



## IT'S NOT WHAT YOU LOOKED FOR, BUT WHAT YOU FOUND

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When the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him. And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. And they were saying to one another, “Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance of the tomb?” And looking up, they saw that the stone had been rolled back—it was very large. And entering the tomb, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, dressed in a white robe, and they were alarmed.

**MARK 16:1-5 (ESV)**

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### OUR DEVOTIONAL

After our youngest left home for college, Wendy and I entered a world that we were not prepared for. Yeah, we missed our kids, but we had the house to ourselves! The one thing that I remember the most was that if I put something somewhere, when I returned it was still there. For you parents with kids at home—this might sound hard to believe—one day you will experience this phenomenon also. I became confident that my things would be where I left them—where I expected them to be.

Mary, Mary and Salome felt the same way on the way to the tomb of the Savior to perform the anointing process of Jesus’ body and honor Him. They expected Him to be in the tomb, and they expected the large stone to still be there, sealing the entrance. They knew they would have to have the stone rolled away so they could gain access to Jesus’ body. Unless they could find someone to help, the stone would stop them from getting to the Savior.

But what they found was the stone rolled away and Jesus no longer there. Scripture says they were “alarmed”; I think that might be an understatement. They expected Him to be laying there dead, but he had risen! Their expectations and concerns (who was going to roll back the stone) became meaningless in an instant. God had something so much bigger, so much more important, in mind.

One of my biggest fears as a believer is that I’ll get caught up in logistics and miss an “empty tomb” moment—that my human expectations and concerns will prevent me from noticing a miracle right in front of me. God’s bigger plans don’t always come with a “young man...dressed in a white robe” to explain things to us.

Have you ever gone looking for Jesus (that is, reading the Bible) and gotten yourself caught up in details, missing the bigger picture? Sometimes, it’s appropriate to release the details and focus on the point: Jesus is alive—and it’s good news that needs to be shared!

For some of us, it might be easy to get wrapped up in the details. We all have our expectations, concerns, and obligations. But God has a bigger plan: Our Savior rose from death to give us life. Let's not let our daily logistics stop us from experiencing that "empty cave moment." Let's look inside where death once was and find life. We were dead in our sins, but He forgave us so that we may have a new life. This is not a CSI moment—we don't have to analyze it. It's a faith moment—we have to receive it and act on it, just like the women did. Go tell others about the good news!

## **FAMILY MOMENT**

Set the table for dinner with the plates and cups upside down. Hide a paper cross under each plate. When the children ask what's up, read the story of the people who found something (the stone) not where it was supposed to be but something greater ended up being there (or not being there). Then have them lift their plates to reveal cross. Tell them just because something is not as we think it should be, Jesus is always there for us. And that is the greatest find!

## **PRAYER & REFLECTION**

Do you tend to be a detail person or a big-picture person? How can you connect with God's bigger plan today? How can you share God's bigger plan today?

*Jesus, help me to not get hung up on logistical stuff and miss what you have for me to see and experience. Help me share that with others boldly and excitedly!*