, "He is Risen."
7. Matthew and John are the only two in which Jesus appears at the tomb.
8. Only Luke and John mention Peter going to see the Empty Tomb.



9. Only John records a specific conversation between Jesus and Mary Magdalene, though he does greet her in Matthew.

10. Jesus, angel(s), Mary Magdalene.

### **About the Worksheet:**

The worksheet is designed to help students understand that they will hear different accounts about the Empty Tomb because the four Gospels have different recollections of the event. The worksheet is also designed to teach them about the Gospel Parallels as a Bible study tool. We have provided both a PDF and a Word Doc version. Depending on your version of Word, the document layout may be tweaked. You can fix it, or use the PDF version.

### **Why are the four Gospel stories of the Empty Tomb different?**

Each Gospel was written in a different time, location, and by a different person to a different audience. None of the writers were part of Jesus' first group of disciples. Rather, they are passing on what was told to them. And like most stories told and retold, the details are remembered differently. (Matthew and John are likely written by their disciples, or someone writing in their name.) What's important is what they agree on! Jesus is Risen! and he began to appear to his followers.

Some people might say that because the stories don't completely agree, then maybe the story can't be trusted or some of it must be "false." But the Early and Ancient Church was not bothered by these differing details, and embraced and preserved them all. They knew Jesus was alive and the exact details didn't matter anymore. Jesus quickly moved on from the opening of the Tomb to what really mattered: showing that he was alive, and inviting his followers to spread the news that he was alive and his Kingdom had begun.

The thing is, the "details" don't prove anything anyway. The tomb being empty, the angels --none of that changed Mary's grief into faith. Indeed, Mary weeps outside thinking someone had stolen his body. It was the appearance of the risen Jesus that gave them the heart to believe, and his presence with us continues to be the most important "proof" that the story of the Empty Tomb is true --because we have experienced his presence alive with us.

When we look at Jesus' sealed tomb, we also see a symbol of our own grave. We feel buried by our sins, doubts, and troubles. So when God rolls away the stone and raises Jesus to new life, it is a sign to us that we too can be made alive in Christ, and that our death is not the end. Jesus' resurrection is a preview of the loving power that will resurrect us.

Attachments

Hide

Images (8)



Files (2)

Empty.Tomb-Gospel.Parallels.docx

Empty.Tomb-Gospel.Parallels.pdf

## Comparing the Four Gospel Empty Tomb Stories

A Rotation.org Writing Team Resource for the Mary Magdalene at the Empty Tomb Computer Workshop



Use the supplied "Gospel Parallel" text (NIV) to answer these interesting questions about the story of the Empty Tomb.

1. According to each Gospel, who were the first people to arrive at the Empty Tomb?

Matthew: \_\_\_\_\_ Mark: \_\_\_\_\_ Luke: \_\_\_\_\_ John: \_\_\_\_\_

2. True or False. Mary the Mother of Jesus was at the Empty Tomb.

3. Which Gospels mention what the women brought to the tomb? \_\_\_\_\_

4. Only one Gospel describes an earthquake, guards, and an angel rolling away the stone. Which one is it? \_\_\_\_\_

5. Each Gospel mentions angels or men in white at the Empty Tomb.

Which two Gospels mention only one angelic person at the Empty Tomb? \_\_\_\_\_

Which two Gospels say there were TWO angelic persons at the Empty Tomb? \_\_\_\_\_

6. Three of the four Gospels have the angel(s) announce "He is Risen!" Which Gospel doesn't include these words? \_\_\_\_\_

