

John 20

John 20:1

*The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulcher, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre.*

1. First day of the week – started her week off right looking for Jesus. That’s a good idea to start your week and your day off early looking for Jesus. Find him early before folk start clowning during the day.
  - a. When she got there it was dark which means when she started to seek him, it was a dark situation. The darkness didn’t keep her from her pursuit. It was dark, can’t see too well, everyone else sleeping it off, but she’s moving. She is going to the last known place to find him.
  - b. When Mary gets there, she notices that something that should be in her way has been moved out of the way. What was in the way, wasn’t in the way anymore.
  - c. Application for Today: How can I/we use this story for our good? She couldn’t have moved this stone by herself. She knew the stone was there and that it was going to be a problem for her before she got there. But she went anyway, by faith. What was in front of her, the problem she would have to face when she got there, didn’t keep her from getting there.
    - i. Don’t let the problem you expect to be there, keep you from seeking and going after Jesus. This was truly an example of a walk of faith for Mary.
  - d. She didn’t let the stone cause her to give up. Her purpose was not to find the stone or obstacle, her purpose was to find and serve Jesus.
    - i. What is your purpose when you make that phone call, have that meeting, roll up into church, is it to look for anything other than Jesus?
    - ii. There have been many occasions early in my life when I went to church, showed up for Bible study, but I wasn’t always looking for or focused on Jesus when I arrived. Looking for Jesus and looking to serve him as Mary was on this dark morning was not always my primary motivation. I am glad that has changed.
  - e. When she got there, she saw something. God wants you to see something when you get there. Note, Jesus didn’t need the stone moved in order to escape the tomb. He was walking through walls and stuff so the rock outside the door probably wasn’t a factor or hindrance for him in escaping the grave.
    - i. So apparently, God wanted her to see that the stone was moved out of the way. The rock wasn’t a problem for Jesus because he could go through it. But I believe God wanted Mary to see that He was able to move the obstacles out of her way so she could reach Jesus.
    - ii. Application for Today: God wants us to know that we don’t have to worry about the obstacles that may be in our way. Just keep moving toward Jesus by faith

and He will take care of the problems in front of us. Mary doesn't have to worry about it because she wasn't able to move by herself. Worrying about it would be of no benefit for her or you and me. God wants us to know for the problems we can't handle, that are too big for us, He is already moving out of our way to reach Jesus. God had already moved for her. It wasn't important for Jesus to have the rock moved, but it was important for Mary and for us to see the stone has been moved out of the way.

- f. The stone was moved before she got there, but if she never went there (looking for Jesus) she never would have experienced that the stone was moved out of the way. If you look for him, you'll see something.
  - i. Now you know there are other things that even if we knew there might be a problem when we get there, that wouldn't stop us from trying. For example, I might not have been 21 years old, but that might not have stopped me from trying to get into the night clubs back in my day...if I really wanted to go there.
- g. Application for Today: Are you in a situation where you know you are headed into some obstacles or something in your way or blocking you before you get there? How can this story help us deal with that? Notice, she never had to deal with the stone....God handled it for her.

John 20:2-5

*<sup>2</sup>Then she runneth, and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and saith unto them, they have taken away the LORD out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him. <sup>3</sup>Peter therefore went forth, and that other disciple, and came to the sepulchre. <sup>4</sup>So they ran both together: and the other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulchre. <sup>5</sup>And he stooping down, and looking in, saw the linen clothes lying; yet went he not in.*

- 2. She ran and told somebody else what she saw. What God has shown you in your situation, be prepared to run and tell somebody else....so they can come running too. Your testimony can cause others to run to that same place looking for Jesus.
  - a. Notice, they didn't go looking for him until she came with her testimony.
  - b. I want my testimony to cause you to run to seek Jesus.
  - c. A careful note, Mary has an incomplete testimony though since she didn't know all the facts yet. In fact some of her comments or assumptions were incorrect. Just because part of the testimony is true, that doesn't always mean the whole testimony is accurate. It was true that Jesus was no longer in the grave, but no man had taken him away. You better go check it out for yourself.

