

## **Easter / Resurrection, John 20:1-18**

### **April 12, 2009 - Skip MacMillan**

Thursday – betrayal; Friday – arrest, trial and cross; Saturday (Sabbath) - death; Sunday - Resurrection

Confusion, disappointment, and inexpressible hope mark the first hours of Resurrection Sunday.

### **Mary Magdalene**

#### **Heavily invested in Jesus**

Luke 7: "sinner"; Jesus drove out 7 demons from her (Mark 16:9).

She has bought in; all her hopes are resting on Him, all her forgiveness, self worth, identity. She has left nothing to spare. This world has abused her, used her and she bought the lie until this man Jesus. Now she is resting everything she has on Him, Savior and God.

She is believing His words to be true; "her sins are forgiven" (Luke 7).

So nothing is going to separate her from Jesus. Not the cross--she was there; not the burial--she was there (Matt. 27:61); not the tomb--she got there before anyone else (John 20:1-2).

#### **First**

First to get to the tomb Sunday morning, waits for the Sabbath to conclude.

First to see the empty tomb.

First to be given the message of his resurrection (although confused), telling Peter and John.

First to hear the risen Savior's voice.

First to see the risen Savior.

Jesus appeared and spoke with her, a woman, first; not a prominent king, priest, not the rich.

#### **Questioned**

Mary is torn up: "they have taken the Lord . . . and we don't know where they have put him" (v. 2). "Mary stood outside the tomb crying" (v. 11).

**Angels:** "Why are you crying?" **Jesus:** "Why are you crying?" and "Who are you looking for?"

#### **Why are you crying?**

Jesus and the angels are questioning her belief: "God is dead".

She believed something that wasn't true; tangible not spiritual; human ability not God's.

She is so covered in grief that she doesn't even recognize Him (20:14).

Jesus meets her in her confusion and mis-belief.

#### **"MARY," Jesus awakens her from her brokenness by speaking her name, "Mary"**

She turns to Him and cries out "Teacher" .

Jesus calls you by name, personally; consider what you believe, quiet yourself and listen.

Isaiah 49:15-16 - "I will not forget you! See, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands."

#### **Spurgeon: what we can learn from Mary**

- She sought Jesus early in the morning – seek Him early, mid day, seek Him in the evening.
- She waited for Him while others left, Psalm 27 – Be patient and wait on the LORD.
- She was weeping for His presence – she wanted His presence more than anything else in this life. This needs to be our desire.
- She wasn't interested in angels; she wanted Jesus; only Jesus will do!
- She soon heard the Savior's voice calling her name, "Mary."
- "Let us arouse ourselves to the same intensity of affection; let our heart, like Mary's, be full of Christ, and our love, like hers, will be satisfied with nothing short of Himself."

## **Peter and John**

They are told by Mary that the tomb is empty and they run to the tomb.

Three times, John tells us he "outran", "Peter (was) behind", John was "first".

Details authenticate the text.

**Peter "saw" the linen and burial cloth, and John "saw and believed".**

## **Linens and Burial Cloth**

The linens were "still in the exact same position a when Jesus' body had been wrapped in it." Jesus body passed through the material (Kostenberger, p564).

## **Faith of John, "Other Disciple"**

**Saw, believed, but did not understand.**

"Saw and believed. (They still did not understand from Scripture that Jesus had to rise from the dead.)" (John 20:9).

**John and the rest of the disciples were struggling to understand, as they have all along.**

- Authenticates the story, the heroes are not brilliant.
- Even though Jesus said he would rise on the third day (Matthew 16:21).
- The Old Testament spoke to a resurrection, Psalm 16:10; Daniel 12; Hosea 6:2, 13:14; Isaiah 26, 53:10-12.

**John "saw". What did John see? Nothing and the potential for everything!**

John was beginning to believe, consider, move into faith which is beyond evidence. He was beginning to believe without having to understand or have proof.

John was beginning to "see" spiritually and take a step into faith.

Believing Jesus had done the miraculous!

Faith lies in the unseen!

**Hebrews 11:1 - "Faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see."**

Faith defies evidence and proof; where there is proof there is no need for faith.