7. Jesus appears and speaks at the Empty Tomb in only two of the four Gospels. Which two? \_\_\_\_\_ & \_\_\_\_\_

8. Peter goes to see the Empty Tomb in only two of the four Gospels. Which two? \_\_\_\_\_ & \_\_\_\_\_

9. This is the only Gospel that records a conversation between Mary Magdalene and the Risen Jesus: \_\_\_\_\_

10. Who are the only people mentioned in ALL four Gospels as present at the Empty Tomb?

## Empty Tomb Gospel Parallels

Matthew 28:1-10	Mark 16:1-8	Luke 24:1-44	John 20:1-29
<p><sup>1</sup> After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb.</p>	<p><sup>1</sup> 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. <sup>2</sup> Very early on the first day of the week, just after sunrise, they were on their way to the tomb</p>	<p><sup>1</sup> 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.</p> <p><i>(Verse 10 gives their names as "Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the others with them.")</i></p>	<p><sup>1</sup> Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb</p>
<p><sup>2</sup> 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. <sup>3</sup> His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. <sup>4</sup> The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men.</p>	<p><sup>3</sup> and they asked each other, "Who will roll the stone away from the entrance of the tomb?"</p>		<p><sup>1b</sup> and saw that the stone had been removed from the entrance.</p>
	<p><sup>4</sup> But when they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had been rolled away.</p>	<p><sup>2</sup> They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, <sup>3</sup> but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus.</p>	
	<p><sup>5</sup> As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man dressed in a white robe sitting on the right side, and they were alarmed.</p>	<p><sup>4</sup> While they were wondering about this, suddenly two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning stood beside them. <sup>5</sup> In their fright the women bowed down with their faces to the ground,</p>	

Matthew 28	Mark 16	Luke 24	John 20
<p><sup>5</sup> The angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified."</p> <p><sup>6</sup> He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay.</p>	<p><sup>6</sup> "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."</p>	<p><sup>5b</sup> but the men said to them, "Why do you look for the living among the dead?"</p> <p><sup>6</sup> He is not here; he has risen!</p>	
<p><sup>7</sup> 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.'</p>		<p><sup>6b</sup> Remember how he told you, while he was still with you in Galilee:</p> <p><sup>7</sup> 'The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, be crucified and on the third day be raised again.'</p> <p><sup>8</sup> Then they remembered his words.</p>	
<p><sup>8</sup> So the women hurried away from the tomb, afraid yet filled with joy, and ran to tell his disciples.</p>	<p><sup>7</sup> 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.'</p> <p><sup>8</sup> Trembling and bewildered, the women went out and fled from the tomb. They said nothing to anyone, because they were afraid.</p> <p><i>(Most modern Bible scholars agree that Mark's Gospel ended with verse 8, and that 9-16 were added later by someone who wanted to give Mark a better ending.)</i></p>	<p><sup>9</sup> When they came back from the tomb, they told all these things to the Eleven and to all the others.</p> <p><sup>10</sup> It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the others with them who told this to the apostles.</p> <p><sup>11</sup> But they did not believe the women, because their words seemed to them like nonsense.</p>	<p><sup>2</sup> 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!"</p>

Matthew 28	Mark 16	Luke 24	John 20
<p><sup>9</sup> Suddenly Jesus met them. "Greetings," he said. They came to him, clasped his feet and worshiped him. <sup>10</sup> Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid. Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me."</p>	<p><sup>12</sup> 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.</p>	<p><sup>3</sup> So Peter and the other disciple started for the tomb. <sup>4</sup> Both were running, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. <sup>5</sup> He bent over and looked in at the strips of linen lying there but did not go in. <sup>6</sup> Then Simon Peter, who was behind him, arrived and went into the tomb. He saw the strips of linen lying there, <sup>7</sup> as well as the burial cloth that had been around Jesus' head. The cloth was folded up by itself, separate from the linen. <sup>8</sup> Finally the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went inside. He saw and believed. <sup>9</sup> (They still did not understand from Scripture that Jesus had to rise from the dead.) <sup>10</sup> Then the disciples went back to their homes,</p>	<p><sup>11</sup> but Mary stood outside the tomb crying. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb <sup>12</sup> and saw two angels in white, seated where Jesus' body had been, one at the head and the other at the foot. <sup>13</sup> 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." <sup>14</sup> At this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not realize that it was Jesus. <sup>15</sup> "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." <sup>16</sup> Jesus said to her, "Mary." She turned toward him and cried out in Aramaic, "Rabboni!" (which means Teacher). <sup>17</sup> 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.'" <sup>18</sup> 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.</p>

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## **(WT) Mary Magdalene: Meeting Jesus at the Empty Tomb ~ Bible Skills & Games Workshop**



**The Writing Team** ○ Fortifying our Supporting Members

**Rotation.org Writing Team**

### **Mary Magdalene: Meeting Jesus at the Empty Tomb Bible Skills and Games Workshop**



#### **Summary of Activities**

Students will listen to (or watch) the scripture and then play an Empty Tomb game that rewards them for listening carefully and helps them memorize the story of Mary Magdalene at the Empty Tomb. As part of their reflection, they will put themselves with Jesus at the Empty Tomb, understanding that the Empty Tomb story both teaches us how to respond to the Good News and that it is a metaphor for our own renewal and resurrection. An optional "meaning of the stone" demonstration is included for older students.

