

LIFE Talk • October 8, 2025

BIBLE & THEOLOGY—WHY IT MATTERS

Grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ. 2 Peter 3:18



TODAY'S TOPIC

Hiding Behind Locked Doors—Finding Peace & Facing Fears

In John 20, Jesus passes through the locked door where the disciples are hiding. How does this resurrection act draw together God's work in Christ Jesus through the Holy Spirit for the disciples then, and for us, today?

ABOUT OUR PRESENTER



May Burt Persaud, D.D. is the Instructor Emerita in Biblical Languages (Biblical Hebrew & New Testament Greek) at Wartburg Theological Seminary, where she taught for 39 years, as well as having served as an Adjunct Instructor at the University of Dubuque and the University of Dubuque Theological Seminary. The daughter of a Presbyterian pastor, May is married to Winston Persaud.

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JOHN 20:1-23

Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. ² So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, “They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him.” ³ Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went toward the tomb. ⁴ The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. ⁵ He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in. ⁶ Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, ⁷ and the cloth that had been on Jesus’s head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself. ⁸ Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed, ⁹ for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead. ¹⁰ Then the disciples returned to their homes. ¹¹ But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb, ¹² and she saw two angels in white sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet. ¹³ They said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping?” She said to them, “They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him.” ¹⁴ When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. ¹⁵ Jesus said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?” Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, “Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.” ¹⁶ Jesus said to her, “Mary!” She turned and said to him in Hebrew, “Rabbouni!” (which means Teacher). ¹⁷ Jesus said to her, “Do not touch me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’” ¹⁸ 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. ¹⁹ When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors were locked where the disciples were, 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 his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. ²¹ Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.” ²² When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³ If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.”

LIFE Group Sheet

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GETTING STARTED

Share in a spiritual practice, discuss an igniter question, and/or begin with prayer.

Creator God, thank you for the opportunity to gather with each person here, to grow in faith and knowledge together, and for the gift of your Holy Spirit. Bless our time, our conversation, and how we care for one another. Amen.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

Briefly share (in pairs or 3s) your initial reaction to what you heard in the LIFE Talk.

Prompts: What stood out to you? What is stirring inside of you? What are you thinking, feeling, or wondering about?

DIGGING DEEPER

1. Going into the Bible Study of John 20: 19-23, what understandings, if any, did you have of this text? How have you known it from the past, if you have at all?
2. What surprised you in studying John 20: 19-23? Is there something new that you learned or read or thought about?
3. As you go out from this study with it in mind, what do you carry away with you into your daily living from this text? What are you pondering?

CLOSING PRAYER

Offer a prayer to draw your time to a close, using one of your own or the one below.

God of wisdom and beauty, thank you for this time together. Help us as we live out our faith this week and share what we have learned. Make us instruments of your peace and healing love, as we grow in grace and knowledge of Jesus. In Christ's holy name we pray, Amen.

To join a LIFE Group, contact Sue Lennartson at slennartson@saintandrews.org