John was hoping for some alternative other than Jesus died and His body stolen, even though he could not see it nor did he understand it.

**Faith is believing and following Jesus even when you don't understand.**

Trusting Jesus' words to be true even in the midst of mixed signals, i.e. empty tomb.

What do you do when evidence isn't there or confusing? Doubt or move in faith?

**Thomas: "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will NOT believe" (John 21:25).**

Thomas had all kinds of stipulations, need of evidence, proofs.

Jesus wants faith! He wants us to believe and trust Him when we don't understand.

Mark 16:14 - Jesus rebukes the disciples for their lack of faith.

**Jesus says, "Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed" (John 21:29).**

"Without faith it is impossible to please God" (Hebrews 11:6).

## **What we learn from John:**

- 1. John didn't understand but believed and trusted Jesus Christ.**
- 2. Be sure and certain of your hope in Christ. It is the only thing in this life we can be sure of.**

**3. Build your faith by continually challenging yourself to believe beyond your circumstances and trust Jesus at His word. Place your faith in His words, His commandments, His ways of living and being.**

**Peter**

**Peter denied Christ.**

Three times, and afterwards “wept bitterly” (Matthew 26:75).

After the third time, “The Lord turned and looked straight at Peter” (Luke 22:61).

**Yet, Peter comes running to Jesus’ empty tomb, one of the two out of the 12 came.**

What about his guilt, shame, denial, weakness, and cowardliness?

**Peter is like the rest of us.**

He loved Jesus but had his weak moments.

When in the wrong environment and situation, he crumbled.

We do the same.

**Lesson One: Don’t hesitate**

Peter doesn’t let his guilt and shame stop him from running to Jesus.

Does it stop you? I believe it stops far too many of us.

We don’t come running to Jesus because of what we did in the past.

Satan’s perfect plan.

Take Peter as an example and run to Christ when we fail.

Die to the old voices that cause you to hesitate, and come!

Jesus says come, all of you who are burdened down by your sins and I will set you free and give you rest.

**Lesson Two: Deal with the sin**

Jesus confronts Peter’s sin and digs it out three times, “Do you love me?” (John 21).

Jesus transformed Peter into a bold, courageous and powerful witness for the Kingdom (Acts).

**What does the Resurrection mean to us today?**

**1. The Resurrection DECLARES to Mary and you:**

- Mary, the Gospel is true; God did become man, substituted Himself for our sins; He is alive.
- Mary, Jesus Christ is exactly who He said He was: “I Am” LORD (John 8:58); Savior of sinners.
- Mary you are forgiven; we are no longer in our sin but a freed people.
- Mary, Jesus is in heaven interceding for you before the accuser of your soul.
- Mary, “Death has been swallowed up in victory” (1 Cor. 15:54b-57).
- Because He lives and resurrected you too will live and resurrect.
- This life, while it seems like everything is miniscule in eternity. **Missionary Story.**
- Mary, the Comforter and Teacher, the Holy Spirit, now resides in you, according to Jesus (John 14).
- Mary, God is in heaven preparing a place for you, with beauty beyond description (John 14).

**2. The Resurrection calls John and You to FAITH in Jesus:**

- Hebrews 11:1 - “Faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.”
- Put your faith in Jesus Christ, not this world which is passing away (1 John 2:17).
- Our hope is not found in this world, but in the unseen resurrected King of glory, Jesus Christ.

**3. The Resurrection calls Peter and You to FULFILL Jesus’ Great Commission:**

- You are called to “**feed My sheep,**” take care of each other, love one another.
- You are called to be Jesus’ **witnesses** to those around you (Luke 24:48).
- You are called to **go and make disciples** (relationship, Bible and lifestyle) (Matt. 28:19-20).
- You are called to **preach repentance and forgiveness of sins** in His name to all nations (Luke 24:47).
- You are called to “always give yourself fully to the work of the LORD because you know that your labor is not in vain” (1 Corinthians 15:58).

“And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age” (Matthew 28:20).  
The Risen Savior says to you this morning, “Peace be with you!”