

**"The Resurrection of Jesus Christ"**

**John 20**

**Introduction:** As we take time today to remember the resurrection of Jesus Christ, I want to walk you through what John recorded concerning the events of resurrection day. Before we get started with this text let me just remind you of a few points that we need to remember.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the greatest event in the history of the world. It is the event that sets Christianity part from all other religions we alone worship a resurrected Savior. Without the resurrection we would have absolutely no hope at all.

**1 Corinthians 15:13-18**

*<sup>13</sup> But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen:*

*<sup>14</sup> And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain.*

*<sup>15</sup> Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not.*

*<sup>16</sup> For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised:*

*<sup>17</sup> And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins.*

*<sup>18</sup> Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished.*

As we come to John 20 today to look at the resurrection I want you to think with me for a moment about how the resurrection would have shocked the disciples. This was something which they were not expecting. Can you imagine if one of your loved ones died and three days later showed up in your house? What would be your reaction? You wake up in the morning and when you walk into the living room they are sitting in a chair and begin to speak with you. When we speak of the resurrection today I am afraid we overlook the shock which the disciples would have experienced.

Let me explain what John is doing in this chapter. He gives no details of the resurrection. He gives us what is much more valuable, a brief account of the manner in which he himself was convinced that a resurrection had taken place. His shy nature, his reluctance to put

himself forward or use the first person in his narrative, does not prevent him from seeing that the testimony of one who, like himself, was an eyewitness of the facts is invaluable.

### I. Mary's Devotion

#### Notice John 20:1

Here John tells us that it was Mary who came to the tomb first. John never mentions that there were two other women with her but instead he focuses upon Mary only because she will play a part in his understanding.

Who is this, Mary Magdalene? She was a woman who had 7 demons in her at one time.

#### Luke 8:2

<sup>2</sup> *And certain women, which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary called Magdalene, out of whom went seven devils,*

She came from a town called "Magdala." Some believe this town was known for prostitution. We do not know that for sure, but it was a major fishing town and prostitution would have prospered there. She had 7 demons at one time so that tells us she was involved in something very wicked. She was saved from the demons and if she was a prostitute, she was saved from that as well. Therefore, she had much to be thankful for. She would prove to be one of the most dedicated followers of Jesus Christ.

Mary came very early in the morning with the intention of anointing the Lord's body. She seems to have given no thought to the stone and how to get it removed. But this is how true love works. It does not look at the obstacles but it just desires to be with the One who is loved. Mary had a deep love for Jesus because she had been set free from the demons.

Let us understand that her world was crushed when Jesus was crucified. She believed Him to be the Messiah and King. She watched His miracles and listened to His teaching. She had forsaken all to follow Him and now in her mind He was dead.

When she sees the stone rolled away her first thought is that someone had stolen the body of Jesus.

#### Notice John 20:2

Her instinct is to run and tell the disciples what she believes has happened. So she runs back to where the disciples are and tells Peter and John that the tomb is empty and that someone had stolen the body of the Lord.

## II. Peter and John's Discovery

### Notice John 20:3-10

Peter and John ran through the streets, out the gates and to the garden. John was younger and he out ran Peter. John stood outside and looked in but when Peter arrived, he went right into the tomb. Peter could make no sense of the missing body but John knew right away that Jesus had been resurrected. John looks at the grave cloths and sees them folded just as if Jesus had taken them off and gently placed them there for His followers to see. Had someone stolen the body they would not take time to unwrap it. In John mind he knew what had taken place.

Listen to what the Expositor's Commentary says concerning this scene.

*"The impression made by this circumstance was confirmed when Peter came up, and they both entered and examined the tomb and made their inferences together. For then they saw still clearer evidence of deliberation; the napkin which had been tied round the head of the dead body was there in the tomb, and it was folded and laid in a place by itself, suggesting the leisurely manner of a person changing his clothes, and convincing them that the body had not been removed to be laid elsewhere. At once John was convinced that a resurrection had taken place; his Lord's words took a new meaning in this empty tomb. Standing and gazing at the folded cloths, the truth flashed into his mind: Jesus has Himself risen and disencumbered Himself from these wrappings, and has departed. It was enough for John: he visited no other tomb; he questioned no one; he made no inquiries of his friends in the high priest's household,--he went to his own house, filled with astonishment, with a thousand thoughts chasing one another through his mind, scarcely listening to Peter's words, but convinced that Jesus lived."*

### Application:

John was the disciple whom Jesus loved. He was closer to the Lord than all the others because he chose to be. Because of his close walk he had a deeper insight. How much are you missing because you do not take the time to draw closer to the Lord? What are God's people missing today because they are all caught up in the world?