- i. Application for Today: Be careful of Facebook and folk who got just a little revelation; just because it starts off right doesn't mean they got the whole thing right. Truth be told, she didn't have this thing totally right.
3. Peter and John take off and get to the same place.
4. They started out together, but John was younger and faster and outran Peter and got there first. Talk to me. They started out together but one got there first.
5. John looked in but he had to stoop down or get low in order to see inside. He only saw what was left inside the tomb from a distance. He saw the linen clothes left behind, but didn't go any closer. He didn't go in even though he got there first. Got there first but didn't know what to do. Application for Today:
  - a. Doesn't matter who gets there first, what are you going to do when you get to that point? Notice the position of John, he is stooping down. That's a good thing, because you have to get down at this point to look inside. But he stays there and never gets closer. You have to be down and humble to truly seek and find Jesus.
  - b. Many Christians have gotten to the resurrection place before us but they are not fully experiencing the fullness of the resurrection. They stay right there but don't go any further in their understanding of Jesus. Many have been in the same position for a while.
  - c. That was me for a long time. I was okay in that position. I had come a long way, but wasn't trying or willing to go any further in my relationship with God. As a result, it took a while for me to fully experience and understand the power and significance of the resurrection.
  - d. Where are you in this story? Are you a long distance Christian, are you working to get closer, or are you still at the crib not searching at all?

*<sup>6</sup>Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes lie, <sup>7</sup>and the napkin, that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself. <sup>8</sup>Then went in also that other disciple, which came first to the sepulchre, and he saw, and believed. <sup>9</sup>For as yet they knew not the scripture that he must rise again from the dead. <sup>10</sup>Then the disciples went away again unto their own home.*

6. Then Peter comes later, but he doesn't stop there. Peter doesn't let coming in later stop him from going further inside. Just because you haven't been doing this Christian thing as long as others, doesn't mean you can't go further or draw closer. In fact, he went further than John, even though he got there later. Application for Today:
  - a. Don't worry about getting there too late, just get there. Whenever you get there, it's always the right time.

- b. Getting there later doesn't disqualify you from getting closer or getting a better blessing.
  - c. Peter didn't turn around and go back because he didn't get there first, and didn't stay where Mary and John had stopped....he kept going.
- 7. Because Peter went further, he got a greater revelation. Peter saw clothes lying there, but napkin was placed in a separate pile deliberately. Put your NCSI hat on. This shows that he probably wasn't stolen away as Mary might have assumed. Nobody is going to take that kind of care if they are stealing something. Theft was not involved. Who would steal a naked body?
  - a. Just because you have a testimony, doesn't mean you have all the facts about Jesus. Stick to what you know and have seen and leave assumptions out of it.
- 8. Peter makes a closer investigation. Sees that the clothes have been laid aside. What was laid aside? The clothes he was buried in. The old stuff that they laid him down in. Burial clothes, but these were now laid aside so he must have had some new clothes. Application for Today:
  - a. Application. When you experience a true resurrection, you should be able to lay some stuff aside, and put on some new stuff. Too many night of the living dead saints walking around where they still have the same old stinky burial clothes. Christians will have trouble and miss the plan of God for their lives when trying to walk in newness of life with old clothes on. Zombie saints.
  - b. Jesus leaves these old clothes in the grave, he didn't take them with him. Application, what is it that you need to leave in that grave that Christ has delivered you from? Some stuff that should have been buried, needs to be left in that old place. The heartbreaks, disappointments, past sins and mistakes need to be left in the grave. We have been crucified with Christ and should walk in newness of life under the power of the resurrected Christ in us.
  - c. When he sees Peter go in, John gets the courage to go further. He goes in too. He sees the evidence also. When John goes further, that's when he believes.
    - i. Where are you in this story? Peter's ministry/action helps to encourage John to go further and experience a deeper revelation. Going further increases his faith and causes him to now believe.
    - ii. He already believed in the life of Jesus, the miracles, and his death; but now he just reached another level of belief.....believed in the resurrection of Christ. Why is this important to us?
    - iii. For me, this is one of the primary missions of this ministry. It is to help others go deeper in Jesus and gain a greater understanding so that they will also believe in the resurrected Christ and step fully into the plan of God for their lives.
    - iv. One believes, one wonders, the other stays there.
- 9. They had to believe based upon what they experienced because they hadn't received or really understood what the Bible said pertaining to the necessity for Jesus to rise again. We see again

