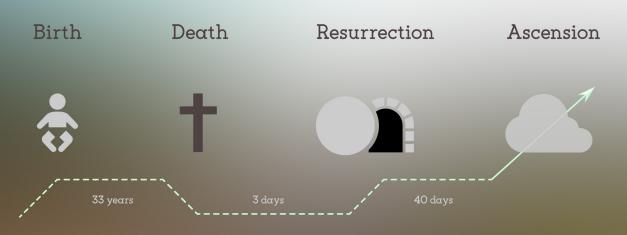
EASTER



Best. Story. Ever.



:1 Before the sun had risen on **Sunday morning, Mary** Magdalene made a trip to the tomb where His body was laid to rest. In the darkness, she discovered the covering had been rolled away.



:2 She darted out of the garden to find Simon Peter and the dearly loved disciple to deliver this startling news. Mary Magdalene: They have taken the body of our Lord, and we cannot find Him!



:3 Together, they all departed for the tomb to see for themselves. :4 They began to run, and Peter could not keep up. The beloved disciple arrived first :5 but did not go in. There was no corpse in the tomb, only the linens and cloths He was wrapped in. :6 When Simon Peter finally arrived, he went into the tomb and observed the same:



:7 the cloth that covered His face appeared to have been folded carefully and placed, not with the linen cloths, but to the side. :8 After Peter pointed this out, the other disciple (who had arrived long before Peter) also entered the tomb; and based on what he saw, faith began to well up inside him!



:9 Before this moment, none of them understood the Scriptures and why He must be raised from the dead. :10 Then they all went to their homes.



:11 Mary, however, stood outside the tomb sobbing, crying, and kneeling at its entrance. :12 As she cried, two heavenly messengers appeared before her sitting where Jesus' head and feet had been laid. Heavenly Messengers: :13 Dear woman, why are you weeping? Mary Magdalene: They have taken away my Lord, and I cannot find



:14 After uttering these words, she turned around to see Jesus standing before her, but she did not recognize Him.

Jesus: :15 Dear woman, why are you sobbing? Who is it you are looking for?



She still had no idea who it was before her. Thinking He was the gardener, she muttered: Mary Magdalene: Sir, if you are the one who carried Him away, then tell me where He is and I will retrieve Him.



Jesus: :16 Mary! Mary Magdalene (turning to Jesus and speaking in Hebrew): Rabboni, my Teacher! Jesus: :17 Mary, you cannot hold Me. I must rise above this world to be with My Father, who is also your Father; My God, who is also your God. Go tell this to all My brothers.



:18 Mary Magdalene obeyed and went directly to His disciples.

Mary Magdalene (announcing to the disciples): I have seen the Lord, and this is what He said to me...



Application

Recognize we all have "stones" that need to be rolled out of the way because they inhibit us from seeing Jesus more fully in our lives.

Remember that we can miss valuable lessons when we refuse to see hidden assumptions we make about how God works in the world.



Application

Take the message Jesus offers us: we have been invited into relationship with the Father, Son, and Spirit.

The resurrection story ends in a garden, but this time it's not Adam and Eve being sent away from the garden. Instead, it's Mary who is triumphantly leaving the garden as the messenger of good news: Christ is risen; he is risen indeed.

