

# Mind

## He is Not Here!

Luke 24:1-12 | Session 8.13

### Before the Session

Facilitator: In advance of the session

- Review today's scripture text and the session activities to help better facilitate the discussion.
- Have the Bible Background Video ready to view.
- Encourage your group to listen to the Faithelement podcast ahead of the next session (Share the link via email or social media).
- Research current events on the Internet, or use the in-session links to review some issues you may wish to discuss while establishing your context.
- Bring some newspapers and/or magazines – enough to allow every one or two group members to peruse as part of the context for the session.

### Context

Distribute some magazines to the group and encourage them to take a few moments to look through the newspapers and magazines, particularly the advertisements, to see how much we're worried about death. After a few minutes, ask:

- Death is something most of us seldom talk about, but that controls so much of what we do. In what ways are we trying to "cheat" or delay death?
- In what ways do terrorists, politicians, entertainers and advertisers take advantage of our fear of (and fascination with) death?

- Why do you think that we human beings – both Christian and non-Christian – fear death so much?
- What might cause someone to not fear death so much and why?

## Content

Read [Luke 24:1-12](#), then watch the Bible Background Video.

Tell the group:

*Some of us are so familiar with the resurrection story that it's hard to experience it in a fresh or new way. As we look through the story this morning, look through the eyes of these women who make the discovery and try to see the experience through their eyes!*

- What were the women coming to do – and why did they wait a full day to do it?
- Why do you think the women would have come so early to do their work?
- When the women arrived at the tomb and found the stone rolled away, what thoughts might have gone through their mind?
- Why would they not have immediately thought, “maybe he’s alive again?”
- Why might God have chosen such fearful messengers to announce Jesus’ resurrection?
- In a society that dominated by males, why do you think God chose these women to first experience Jesus’ resurrection?
- For what reasons were these women more suited to receive the message than the men?
- Why do you think the women and the twelve didn’t understand or believe Jesus when he originally told them what would happen ?
- Why do you think the apostles didn’t believe the women, even after Peter saw for himself?

## Closure

Continue by asking questions like:

- In what ways do people understand Jesus' resurrection to be Good News and why?
- Where do you understand the cross and the empty tomb to be inseparable parts of God's Good News?
- In what ways does this Good News speak affect your life today?
- In what way are you controlled by death, or afraid of death – your own, or someone else's – and how does Jesus' resurrection address that?
- What claim do you think the events of Easter Sunday have upon us, at least in terms of what it calls us to do or be for others?

Close with prayer, thanking God for the Good News of Jesus' resurrection this Easter Sunday!

**Writer: Jon Parks**

# Current

## He is Not Here!

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### Before the Session

Facilitator: In advance of the session

- Review today's scripture text and the session activities to help better facilitate the discussion.
- Have the Bible Background Video ready to view.
- Have any selected video or music clips ready to show
- Familiarize yourself with the controversy over cold fusion by reading the attached articles and [wikipedia link](#).
- Encourage your group to listen to the Faithelement podcast ahead of the next session (Share the link via email or social media)

### Context

Begin by asking questions like:

*Note: Since this is an election year in the USA, beware of taking this discussion off-track or allowing it to turn into a debate.*

- Before we discuss this important day in world history, what are some things that you think people most commonly believe these days, despite lacking definitive proof?
- What are some things that you think people do not believe, even though they have been proved?

- Why do you think people choose to believe or disbelieve in such things?
- What do you think is most required in order to have someone else believe you or something that you hold to be true, and why?
- In what ways do people's differences over what they accept as "true" affect the way they approach the world?

## Content

Read [Luke 24:1-12](#), then watch the Bible Background Video.

Ask questions like these:

- What do you think prompted the women to visit the tomb on that Easter morning, when apparently the male members of Jesus' followers did not plan to do so?
- In what ways might their relationship with Jesus led to the differences between the male and female roles in this story?
- Given the cultural distance between us and Jesus' original followers, how might modern characters act if they found themselves in the same situation and why?
- Nikki mentions "We've never done it that way before" thinking as a sort of looking for faith among the dead, rather than the living. In what ways do our approaches to the Easter event represent "looking for the living among the dead" and why?
- At what points can Easter, as seen through this narrative, help free us from such "seeking the living among the dead" in our understanding of faith and community?