#### **Scripture**

**Bible Story:** [John 20:1-18](#)

**Key/Memory Verse:** "Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, 'I have seen the Lord', and she told them that he had said these things to her." John 20:18 (NRSV)

## Lesson Objectives

See the [Bible Background at rotation.org](#) for this set's complete list of objectives and additional thoughts and questions to share.

## Preparation and Materials

- Read the [Bible Background](#) and scripture.
- Print the [Empty Tomb graphics](#) on heavy card stock (the Tomb graphic and the Stone graphic, which has instructions). The graphics PDF is attached to this lesson at [rotation.org](#).
- Print a copy of the [Empty Tomb Questions](#) about the Empty Tomb story attached to this lesson.
- Scissors and markers.
- Paste.
- Flipchart (or a way to cover what you write on the board).
- Bibles, or a copy of the Gospel of John DVD (Visual Bible) to play back the word-for-word Empty Tomb story and the equipment to show it.
- Optional: Two heavy rocks, big enough for students to hold for a few seconds but not for more than a minute with their arms outstretched. (Bring two different weights just in case, one that's extra big.) Include a cushion for the rock to fall into when they drop it.
- Optional: To save time, you can cut-out the Empty Tomb and Stone graphics yourself.

Here is a [preview clip of the Gospel of John found on YouTube](#). The story of the Empty Tomb begins at about 2:34:30. This is the same clip recommended in the Video Workshop lesson, so this may be a refresher for them, which is okay. The narration is "word for word" from scripture.

The Gospel of St. John - Film - High Qu...





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## Lesson Plan

### Open

Welcome your students and explain what they'll be doing and learning about today. Ask them to tell you as much as they can remember about the Story of the Empty Tomb. Outline it on a FLIPCHART as they speak, but do not correct them. Instead, after they are done brainstorming, simply tell them that "some things you have remembered are incorrect, and some things are NOT part of the Gospel of John's story of the Empty Tomb --but are found in the other Gospel stories," (Matt, Mark, Luke). **Don't tell them what is right!**

*Now cover up what they brainstormed; you'll come back to it after the game.*

*Give each a copy of the Game Graphics (Tomb and Stone) in preparation for the quiz. They can cut them out now prior to hearing the story.*

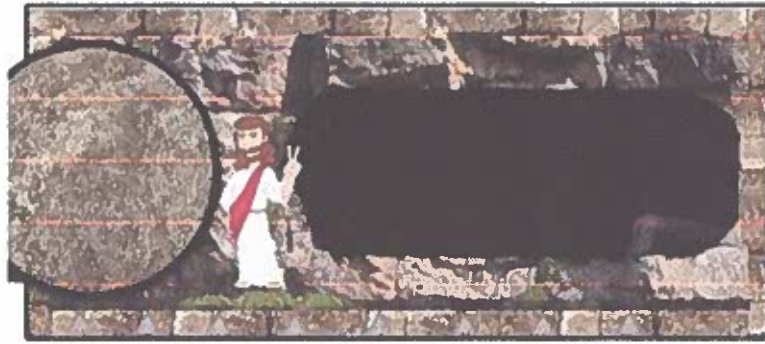
### Listen Carefully to the Scripture

*Using either a Bible or by showing the video clip starting at 2:34:30. [If you have the DVD it's Chapter 31.]*

Say: After listening to (or watching) the Empty Tomb scripture from John 20, you are going to be playing a Quiz Game to see how well you listened and can remember the details of John's version of the Empty Tomb story.

Read or play the scripture.

### Play the Empty Tomb Quiz Game



*(Sample graphic. Full-size graphics attached below)*

Each student should have a copy of the [Empty Tomb and Stone graphics](#). Place the cut-out stone graphic on top of the Empty Tomb graphic, aligning the markers so that the tomb appears fully sealed. Use the "person outline" cut out as an answer marker.

The teacher should have a copy of the [Empty Tomb Questions](#) about the Gospel of John's Empty Tomb Story (PDF).

