**Study Series: More Than a Carpenter**

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**Lesson Title: “Can You Keep a Good Man Down?” (pp. 70-80)**

April 11, 2021 Session 06

The main point of this lesson is: The resurrection is the most plausible explanation for the empty tomb.

Focus on this goal: To help adults be equipped to give a rational defense for the resurrection of Jesus.

Key Bible Passage: Mark 16:6

During the Session

**Step 1. Create Interest / Jumpstart Discussion**

**Organize** the group into several teams.

**Request** **each team list** what they think are the five most important historical events of their lifetime, and the five most important historical events of all time.

**Invite teams** to share their lists.

**Ask:** How can we believe any of these historical events really occurred?

**Recall** that the author became a Christian after an intense intellectual search intended to disprove the claims of Christianity.

**Read** the Day One margin/pull quote (p. 70).

**State:** A reasonable, intellectual look at historical evidence has led many to conclude that the resurrection is the most plausible explanation for the empty tomb. This session can equip us to give a rational defense for the resurrection of Jesus.

**Step 2. Day One – Death and Burial of Jesus**

**Discuss** Day One, activity 1 (p. 70).

**Declare** that, in order to verify that Jesus really was raised from the dead, it must be verified that Jesus really did die.

**Invite a volunteer to read** Mark 15:12-25.

**State** that all the Gospel writers simply state Jesus was flogged and crucified without adding details, perhaps because their original audience already knew those gruesome details.

**Summarize** from Day One (p. 71) the description of a Roman flogging.

**Read** the Day One paragraph (p. 71) beginning with, “Given the brutality of the whipping ….”

**Note** that John emphasized that Jesus was truly dead.

**Read** John 19:31-35.

**Request adults consult** the last two paragraphs of Day One (p. 71) **and relate** what happened to Jesus’ body after His death.

**Discuss** Day One, activity 2 (p. 72).

**Read** the last sentence of Day One (p. 71).

**Step 3. Day Two – The Empty Tomb, Part 1**

**Discuss** Day Two, activity 1 (p. 73).

**Ask:** Why are people afraid of a resurrected Jesus?

**Assert** if Jesus has been raised then He really is Lord, which means He must be worshiped in full surrender and obedience.

**State** that many people who refuse to bow the knee to Jesus have come up with all kinds of theories to explain away the resurrection.

**Ask** the author’s question (p. 72): “How can we explain the empty tomb?”

**Relay** his answer (p. 72): “Based on overwhelming historical evidence, Christians believe Jesus was bodily resurrected in real time and space by the supernatural power of God.”

**Direct a volunteer to read** the margin/pull quote of Day Two (p. 72).

**Reorganize** **the group** into the same teams from Step 1.

**Assign** the alternative theories to the resurrection (Days Two through Four, pp. 72-77) to each team (teams may have more than one theory).

**Request teams** be prepared to describe and disprove their assigned theory to the entire group.

**After allowing** teams a few minutes to discuss, **invite** the wrong-tomb theory team to report.

**To add** to the discussion, **invite a volunteer to read** Luke 23:50–24:10.

**Analyze** how this resurrection account provides further defense against the wrong-tomb theory.

**Ask rhetorically:** There were several women who saw where Jesus’ body was laid on Friday and returned to that tomb on Sunday morning—would every woman have mistaken something so vitally important to them as the location of Jesus’ tomb?

**Request** the appropriate team report on the hallucination theory.

**Invite responses** to Day Two, activity 2 (p. 74).

**Step 4. Day Three – The Empty Tomb, Part 2**

**Invite** appropriate teams to report on the swoon and relocated-body theories.

**Add** to the discussion if desired by **inviting responses** to Day Three, activities 1 (p. 74) and 2 (p. 75).

**Step 5. Day Four – The Empty Tomb, Part 3**

**Invite appropriate teams** to report on the stolen-body, moved-body, and copycat theories.

**Discuss** Day Four, activities 1 (p. 76) and 2 (p. 77) if the teams did not use those Bible passages and related questions in their reports.

**Step 6. Day Five – Evidence for the Resurrection**

**Discuss** Day Five, activity 1 (p. 78).

**Invite a volunteer to read** 1 Corinthians 15:20-22.

**Ask:** What good news could Paul give in contrast to all the dire realities if Christ has not been raised from the dead?

**Declare:** But Christ has been raised, and we can give a logical defense of His resurrection to anyone who asks about the hope that we have in us (1 Pet. 3:15).

**Step 7. Practical Application - Live Out the Lesson**

**Invite volunteers to share** which of the evidences examined in this study they find to be the most compelling defenses of Jesus’ resurrection.

**Encourage** them to recall (or look back at) Sessions 4 and 5 and consider how the lives of the first believers can also be used as evidences for the reality of the resurrection.

**Declare** that evidence that no one can deny is the lasting effects the resurrection of Jesus has made on our own lives.

**Invite responses** to Day Five, activity 2 (p. 80).

**Ask:** How can we reflect the reality of the resurrection in our daily lives so that others will notice and ask for a reason for our hope?

**Close in prayer**, thanking God for the certainty of Jesus’ sacrificial death and victorious resurrection.