

# Easter

at Sierra Community Church



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After the Sabbath, as the light of the next day, the first day of the week, crept over Palestine, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to the tomb *to keep vigil.* **2** Earlier there had been an earthquake. A messenger of the Lord had come down from heaven and had gone to the grave. He rolled away the stone and sat down on top of it. **3** He *veritably* glowed. He was vibrating with light. *His clothes were light, white like transfiguration, like fresh snow.* **4** The soldiers guarding the tomb were terrified. They froze like stone. **5** The messenger spoke to the women, to Mary Magdalene and the other Mary.

Don't be afraid. I know you are here keeping watch for Jesus who was crucified. 6 But Jesus is not here. He was raised, just as He said He would be. Come over to the grave, and see for yourself. 7 And then go straight to His disciples, and tell them He's been raised from the dead and has gone on to Galilee. You'll find Him there. Listen carefully to what I am telling you.

The women were both terrified and thrilled, and they quickly left the tomb and went to find the disciples and give them this *outstandingly good* news. **9** But while they were on their way, they saw Jesus Himself.

**Jesus** (*greeting the women*): Rejoice.

The women fell down before Him, kissing His feet and worshiping Him.

**Jesus: 10** Don't be afraid. Go and tell My brothers to go to Galilee. Tell them I will meet them there.

As the women were making their way to the disciples, some of the soldiers who had been standing guard *by Jesus' tomb recovered themselves*, went to the city, and told the chief priests everything that had happened—*the earthquake just after dawn, the heavenly messenger, and his commission to the Marys.*

**12** The chief priests gathered together all the elders, *an emergency conference of sorts. They needed a plan. They decided the simplest course was bribery:* they would pay off the guards **13** and order them to say that the disciples had come in the middle of the night and had stolen Jesus' corpse while they slept.



**14** The chief priests promised the soldiers they would run interference with the governor so that the soldiers wouldn't be punished *for falling asleep when they were supposed to be keeping watch*. **15** The guards took the bribe and spread the story around town—and indeed, you can still find people today who will tell you *that Jesus did not really rise from the dead, that it was a trick, some sort of sleight of hand*.

The eleven disciples, *having spoken to the Marys*, headed to Galilee, to the mountain where they were to meet Jesus. **17** When the disciples saw Jesus there, many of them fell down and worshiped, *as Mary and the other Mary had done*. But a few hung back. They were not sure (*and who can blame them?*). **18** Jesus came forward and addressed *His beloved disciples*.

The disciples don't know what to think or how to act. Nothing like this has ever happened before.

**Jesus:** I am here speaking with all the authority of God, *who has commanded Me to give you this commission:* **19** Go out and make disciples in all the nations. Ceremonially wash them through baptism in the name of the *triune God:* Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. **20** Then disciple them. *Form them in the practices and postures that* I have taught you, and show them how to follow the commands I have laid down for you. And I will be with you, day after day, to the end of the age.





Anne Rice  
author of the  
Vampire Chronicles  
Jesus Out of Egypt



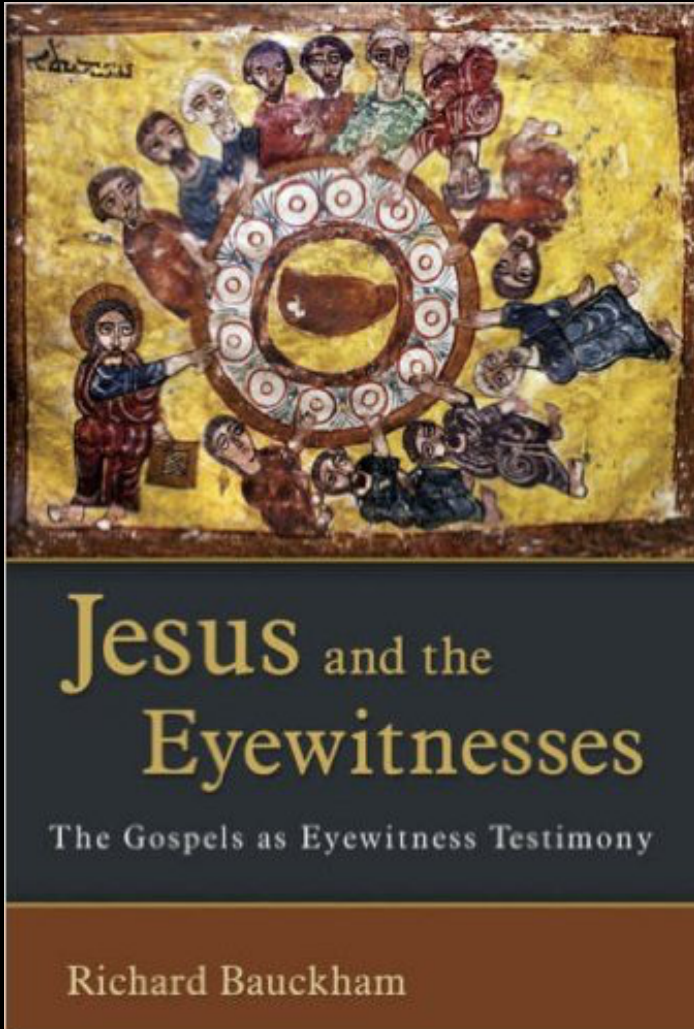
Anne Rice  
author of the  
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*“The whole case for the non-divine Jesus who stumbled into Jerusalem and somehow got crucified and had nothing to do with the later founding of Christianity. That whole picture floated in liberal circles I had frequented for thirty years, but that case was never made.”*