### **Quiz Rules:**

Read each question and its three possible answers one at a time, and give students a few seconds to decide on answer "a, b, or c." When they are ready to answer, have them move their "Person Outline" (cut from the Tomb graphic handout) on top of either A, B, or C as seen on their Tomb graphic, then announce the right answer, repeating it for all to hear. (The purpose of placing the person marker on the answer is to declare their answer. If you think your students will "cheat" off of each other, give them slips of paper to secretly write "a, b, or c" on and reveal when it's time to answer.)

Notice the triangular mark on the bottom of the round stone. Line it up to the triangular marks along the bottom of the tomb, starting with the stone on the far right. Answering correctly = slide the stone one triangular mark to the left. Answering incorrectly = slide the stone one mark to the right. The teacher may change the "incorrect" penalty to "do not move" if students are finding the quiz too hard. If you run out of questions and some players have not yet fully "opened" the tomb to see Jesus standing there, ask the questions again. The player has "won" when the stone is in the last position on the left and Jesus is seen fully. Players should wait until everyone has finished.

### **After playing the quiz...**

Go back to the OUTLINE they brainstormed at the beginning of class to see what they got right or wrong. If you need to know which parts of the story were from other

Gospels and not John, consult the [Gospel Parallels document](#) created for the Empty Tomb Computer Workshop at [rotation.org](http://rotation.org) and also attached below to this lesson.

## Reflections

Using the "person outline" cut from the printable sheet, use markers to make it look like you. Before pasting it next to Jesus, do the following "demonstration reflection" with your students.

### The teacher may say:

Place your colored cutout of yourself inside the empty tomb and place the stone over the tomb -covering you up.

Say: One of the things we Christians have discovered about the story of the Tomb is that the Tomb is also a way to describe our lives without God. Without God, we are living without hope, sealed away in sin and darkness. Being without God is like being dead. When God raised Jesus from the tomb, he was not only fulfilling his promise about Jesus being the Messiah, the one to follow, but he was also making a promise to us --that he would roll away the stone from OUR lives and resurrect us to new life. (As you're saying this, you and the students are opening the tomb to reveal their images.) That's the interesting thing about Resurrection. It's not just for Jesus, it's for all of us. It's a gift. And it's not just something that happens at the end of our lives. Resurrection begins when you step out of the Tomb of faithlessness and sin and begin to follow the risen Jesus.

Now you have a decision to make as to where you want to paste yourself in this story of the Empty Tomb. Do you want to put yourself STILL IN the Empty Tomb? Or do you want to paste yourself as Risen with Jesus -believing and ready to follow? (Pass out the paste.)

### Other things you can do with the Tomb and Stone graphics:

1. Write on the stone the things which keep a person from believing and following Jesus.
2. Place a "thought bubble" next to Jesus and add some words about the resurrection that the Risen Jesus might say to encourage our faith and follow him.
3. Write in the margin of the Tomb graphic "things which can help us believe" and "attitudes and actions" that will keep us sealed in the Tomb of sin and unbelief.

## An Optional "Stone" Demonstration

Say: Another one of the things we Christians have discovered about the story of the Tomb is that we can think about the STONE that seals us in the Empty Tomb and talk about what that stone represents.

Pass around the heavy stone to each student, letting them take a turn trying to hold on to it *with their arms fully extended* as long as they can. Put a cushion on the floor below the rock to catch it. Be sure their arms are outstretched so it is harder to hold onto for long, and so that it doesn't hit their feet when they drop it.

- The Stone dropping can represent death. We think we will live forever, but eventually, we will die. We trust God to pick up our life and hold onto it
- The Stone dropping can represent our sins. Eventually, the weight of all our sins gets too heavy and starts to break us. We need the power of God to forgive our sins and free us from their weight.
- The Stone dropping can represent the weakness of our faith. Eventually, even our faith fails us. We need the power of God to renew our strength.
- What else could the stone's weight or the stone dropping teach us about ourselves and our need for God?
- **What is the "Good News" about the Stone at Jesus' tomb and covering OUR "tomb"?**

The teacher can demonstrate a number of "points" about the stone. ***You could "act as Jesus"*** to help the student "bear the burden" of the stone, or take it away completely, or Jesus could encourage the student to let the stone drop --to trust. The Good News is that Jesus is alive and present to help us with "whatever stone" is holding us back, or holding us down, or keeping us in darkness or sin.