## Closure

Discuss the topic of Cold Fusion with the group by sharing this article from [60 Minutes](#) and [this article](#) that is critical of that story. You may want to summarize

them in the interests of time, or show [this video](#) which is fairly technical but illustrates the ongoing argument over this area of science.

Ask:

- What did you know of this subject before today and how did you come to learn it?
- Based on what you know now, how do you feel about the study of Cold Fusion and why?
- In what ways might the idea of Jesus' death and resurrection seem as alien to some listeners as a discussion on cold fusion?
- In what ways might people receive this news in similar ways to the way they deal with other controversial subjects, and why?

Read these words from the hymn ["I Serve a Risen Savior"](#)

*I serve a risen Savior,  
he's in the world today;  
I know that he is living,  
whatever others say;  
I see his hand of mercy,  
I hear his voice of cheer,  
and just the time I need him  
he's always near.  
He lives, he lives,  
Christ Jesus lives today!  
He walks with me and talks with me  
along life's narrow way.  
He lives, he lives, salvation to impart!  
You ask me how I know he lives?  
He lives within my heart.*

Continue by asking:

- What is the impact of the Resurrection on the ways we come to have faith and why?
- What can we do to move beyond mere argument over faith and toward making a positive impression on people's lives?
- In what ways is Jesus' resurrection good news for you personally?

Close with a word of prayer. You might also wish to sing the song you just read.

**Writer: Erin Robinson Hall**

# Mystic

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### Before the Session

- Review today's scripture text and the session activities to help better facilitate the discussion.
- Have the Bible Background Video ready to view.
- Encourage your group to listen to the Faithelement podcast ahead of the next session (Share the link via email or social media)
- **Prepare a focal point** Make a focal point in the center of the group – arrange plants, flowers, a cross, draped cloth, candles, and Kleenex (see below)

### Context

Read [Luke 24:1-12](#), then watch the Bible Background Video.

### A Musical Reflection/Meditation

*This meditation will open a space for people to consider the situations in their lives or within their souls that need a sense of love and new life. Because places of darkness and "death" can be deep and tender, provide some boxes of Kleenex with the focal point as a tacit "permission" to cry, if needed.*

Play Nichole Nordeman's song "[Hold On](#)" three times through.

**Provide the following guidance:**

For the **FIRST** playing, invite people to just listen to the song as a whole. (Pause for 1 minutes before playing the song again)

For the **SECOND** playing, invite people to listen to the song and pay attention to which words or images come to the forefront of their minds. Ask them to consider what connections these words or images might have to their lives. (Pause for 2 minutes before playing the song again)

For the **THIRD** playing, invite people to listen for God’s words to them. Let them know that there will be a time of silence following the song so that they can hold their thoughts and feelings and stay “with” whatever has happened in the reflection, and respond to God, if they choose to. (Pause about 3- 5 minutes after the song is played)

Create a safe, confidential space for people to share. There is no need for people to comment on, fix or elaborate on what any person shares. Encourage persons to simply listen, receive what is shared, and hold what is shared in confidence. Invite those who want to, to share their reflection experiences with the group.

Close with group prayer.

**Writer: Joy Yee**

# Media

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### Before the Session

- Have the Bible Background Video ready to view.
- Review today's scripture text and the session activities to help better facilitate the discussion.
- Encourage your group to listen to the Faithelement podcast ahead of the next session (Share the link via email or social media).

### Context

Play the [Where is the Body?](#) video clip and ask questions like:

- What are your Easter Sunday rituals and why do you usually do those things?
- What do you think it would have really been like on that first Easter Sunday morning (from more than one perspective) to discover that Jesus is no longer in the tomb?
- How did the people in that clip react to the news of the Jesus' body being gone and in why might such reactions be expected?
- Some people were very happy to get the news of Jesus' resurrection, some disbelieved, and some were less than pleased. Who might react to that news in similar ways today and why?

## Content

Read [Luke 24:1-12](#), then watch the Bible Background Video.

Ask questions like these:

- Why did the women come on Sunday to attempt to properly bury Jesus?
- Why do we often overlook that the ladies of that time/culture were the first to see the empty tomb?
- Why is it significant for us to remember that the ladies of that culture were the first to tell the “good news”?
- Why did the disciples not believe them, and why did the writer of the story feel it important to emphasize this?
- As Nikki mentioned, this text can make you wonder if we are often looking for the living among the dead. In what ways do you or the groups to which you belong do that and why?