**1 John 2:15-17**

<sup>15</sup> *Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.*

<sup>16</sup> *For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.*

<sup>17</sup> *And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.*

I want to also point out that John was not convinced of the resurrection by a vision or a dream. It was not through some miracle. It was simply by observation of the facts. Can we not see the importance of observing the Word of God on a daily basis? Spending time in the Truth of the Word of God gives to us deeper understanding in life.

**Psalm 119:97-100**

<sup>97</sup> *O how love I thy law! It is my meditation all the day.*

<sup>98</sup> *Thou through thy commandments hast made me wiser than mine enemies: for they are ever with me.*

<sup>99</sup> *I have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies are my meditation.*

<sup>100</sup> *I understand more than the ancients, because I keep thy precepts.*

**III. Mary's Joy**

**Notice John 20:11-12**

The men had outrun Mary back to the sepulcher and when they returned to their own home she had missed them in the streets of the city. She has returned to the tomb with the hope that just maybe His body would be there. But the tomb is empty and so is her world. All is empty to Mary at this point. She is so consumed in her grief that she is not even startled by the angels. Her heart is so full of sorrow that there is no room for wonder. The grief has completely consumed her at this point. She can do nothing but pour out her tears as she stares at the empty tomb.

**Notice John 20:13**

Her short dialogue with the angels is very telling. Notice that she says, "They have taken away MY LORD." It is as if she feels the pain like no one else.

**Notice John 20:14-15**

She does not recognize Jesus in the midst of her grief and what she says here is important. She expects Him to know what has happened and she expects to be able to carry Him back to the tomb if she can just find where His body is located.

We have in these verses a picture of the deepest grief and we also have a picture of the deepest love. We would be hard pressed to find anyone else in the Scriptures with this kind of love for the Lord and it would be very rare to find this love today. This love and devotion did not go unnoticed. The sorrow Mary felt was the very sorrow that Jesus was able to comfort. In this situation Jesus will keep a promise He had made earlier.

**John 14:21**

*<sup>21</sup> He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.*

**Application:**

This is the reason many believers do not witness the presence of God in their lives today. He is there and this we know because of His promise to never leave us nor forsake us. But for Him to manifest Himself (not in bodily form) but to just experience His presence, is brought on by a deep love for Him.

**Not only did Jesus manifest Himself because of her love but He was near because of her sorrow.**

**Psalm 34:17-19**

*<sup>17</sup> The righteous cry, and the LORD heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles.*

*<sup>18</sup> The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.*

*<sup>19</sup> Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all.*

**Isaiah 57:15**

<sup>15</sup> *For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.*

The Lord is near when we are broken hearted but the reason many believers are not aware is because they have lost their love for the Lord. Something else has stolen away the love and therefore, He is near but you miss the manifestation of His presence. Remember the church at Ephesus?

**Revelation 2:4**

<sup>4</sup> *Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.*

He will still bring comfort but how much do we miss because of the lack of love?

**2 Corinthians 1:3-4**

<sup>3</sup> *Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort;*

<sup>4</sup> *Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.*

**Notice John 20:16-17**

Don't miss the way Jesus revealed Himself to Mary. There was no spectacular blaze of light, there was no thunder or lightning. He revealed Himself with His Word. All He did was speak her name and she knew immediately who He was.

**Application:**

This is how the Lord often manifests Himself to us, through His Word. Too many people are looking for experiences and we **MUST** keep in mind that Satan can provide experiences.

**Conclusion:**

Because the tomb was empty Mary had hope and everlasting joy. Let us rejoice and praise God for the resurrection of Jesus Christ.