

**SEVEN SIGNS**  
**#1: The Ultimate Sign**  
**April 15-17, 2006**

<sup>1</sup>Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the entrance. <sup>2</sup>So she came running to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one Jesus loved, and said, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we don't know where they have put him!" <sup>3</sup>So Peter and the other disciple started for the tomb. <sup>4</sup>Both were running, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. <sup>5</sup>He bent over and looked in at the strips of linen lying there but did not go in. <sup>6</sup>Then Simon Peter came along behind him and went straight into the tomb. He saw the strips of linen lying there, <sup>7</sup>as well as the cloth that had been wrapped around Jesus' head. The cloth was still lying in its place, separate from the linen. <sup>8</sup>Finally the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went inside. He saw and believed. <sup>9</sup>(They still did not understand from Scripture that Jesus had to rise from the dead.) <sup>10</sup>Then the disciples went back to where they were staying. <sup>11</sup>Now Mary stood outside the tomb crying. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb <sup>12</sup>and saw two angels in white, seated where Jesus' body had been, one at the head and the other at the foot. <sup>13</sup>They asked her, "Woman, why are you crying?" "They have taken my Lord away," she said, "and I don't know where they have put him." <sup>14</sup>At this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not realize that it was Jesus. <sup>15</sup>He asked her, "Woman, why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?" Thinking he was the gardener, she said, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him." <sup>16</sup>Jesus said to her, "Mary." She turned toward him and cried out in Aramaic, "Rabboni!" (which means "Teacher"). <sup>17</sup>Jesus said, "Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father. Go instead to my brothers and tell them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'" <sup>18</sup>Mary Magdalene went to the disciples with the news: "I have seen the Lord!" And she told them that he had said these things to her. . . <sup>30</sup>Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. <sup>31</sup>But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

*John 20:1-18, 30-31 TNIV*

Introduction: Today we begin our study of John's Gospel, "the book of signs." The most theological of the four Gospels, John is a presentation of seven signs that Jesus is Lord and the teachings of Jesus that interpret them. It culminates in the resurrection of Jesus, the ultimate sign that substantiates all the others.

- I. The Meaning of Signs
    - A. Webster's defines a sign as "something material or external that stands for or signifies something spiritual."
    - B. Throughout God's Word, signs are acts of God that indicate his power and presence.
      1. Deliverance of the Hebrew people from Egypt  
". . . so that I may perform these signs of mine among them that you may tell your children and grandchildren . . . how I performed my signs among them, and that you may know that I am Lord." *Exodus 10:2-3*
      2. The Created Order  
"For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse." *Romans 1:20*
    - C. Signs differ from mere miracles, in that miracles are ends in themselves, but signs are indications of something greater.
  - II. The Ultimate Sign
    - A. The resurrection is the ultimate sign that "Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name."
    - B. Mary and the Apostles encountered clear signs that Jesus had risen from death.
      1. The stone had been removed from a guarded tomb.
      2. The burial clothes were still in place, but Jesus' body was gone.
      3. Angels now occupied the tomb.
      4. Jesus appeared to them and many other witnesses.
    - C. Jesus' resurrection is more than a mere miracle, it is the ultimate sign that Jesus is Lord.  
". . . the gospel he promised beforehand through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures regarding his Son, who as to his earthly life was a descendant of David, and who through the Spirit of holiness was appointed the Son of God in power by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord." *Romans 1:2-4*
  - III. Reading the Sign
    - A. We tend to be so taken with the miracle of the resurrection that we miss the certain sign that Jesus has conquered death once for all.
    - B. We tend to become so concerned with our search for Jesus that we miss his presence right beside us.
    - C. We tend to become so interested in what Jesus can do for us that we forget to tell others that Jesus is Lord.
- Conclusion: The resurrection is the ultimate sign that Jesus is Lord given so that "by believing we may have life in his name."