## Closure

Play the [you do not know what is coming](#) movie clip and continue by asking:

- What things that are dead should we stop pretending are alive?
- What things that should be alive do we tend to pretend are dead?
- In what ways does facing death help us see such things more clearly??
- In the video clip, how was Stephen handling being told he would die?
- How did Jane handle it and which is a better way to approach death?
- What does Jesus’ death and resurrection teach us about our approach to something that so many see as inevitable?

- In what ways might our faith help others who seek hope in the face of hopelessness?

Close in a prayer of thanksgiving...

**Writer: Jon Self**

# Youth

## He is Not Here!

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### Before the Session

Facilitator: In advance of the session

- Review today's scripture text and the session activities to help better facilitate the discussion.
- Have the Bible Background Video ready to view.
- Listen to the FaithElement podcast for this session.
- Use the social media prompts on this session's webpage to help youth begin engaging the session ahead of their gathering.

### Intro

Play a game of [Quarter's up](#) by forming teams of six to eight people around a table. If you don't have a tables, the floor might suffice. Select a volunteer to stand up while everyone else puts their hands under the table, then have the team pass a quarter around under the table, where the volunteer cannot see it. At any time, the volunteer can yell out "Quarter's up" (or "Up Jenkins") and everyone must immediately put their hands flat on the table, including the person holding the quarter. The volunteer will have three guesses to try to find out exactly which hand the quarter is under, changing places with the other person if she or he guesses directly. Play several rounds, or until everyone has had an opportunity to guess, then ask:

- How did you figure out whose hand the quarter was under?
- Who did the best job of hiding the quarter and what was their technique?

- What is it like to be sure that the quarter was somewhere when it turned out to be inaccurate?
- This being Easter, what do you think the women who went to Jesus' tomb were really expecting to find?

## Context

Play the [Amistad video clip](#) and use these questions to facilitate your discussion:

- Why do you think one slave was willing to believe the story while the other one found it to be unbelievable?
- What do you think was going through their minds as they read this story and why?
- At what points have you encountered other people for whom this story might seem just as alien?
- How might we best share this story with other people who don't already share our background or values?

## Content

Read [Luke 24:1-12](#), then watch the Bible Background Video.

Ask your group:

- What did the women find when they went to the tomb?
- What might they have suspected actually happened?
- How would you have responded if you were in their position and met two men who told you that Jesus was gone?
- Why do you think the disciples did not believe the women's story?
- In what ways do other people treat your expressions of faith like the disciples treated those women and why?

- In what ways do you think the reality of Jesus' resurrection changes things like that?

## Closure

Form groups of three to five people, and ask everyone to share their experience with God to each other. Specifically, ask them to share how they feel about Christ's Resurrection. As the conversation dies down, bring the group back together and ask questions like:

- In what ways is the story of Jesus as the Messiah a pretty unbelievable story?
- How might someone hearing this the first time respond to the story of a man risen from the dead and why?
- In what ways have you seen some Christians who have spent their entire life in church struggle with this story?
- Why it possible to be too comfortable and familiar with this story?
- What was your reaction when you first heard about the Resurrection and why?
- In what ways is this story good news, even to people who might not believe it?

Close this session in prayer.

**Writer: Don Breeden**

# Mix

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- Bring some newspapers and/or magazines – enough to allow every one or two group members to peruse as part of the context for the session.

### Context (From the Mind Session Page)

Distribute some magazines to the group and encourage them to take a few moments to look through the newspapers and magazines, particularly the advertisements, to see how much we're worried about death. After a few minutes, ask:

- Death is something most of us seldom talk about, but that controls so much of what we do. In what ways are we trying to “cheat” or delay death?

- In what ways do terrorists, politicians, entertainers, and advertisers take advantage of our fear of (and fascination with) death?
- Why do you think that we human beings – both Christian and non-Christian – fear death so much?
- What might cause someone to not fear death so much and why?

## **Content (From the Current Session Page)**

Read [Luke 24:1-12](#), then watch the Bible Background Video.

Ask questions like these:

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- At what points can Easter, as seen through this narrative, help free us from such "seeking the living among the dead" in our understanding of faith and community?

## Closure (from the Media Session page)

Play the [you do not know what is coming](#) movie clip and continue by asking:

- What things that are dead should we stop pretending are alive?
- What things that should be alive do we tend to pretend are dead?
- In what ways does facing death help us see such things more clearly??
- In the video clip, how was Stephen handling being told he would die?
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Close in a prayer of thanksgiving...