



Sunday of the Myrrh-Bearing Women

On this Sunday, we remember both Joseph of Arimathea, who asked for the body of Christ, and the Myrrh-Bearing women, who went to the tomb to anoint the body. Both these stories are a test. During his career, Jesus had told his disciples, over and over again, how he must be crucified, but, on the third day, he would rise. If Joseph truly believed this, then why would he ask for Jesus's body and why would he "seal it" in a tomb? And, if the women believed this, whose body were they expecting to find and anoint? Nevertheless, there's hope. The women went to tomb even though they recognized their powerlessness to roll away the stone. They had to trust in God.

Scripture: Mark 15:43-47; 16:1-8

Bottom Line: From the empty tomb comes not a body, but the proclamation of the crucified and risen Lord.

Discussion Questions

1. The empty tomb is acted out every Sunday at Orthros. The priest, dressed in white, proclaims the resurrection from the right side of the altar, which stands for the opened tomb. The women were filled with fear. What emotions does the empty tomb evoke for you?
2. Standing at the cross, the centurion recognized Jesus as the Son of God. But Joseph tried to hide the gospel in a tomb. In what ways have you tried to hide the gospel? How can you become the "young man" and proclaim the gospel?
3. Like Thomas, from last week, Joseph and the women wanted to "see" a body. But Christ is revealed in **the proclamation** of his crucifixion. What does it say about God that he's revealed through the shame of crucifixion? How does this make you feel? Will you run away in fear and say nothing to anyone too?
4. There's no account of Jesus actually raising from the dead. From the tomb comes the proclamation. What does this say about the importance of hearing the gospel? What does it say about the importance of every Christian preaching the gospel?

Moving Forward

When the women got to the tomb, they found that God had bestowed grace on them: the stone had been rolled away. However, they did not encounter the stench of a dead body . . . in fact, there was no body at all. Instead, there was a young man, who represents the Gospel of Mark, proclaiming the gospel: Christ is risen! Here is our chance to demonstrate our faith and proclaim the same message.

Changing Your Mind

But he said to them, "Do not be alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised; he is not here." (Mark 16:6)