

Christ is Risen!

Matthew 28 v 1-10

The tomb is empty. With clear, simple phrases, the angel explains what has happened, and what the women must now do.

Doubts dispelled

- Go through the message the angel delivered to the women, phrase by phrase, and try to work out the intention behind each instruction and statement.
- Trace the emotional journey the women make from verses 1-8.
- What do you think the women were afraid of (v 8)? And joyful about?

Anyone watching the two Marys start out to the tomb, and then noticing them again on their return, would have been astonished. The change was startling, obvious to any observer. In just a few moments they moved from grief to a strange mixture of fear, joy and worship. Can you understand how they felt? It all seemed too good to be true; surely any moment all their hopes would be dashed. But notice how Jesus helps his followers then, and us today.

- Find at least six pieces of evidence in this account that the disciples could look back to, and be confident that they had not been mistaken.

APPLY

- How is all this an encouragement when our faith is so weak, and we are slow to take God's word for it?
- How is it an encouragement to you today?

Compassion shown

Notice how Jesus speaks to them.

- Given what has happened in the last few days, and given that Jesus is the risen Lord of creation, how might he have justifiably dealt with them?

They had not believed Jesus. They had fled from him. Peter had denied him. They held out no hope of him rising from the dead, as he had said. And even now, when the evidence was so strong, they found it hard to believe. So does Jesus reprove them? No. He speaks to them so kindly. He does nothing but encourage them. The risen Lord is the same loving, gentle, compassionate friend they had known and loved in his earthly life.

PRAY

And he is the same Lord who is now seated in heaven, who hears our prayers, and longs to give good gifts to his children. There is no need to be fearful as you come before him with your needs and requests.