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## Adaptations

**For Younger Students:** If you show the video clip, be aware that some younger children will be disturbed by the scene of Jesus on the cross. You can position your video starting point to a "still frame" of Jesus on the cross and offer some introductory remarks, before going into the Empty Tomb story. As they brainstorm the "Empty Tomb Story" on the flipchart, draw images to represent what they are saying. When asking the questions, provide fewer possible answers to choose from.

Written by the Rotation.org Writing Team  
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Images (1)



Files (3)

[Empty.Tomb-Gospel.Parallels.pdf](#)

[Empty-Tomb-Questions.pdf](#)

[Graphics for the Quiz Game.pdf](#)

1/30/18 @ 9:40 AM \*

## Empty Tomb Questions for the Rotation.org Writing Team "Mary Magdalene" Bible Skills and Games Quiz

The following questions are based on John 20:1-18. The correct answers have an asterisk \*



- According to John's Gospel, who went with Mary Magdalene early that morning to the tomb of Jesus?
  - Jesus' mother who was also named Mary.
  - Joanna and "the other Mary"
  - Nobody, Mary Magdalene went alone.\*
- What did Mary Magdalene do when she saw that stone had been removed from Jesus' Tomb?
  - She ran to tell Peter and "the other disciple Jesus loved" (probably John).\*
  - She asked the Gardener, "Where have they taken my master's body?"
  - She went into the tomb and saw an angel sitting inside who said, "He is not here, He is Risen."
- When Mary Magdalene reported to Peter and John that the tomb was empty, what did she tell them?
  - "Christ is Risen! His tomb is empty!"
  - "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb and we don't know where they have laid him."\*
  - "An angel of the Lord said, "The One you seek is not here. He is Risen."
- When Peter and John heard Mary's news that the Tomb was empty, what did the two disciples say to her?
  - John's Gospel says they immediately started running to the tomb.\*
  - Peter said, "Mary, how can this be? We saw him crucified and buried."
  - John said, "I believe you Mary. Our Lord has risen from the dead."
- When John and Peter arrived, they went into the empty tomb. What did they see?
  - They saw an angel of the Lord, who announced, "Christ has risen, come, see the place where he lay."
  - They saw the linen cloth which had been put around Jesus' body, and a rolled up cloth that had been around his face.\*
  - They saw Jesus, but thought he was the gardener.
- When Peter and John left, what did Mary Magdalene do?
  - Mary stayed and wept outside the tomb.\*
  - Mary returned with them to tell the other disciples that Jesus was alive.
  - Mary went into the tomb and sat on the stone bench where Jesus' body had been laid.
- While Mary cried outside the tomb, what did she see when she bent over to look into the tomb?
  - She saw two angels dressed in white and sitting where Jesus' body had been laying.\*
  - She saw Jesus, but thought he was the gardener.
  - She saw the burial clothes of Jesus and then turned away in tears.
- What did the angels say to Mary Magdalene when she saw them sitting in the tomb?
  - "Turn around Mary, for the Risen One you seek is right behind you."
  - "Jesus is not here, He is risen. Now go, tell the brothers."
  - "Woman, why are you weeping?"\*
- What did Mary Magdalene say in response to the two angels who asked her why she was weeping?
  - Mary saw Jesus and exclaimed, "Rabboni!" Which means, "teacher."
  - "I am weeping tears of joy, for my Lord is Risen."
  - "They have taken away my Lord and I do not know where they have laid him."\*
- After talking to the angels, Mary turned around and saw Jesus. What did Jesus say to her?
  - "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?"\*
  - "Mary, Do not hold onto me, but believe."
  - "Woman, do not weep, for I am alive. Now go and tell your brothers."
- What did Jesus say to Mary Magdalene to help her realize it really was him?
  - Jesus breathed his Holy Spirit on her.
  - Jesus called her by her first name.\*
  - Jesus said, "It is I, your Rabboni," which means, "your teacher."
- What did Mary Magdalene tell the disciples after she had spoken to Jesus at the Empty Tomb?
  - "I have seen the Lord," and she told them the things he said to her.\*
  - "Come, let us go to the Empty Tomb to see our Lord."
  - "We cannot hold him, because he has not yet ascended, but go, spread the Good News that Jesus is risen."

