

Be Bold 20 EASTER

How Do I Know Jesus Really Came Back to Life?

Bold Bible Truth: The Bible is true.

(2 Timothy 3:16)

Bold text is spoken text.

Supplies

Bible, bedsheet

Prep

Children's Ministry Directors, if you're leading this over video or a video-chat platform, you'll need to send out the "Roles" information ahead of time. You can copy it from the last two pages of this document, or send the PDF of the student book provided in the Digital Download Center. Families may print it out if they can, or just refer to the document on screen when cued to do so.

Question of the Week

Say: It's Easter time! That means we're going to talk about how Jesus died on the cross, was buried in a tomb, and came back to life three days later.

But...how can we be sure that's what happened? Maybe there's another way to explain Jesus' missing body.

- What are your thoughts about what could've happened to Jesus' body?

It sounds like there are a bunch of things that could've happened to Jesus' body. How do we know what really happened? That's what we'll dive into today: How do I know Jesus really came back to life?

Before we dive into the question, let's play a game that will help us understand the mystery of what happened to Jesus. In this game, instead of figuring out where a missing item went, you'll have to figure out what's missing.

What's Missing?

Have everyone stand and face the corner with their eyes closed. (Children's Ministry Directors, if you're onscreen, simply have them turn away from the screen.)

Choose one item from the room to hide in another room (or offscreen). This could be a chair, a Bible, a trash can, or a shoe.

When the item is safely hidden outside or offscreen, have everyone turn around and race to figure out what item is missing from your room.

Play two or three rounds.

- **What clues did you use to figure out what was missing?**
- **How confident were you when you guessed what was missing?**

Say: In this game, we knew where the item went—out in the hall. But it was a mystery to figure out what was missing. Maybe you used clues to figure out what was missing. Maybe you just paid really close attention before you turned around! Whatever you did, you're now well practiced in detective work. So, let's try to solve the mystery of Jesus' missing body.

Who Did What?

Assign everyone one or more of the following roles. (It's okay if people have more than one role or for multiple people to share a role.)

- Lying Disciples
- Jewish Leaders
- Grave Robbers
- Thieving Disciples
- Map Maker
- Strong People

Hold up the bedsheet and say: **I was just at Jesus' tomb, and this was all I could find—his grave clothes. Where is the body?**

I think maybe one of you knows what happened to it. So, it's time to interrogate you!

Have everyone spend a couple minutes looking at their assigned roles on the "Roles"

pages provided at the end of this document. When everyone is ready, begin your interrogation using the questions below, pausing for a response after each. Refer to roles as needed, and invite everyone to add their own thoughts as to why they're innocent.

Lying Disciples! That's what happened! Maybe the body isn't even really gone. Disciples, did you lie? Pause for response.

Aha! Then maybe the Jewish Leaders stole the body! Jewish Leaders, you stole it, didn't you! Pause for response.

Well then it must've been Grave Robbers! Grave Robbers, show us the body you stole! Pause for response.

I've got it...the body is missing...but it was the disciples who took it! Thieving Disciples, where did you put it? Pause for response.

Okay, maybe the body is missing...and no one stole it...because you went to the wrong tomb! This whole thing is the fault of a bad Map Maker! Map Maker, what do you have to say about your map? Pause for response.

Well, if it was Jesus' tomb, we know someone had to move the stone from in front of the tomb. So obviously some Strong People came by to move the stone. Strong People, what have you done? Pause for response.

- **What other thoughts do you have that debunk the theories we talked about earlier?**
- **What questions do you have about the theories we just debunked?**

Say: Breaking news! I just learned that it wasn't just Jesus' closest friends, the disciples, who say they saw him alive. There were a ton of eyewitnesses!

Read 1 Corinthians 15:4-6.

Say: We know that the Bible is true. Not everyone believes that. But between the Bible and basic logic, it's clear to see that nothing else could have happened to Jesus' body. It wasn't stolen, it wasn't hidden—it was alive!

Say: We just declared a lot of people innocent of lying or stealing Jesus' body. These are great thoughts for you to share if people have questions about the Resurrection! The Bible is true, and it says Jesus is alive.

Pray

Say: We discovered today that Jesus is alive—for sure. We know that because the Bible is true, and it tells us so. And we also know it because those

conspiracies just don't hold water!

The tomb was empty on Easter morning, and not because someone stole Jesus' body. It was empty because Jesus was alive! Let's thank Jesus for coming back to life.

Have kids cup their hands together so they can peer inside and see it's empty. Have them hold their hands like that as you pray.

Pray: Thank you, Jesus, that you came back to life. Thank you that you're alive today! We love you! In your name, amen.

