

Believing in the Resurrection of Jesus

John 20:1-10

October 25, 2026

If Jesus had not been resurrected, Christianity would not be true.

Jesus predicted His resurrection several times. (Matthew 16:21; 17:22-23; 20:18-19)

Can you blame the disciples for failing to believe?

Do you question the resurrection?

What do empty tombs mean?

Was Mary alone at the tomb? Why was she there?

Mary Magdalene is the first person to see the risen Jesus in John's account. (John 20:14-18)

Why is that surprising?

What was Mary's conclusion?

Why are there so many strange and curious details in the gospels?

What did the empty tomb mean to Peter and Mary, and what did the grave clothes mean to Peter?

What did they mean to John?

John saw and believed. v. 8

Those two pieces of evidence, those clues, were enough for John.

He did not yet understand the Scripture that Jesus must rise from the dead. v. 9 (see John 2:22)

Why cast the apostles, the foundational witnesses, in such a bad light?

This strange blend of doubt and disbelief turning to confident joy has happened before.

As a Christian, you do not have to check your mind at the church door.

What will it take for you to believe that Jesus rose from the dead?

What difference does it make?

Meditation

Our Resurrection in Christ

When the Christian has run the race set before him, and finished the work appointed for him to do, the earthly house of his present tabernacle will be dissolved, and thrown aside: the veil of the temple being rent in twain, and the temple itself reduced to a mass of inanimate clay, the soul that lodged in it flies to the holy of holies, and *travelling out from* the body, *gets home* to the Lord...

When the bodies of God's elect have slept the time allotted, the Lord will suddenly come to His temples, He Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Of this the ancient Jewish church had as positive assurances given them, as *we* have under the gospel. Thus Isaiah 43:5, 6: "Fear not, for I am with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west I will say to the south, Give up; and to the north, Keep not back; bring My sons from far, and My daughters from the ends of the earth." "As for me," says David, "I shall behold Thy presence in righteousness, and when I wake up after Thy likeness, I shall be satisfied with it."

When God calls home His people to glory, they may, without presumption, sing as the Psalmist did on another occasion, "I will lay me down to sleep in peace, and to take my rest; for Thou, O Lord, makest me to dwell in safety." Death is a long sleep; but, to them, it is a *sweet* sleep, and a *safe* one: though their flesh sees corruption, it rests in hope, and their dust is precious, for it was ransomed by the blood of Christ, sanctified by the Spirit of God, and is part of the Savior's mystic body: for which reasons it shall not be lost, but will rise from the bed of death incorruptible, when the morning of the resurrection dawns, and the trumpet sounds.

Augustus Montague Toplady (1740-1778), was educated at Westminster School and Trinity College, Dublin, he was converted through a Methodist lay preacher, took Anglican orders in 1762, and later became vicar of Broadhembury, Devon. In 1775 he assumed the pastorate of the French Calvinist chapel in London. He authored "Rock of Ages."