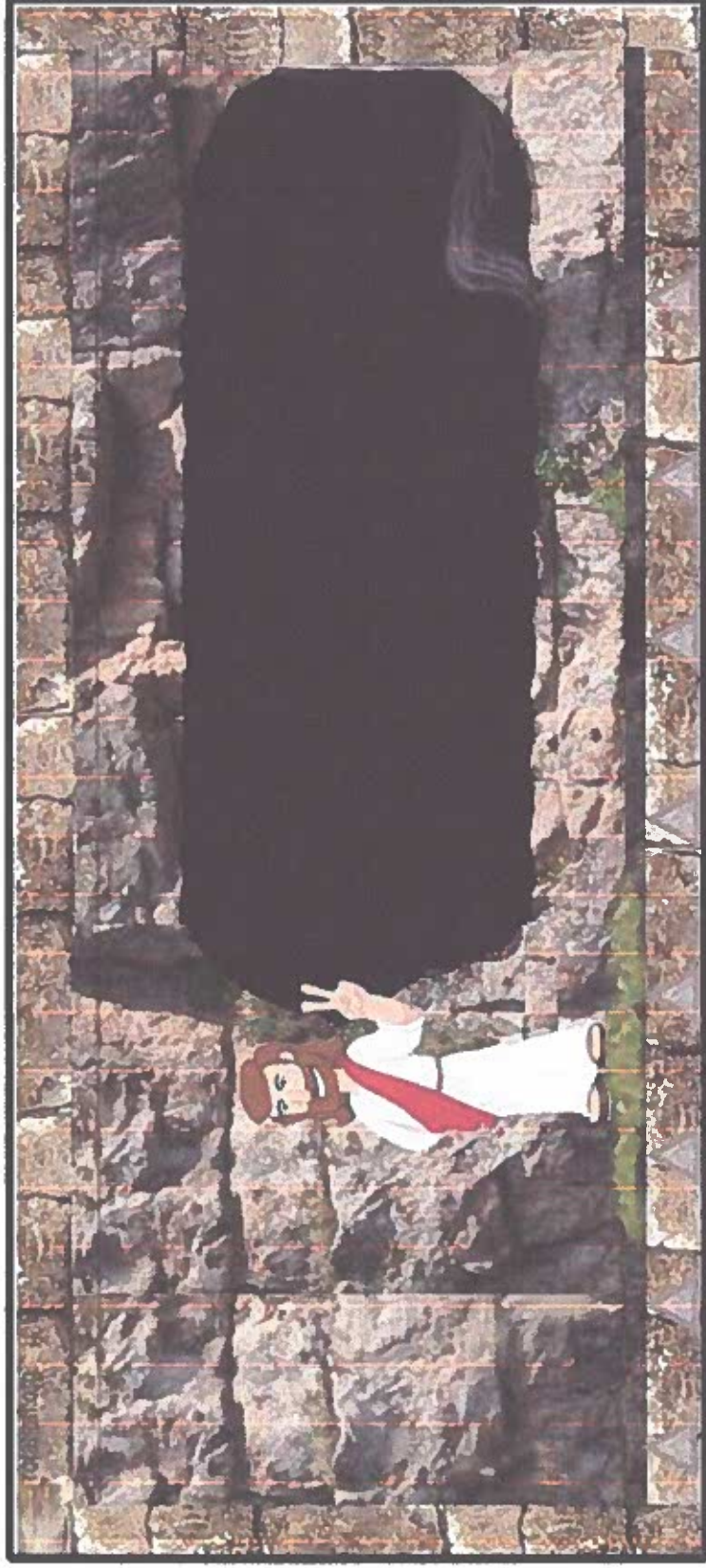
## Graphics for the Quiz Game

2 Graphics for the Rotation.org Writing Team "Mary Magdalene" Bible Skills and Games Workshop

Print in color, landscape mode, and full page width. The "A,B,C" are for students to place their gamepiece on when declaring an answer to the quiz question.



**Graphic 1: Empty Tomb Background:**



**A**

**B**

**C**

**Graphic 2: Instructions, stone, and person outline.**

**Use the Person Outline as your "ABC" answer marker during the quiz.**



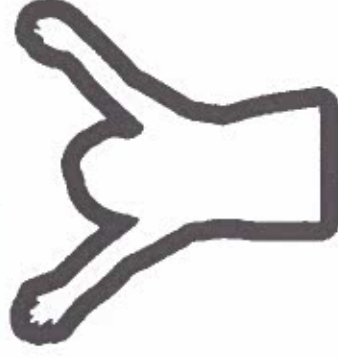
**Instructions:**

**Print the tomb and stone graphics on heavy card stock.**

**Cut along the black lines to create the Empty Tomb background and the "sliding" stone to be your Quiz Game pieces.**

**Cut out the "person outline" and save it for the reflection.**

**Printed from [rotation.org](http://rotation.org)**





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## (WT) Mary Magdalene: Meeting Jesus at the Empty Tomb ~ Art Workshop