Bold Blessing

Have everyone stand in a circle with their hands in the center, like a sports team. Tell them that when you finish the Bold Blessing, they'll raise their hands and shout "Let's be bold!" (Doing this over video chat? Put your hands in toward the camera!)

Say this Bold Blessing: **Receive this Bold Blessing and carry it out with you: May God bless you with the boldness of the disciples to go and share about Jesus' resurrection. Jesus is alive! *Let's be bold!***

Mystery Mission

Read everyone the Mystery Mission, and challenge them to live out their faith this week by doing this mission. (Children's Ministry Director, if you're leading this over video and you have the card, fold and seal it in advance and open it on the video to create the sense of mystery! Then send out the mission via email.)

Celebrate Easter with a fun Easter egg hunt around your house. Find a few plastic Easter eggs, and write Bible verses on slips of paper. Put the verses in the Easter eggs and hide them under your family's pillows! Need ideas for verses to use? Try these!

- John 3:16
- Romans 8:28
- 1 Thessalonians 5:17
- 1 Corinthians 15:54-55
- Romans 3:23
- Philippians 4:6-7

Roles

LYING DISCIPLES: Jesus' body wasn't really missing.

Matthew 28:11-15: “As the women were on their way, some of the guards went into the city and told the leading priests what had happened. A meeting with the elders was called, and they decided to give the soldiers a large bribe. They told the soldiers, ‘You must say, “Jesus’ disciples came during the night while we were sleeping, and they stole his body.” If the governor hears about it, we’ll stand up for you so you won’t get in trouble.’ So the guards accepted the bribe and said what they were told to say. Their story spread widely among the Jews, and they still tell it today.”

The guards’ testimony is proof that Jesus’ body was *missing*. If Jesus’ body was still in the tomb, they wouldn’t have said it was stolen. So either the body was stolen or Jesus really did come back to life. We’re not lying—the body is gone!

JEWISH LEADERS: Maybe they stole Jesus' body.

We hated Jesus and didn’t think he was really God. **We** were the ones who killed him! We *wish* we had the body; we’d show it to you and prove those disciples wrong! We’d love to prove that Jesus isn’t really alive!

GRAVE ROBBERS: Maybe they stole Jesus' body.

John 20:5-7: “He stooped and looked in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he didn’t go in. Then Simon Peter arrived and went inside. He also noticed the linen wrappings lying there, while the cloth that had covered Jesus’ head was folded up and lying apart from the other wrappings.”

Sure, we rob graves sometimes. We like to sell whatever we can from the graves. But this tomb was heavily guarded. It wasn’t worth the risk. Plus Jesus’ grave cloths were left behind. If we’d been there, we would’ve stolen them and sold them!

THIEVING DISCIPLES: Maybe the disciples stole Jesus' body.

The guards are going around saying *we’re* the ones who stole the body. If that was the case, we’d know Jesus wasn’t *really* alive. We’d know it was a lie. But we were persecuted, and some of us were even killed for standing up for the fact that Jesus is alive. We love Jesus, but we wouldn’t have given up our lives for something we knew was a lie. Remember, we’re the same guys who ran away when Jesus was arrested—except Peter, who denied knowing Jesus. We’re not exactly known for our courage! No, we stood up for the fact that Jesus is alive because we know it’s *true*!

MAP MAKER: Maybe the disciples went to the wrong tomb.

Matthew 27:62-66: “The next day, on the Sabbath, the leading priests and Pharisees went to see Pilate. They told him, ‘Sir, we remember what that deceiver once said while he was still alive: “After three days I will rise from the dead.” So we request that you seal the tomb until the third day. This will prevent his disciples from coming and stealing his body and then telling everyone he was raised from the dead! If that happens, we’ll be worse off than we were at first.’ Pilate replied, ‘Take guards and secure it the best you can.’ So they sealed the tomb and posted guards to protect it.” Wow, the guards *really* didn’t want Jesus’ body to go missing. If they really thought the body had been

stolen or that the disciples were at the wrong tomb, they would've searched everywhere to find it and prove Jesus was still dead. My map is just fine! They were at the right tomb.

STRONG PEOPLE: Some strong people moved the stone.

Mark 16:3: "On the way they were asking each other, 'Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?'"

As we heard earlier, the guards sealed up the tomb with a heavy stone to make sure the body wasn't stolen. The women wondered how they would move the stone, but they found an angel had already moved it. Now sure, we're really strong. But if we'd moved it, it would've made a lot of noise. If the guards were sleeping when people came to steal the body, as they claimed, the noise would've woken them up. An angel had to have moved the stone. Wasn't us!