

I want to recount a story to you. It's an old story, written down by those who shared it and safeguarded it. The story is retold by four different people and their accounts do not 100% agree, but their recollection of events is our window into this story. Below is a translation of John's account of events. If you want to discover who John was you can Google it and see what scholars think. I personally chose not to doubt that the account below is true and the best record of events. I will let you make up your own mind.

"Early in the morning on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone was moved away from the entrance. She ran at once to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one Jesus loved, breathlessly panting, "They took the Master from the tomb. We don't know where they've put him." Peter and the other disciple left immediately for the tomb. They ran, neck and neck. The other disciple got to the tomb first, outrunning Peter. Stooping to look in, he saw the pieces of linen cloth lying there, but he did not go in. Simon Peter arrived after him, entered the tomb, observed the linen cloths lying there, and the kerchief used to cover his head not lying with the linen cloths but separate, neatly folded by itself. Then the other disciple, the one who had gotten there first, went into the tomb, took one look at the evidence, and believed. No one yet knew from the Scripture that he had to rise from the dead."

If true, this account is life changing. It alters how we view the world we walk on. If true, it is our window into God's nature. If true, it should have impacted the world for great good and transformed our view of everything. But the story was put into the hands of humans, into the hands of Men (and women), "Men, who above all else, desire power." (J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring*). We have been poor custodians of this story, but there is hope. There is hope that the rich truth of God's love for you and me might grow inside of us. My prayer today is that you might know something of this richness in your life, maybe even explore it more by joining in with our online events at the Free Church. Happy Easter - Rev Martin Cockerill