The Writing Team   Fortifying our Supporting Members

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### Mary Magdalene: Meeting Jesus at the Empty Tomb Art Workshop



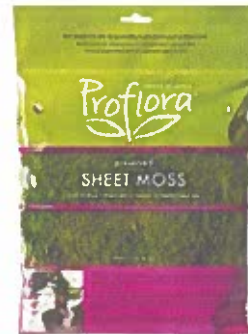
#### Summary of Activities

Students will construct a "Dish Garden Tomb" to celebrate Jesus' resurrection and appearance to Mary Magdalene. They will create and place figures of Jesus, Mary Magdalene, and their self at the Empty Tomb.

#### Scripture

**Bible Story:** [John 20:1-18](#)

Note that alternative supplies may be needed instead of sticks and yarn for making people by younger students or if time is short; see the adaptation suggestions at the end of this lesson.

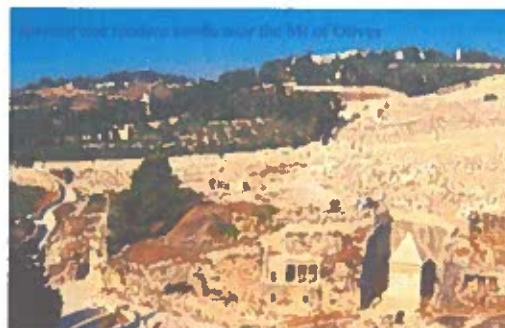


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## Lesson Plan

### Opening

**Welcome your students and explain what they'll be learning and doing today.** Show them some of the dish garden materials, and walk them through the following explanation as you show them a picture of a tomb ([attached](#) at the bottom of this lesson page) and/or quickly assemble a dish and pot.



**Key/Memory Verse:** "Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, 'I have seen the Lord', and she told them that he had said these things to her." John 20:18 (NRSV)

## Lesson Objectives

See the [Bible Background at rotation.org](https://www.rotation.org) for this set's complete list of objectives.

## Preparation and Materials

- Read the [Bible Background](https://www.rotation.org) and scripture.
- Print the attached [photo of tombs](#) at the time of Jesus.
- Gather supplies:
  - Permanent markers.
  - A clay pot dish (saucer), approximately 12"-14" in diameter, for each student.
  - A small clay pot to form the empty tomb for each student. Mini 1 3/4" to 2" clay pots recommended.
  - Bag of topsoil to form around the clay pot tomb and cover with moss and rocks.
  - Scoops or shovels for the soil.
  - Bag of small rocks (polished hobby rocks easily found on Amazon or craft stores).
  - Bag of larger flat rocks to cover the tomb opening.
  - "Sheet" Moss found in hobby stores or on Amazon.
  - Water.
  - Paper towels.
  - Sticks of various sizes for the crosses and for Jesus, Mary Magdalene, and student figures. See the alternate idea for "peg people" below if you choose to use that.
  - Pruning sheers to cut sticks.
  - Yarn to wrap around sticks to form Jesus, Mary M., the student, and the cross(es).
  - Scissors to cut the yarn.
  - White glue to secure the end of the yarn.
  - Plastic wrap to wrap up completed gardens for safe transport home.

### Supply Tips:

The clay dishes/saucers, pots, polished rocks, larger rock, and sheet moss can all be **purchased online in quantity at very reasonable prices** --typically \$1 for the pot, \$1 for the dish, and so on. Think of this as a family devotion like a creche, and not a disposable craft.

It is important to get the sizes of the dish, pots, and rocks that are proportionate to each other. You don't want a pot that's too big or a dish that's too small. If you will be making smaller dish gardens, get smaller rocks, too. Use topsoil, as potting mix won't compact to hold the garden elements in place.