<sup>12</sup> When the chief priests had met with the elders and devised a plan, they gave the soldiers a large sum of money, <sup>13</sup> telling them, “You are to say, ‘His disciples came during the night and stole him away while we were asleep.’ ...<sup>16</sup> “So the soldiers took the money and did as they were instructed. **And this story has been widely circulated among the Jews to this very day.”**

Matthew 28:12,13,16

Richard Bauckham



Jesus and the  
Eyewitnesses



## Richard Bauckham- “Jesus and the Eyewitnesses

“What if that had never happened and you just wanted to write a document and say, “Jesus Christ raised a boy from the dead in the village of Nain”? **Maybe you could write that 130 years later,** when everybody who ever lived there was dead, and get away with it.

But you couldn't write, “Jesus Christ raised a boy from the dead in the public square of Village of Nain **within 30 years,** when most of Village of Nain is still around. It would be squashed then and there.



He was buried, and he was raised from the dead on the third day, just as the Scriptures said. 5 He was seen by Peter and then by the Twelve. 6 After that, he was seen by more than 500 of his followers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have died. 7 Then he was seen by James and later by all the apostles. 8 Last of all, as though I had been born at the wrong time, I also saw him.

1 Corinthians 15:4-8

“So the women hurried away from the tomb, afraid yet filled with joy, and ran to tell his disciples.”

Matthew 28:8

It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna,  
Mary the mother of James, and  
several other women who told the  
apostles what had happened.

11 But the story sounded like  
nonsense to the men,...

Luke 24:10,11

She turned to leave and saw someone standing there. It was Jesus, but she didn't recognize him. ...16 "Mary!" Jesus said. She turned to him and cried out, "Rabboni!" (which is Hebrew for "Teacher").

John 20:14,16

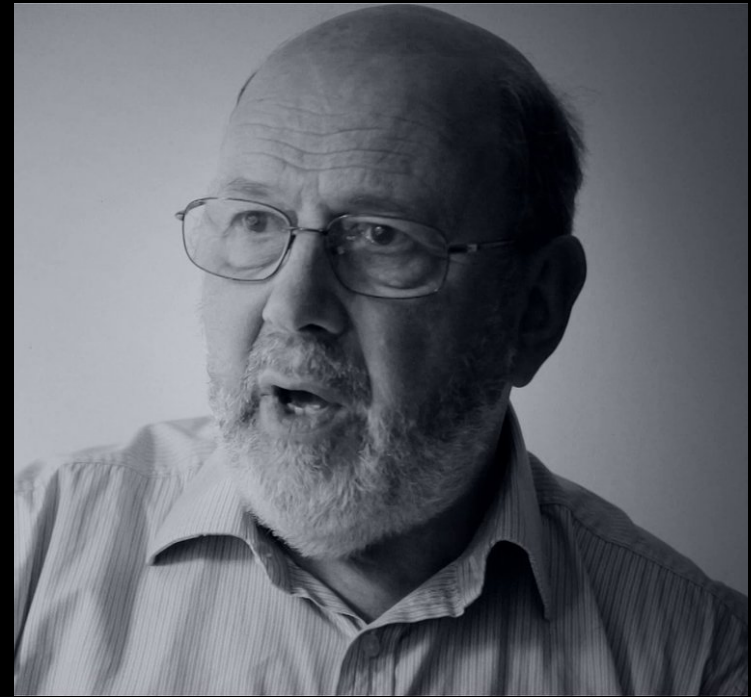
After He rose from the dead early on Sunday, **Jesus appeared first to Mary Magdalene**, a woman out of whom He had cast seven demons.

Mark 16:9



“Even though women were the first eyewitnesses, there would have been tremendous incentive on the part of the Christian authors of the Gospels not to have mentioned it.”

N.T. Wright- A Leading  
New Testament Scholar







“Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. When they saw him, they worshiped him; **but some doubted.**”

Matthew 28:16,17



“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.

Therefore **go and make disciples of all nations ...**” Matthew 28:20







“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.”

...And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.

Matthew 28:18,20b



When he had cleansed us from our sins, he sat down in the place of honor **at the right hand of God the Father** in heaven.

Hebrews 1:3

“All things **work together for** good  
to those who love God.”

Romans 8:28

“I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. **19** Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. **20** **Teach these new disciples to obey** all the commands I have given you.

“Weren’t our hearts on fire when he opened **the Scriptures** to us?”

Luke 24:32

... “surely I am with you always” ...

Matthew 28:20



...to the very end of the age...

Matthew 28:20





But if we are to share his glory, we must also share his suffering.

18 Yet **what we suffer now is nothing compared to the glory** he will reveal to us later.

Romans 8:17,18



Jesus: Don't get lost in despair; believe in God, and keep on believing in Me. 2 My Father's home is designed to accommodate all of you. If there were not room for everyone, I would have told you that. I am going to make arrangements for your arrival. 3 I will be there to greet you personally and welcome you home, where we will be together.

John 14:1-3