**Say:** Back in the time of Jesus, around Jerusalem wealthy people were often buried in family "caves" cut into the rocky hillside. The cave might have a carved entrance, and often a large square or round stone would be used to seal the tomb entrance. Inside the tomb there was a stone bench upon which they would lay the dead body, which was wrapped in cloth and covered with myrrh and other things to cover the odor. Jesus was not wealthy enough to own such a tomb; but Joseph of Arimathea, a wealthy Pharisee and friend of Jesus, asked Governor Pilate if he could take Jesus' body off the cross and place it in his family's tomb where the bones of his family rested. That was on Friday. The next day was Saturday, the Sabbath. Then early on Sunday morning -- the third day since Jesus had been crucified -- Mary Magdalene went to mourn at the tomb. That's where our scripture story picks up.

Let's take turns reading it to one another, and as we do, I want you to think about the answers to these four questions. [Teacher: you might want to assign these questions to students ahead of time so they know they're going to be called upon to answer.]

- (1) How did Mary Magdalene, Peter, and John each respond differently to finding the tomb empty?
- (2) If you had been there that morning, which of the three disciples would you have most likely responded like?
- (3) What changed Mary's grief into belief?
- (4) When you believe that Jesus is alive, what are you supposed to do?

**Read [John 20:1-18](#).** For younger children, you may use a Bible storybook.

Option: As you read the scripture, you or an assistant can lay out and move the clay pot, stones, and 'people' to mimic the action in the story.

## Make the Resurrection Garden

### Dish Garden Steps

1. Begin by writing the key verse around the outside of the clay dish: *"Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, 'I have seen the Lord.'" John 20:18*
2. Put a thin layer of soil in the dish and set the clay pot in it to form the tomb.
3. Add soil and compact it around the clay pot and in the dish.
4. Add small rocks and a large rock.
5. Place sheet moss on top of the soil and clay pot. Lightly water and press the moss into the soil. Trim excess with a pair of scissors or tuck into the dish.

6. Create a cross using sticks and yarn and sink it in the deepest part of the soil next to the clay pot. (Create just one to save time.)
7. Clean the edge of the dish with a wet paper towel.
8. Quickly make and place stick figures representing Jesus and Mary M. at the tomb. The "student" figure will be made and placed during the Reflection.
9. If there is time, add a few stones inside the "tomb" on top of some soil to form the "bench" where Jesus' body would have been laid, and where the grave clothes were found. Comment on this part of the story, such as, "What would you have thought if you had looked in and didn't see his body?"

Your Dish Garden should now be complete with tomb, moss, cross, stones, and Jesus and Mary figures.

## Reflection: Me at the Empty Tomb

Have students make a stick figure that represents THEM, then before having them place it in their garden, ask these questions:

(1) Where are you standing at the Resurrection right now? Are you looking in the Empty Tomb and wondering what happened? Do you think it's just a strange story and are you planning to walk away and not think about it once Easter is over? Or have you felt like Jesus has been calling your name and trying to get your attention? (How does he try to get our attention?)



(2) Now place your stick figure next to Jesus and Mary. As you do, answer this question: What does the risen Jesus want you to do with your life?

(3) Finally, observe that they have created a garden, and that "gardens are meant to grow things." **Ask:** When you take this garden home and put it in a prominent place so that friends and family see it, what might grow in your home?

**Last Step:** Wrap the dish gardens in plastic wrap for safe transport home.

**Stick figure notes:** You probably won't have much time to create the Jesus, Mary Magdalene, and "my" stick figures, this is why we have kept their design simple. To hasten the creating of the stick figures, you can pre-tie the stick figure pieces together and then let students wrap the sticks with a bit of yarn. Tying-off the yarn requires some manual dexterity. Use a simple half-hitch and then smooth in a dab of white glue to secure it. Do not wrap the last 1" of the stick as that will go into the soil.

## Adaptations

**For Younger Students:** Prepare the saucers with the memory verse and soil ahead of time. Fasten the cross pieces together ahead of time, and the stick figure pieces as well, so that the children simply have to wrap a bit of yarn around them. Consider using sturdy plastic saucers that won't break.

**If Short on Time:** Situate the clay pots in the soil and saucer ahead of time. Fasten the cross pieces together ahead of time. Pre-cut lengths of yarn. Help place and press the sheet moss onto the dish garden and have a helper trim the excess with a pair of scissors, or tuck it into the soil. Instead of yarn and sticks, you could make the people using clothespin dolls, craft sticks, or peg dolls decorated with markers. See the "Alternate People" post below in this lesson thread.

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 Attachments

Show 

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