the importance of God wanting you to see something....so you can start to believe. In this case, they needed to see the burial clothes left behind for their benefit and belief.

- a. Scripture must be important for our development because it will cause you to believe since it tells you about the resurrection. I need that kind of word.
  - b. We need to be in a good Bible study.
10. They go back home. Leave that place and return to their own home, but experienced.

*<sup>11</sup> But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping: and as she wept, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre,*

11. Mary stays there. She was probably sad when she got there, and she was still there, and still sad. You can be in the right place, and be seeking Jesus and still not experience the joy of the resurrection. Wait a minute. How come the two disciples can leave that place and go home believing, but she is still broke down and in the same place/state?
- a. Because she never went inside when she got there. Never investigated further what happened. There but not fully experiencing the joy of the resurrection even though she led others there. She could only show the disciples the place, but couldn't show them inside because she had never been inside herself. You can't effectively take somebody to where you haven't been.
  - b. But here finally in this verse we see she finally stooped down. She was the first one there, but the last one to stoop down and look inside.
  - c. I am noticing that these scriptures continue to mention that first there must be the proper posture....stooping or bowing down before you can get closer to Christ. Humble submission is always the first step in following the plan of God for your life.
  - d. Now you have different examples of faith all in the same place, but different responses.
    - i. One arrives there sad and remains in the same condition. There are Christians like that. They will make the sacrifice to get to church, tore up when they get there and still carry with them the same issues when they leave.....no change! It is easy for them to make faulty assumptions about Jesus. Now...to Mary's credit...she doesn't go away sad....she stays right there. That's a good thing!!!
    - ii. Some will get there, experience it, but go away pondering and not fully understanding how all of this works.
    - iii. Some will get there and experience it and increase their faith and believe.

*<sup>12</sup>And seeth two angels in white sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain.*

*<sup>13</sup>And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, because they have taken away my LORD, and I know not where they have laid him. <sup>14</sup>And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus.*

12. Mary doesn't see the angels until she does what??? Stoop down. Until you get humble, you may not see it. Humility and stooping down, is still a requirement before you can get up and truly experience a resurrection. Gotta experience being down before you can truly get up.
13. Angels speak to her and ask her a question. God still asks us questions today. Why are you crying? Two are the required number of witnesses in the Bible.
  - a. After all she has seen and the evidence around her, why is she still crying? She was sad when she got there and still sad now. Let me ask you a question, with all the evidence around us, why are we still crying about stuff?
  - b. We must not be investigating the facts; must have limited knowledge of the scriptures if we are still crying about stuff after all of this and after getting this far.
  - c. Her answer is sincere, heartfelt, but not true. Still holding onto her original assumptions despite the facts inside the tomb. Crying because she doesn't know where Jesus is.
    - i. If you don't know where Jesus is, you should be crying. But when you study the Word those tears about where he is should stop.
14. Okay, she turns back and sees Jesus, but doesn't recognize him. That's how real resurrections should work. She knew what he looked like before. Recognized him before this, but now after he has gone through all of this and gotten up from this impossible situation, when she sees him again, she doesn't recognize him.
  - a. When you see me get up from this mess, you shouldn't recognize me.
  - b. When I have had a true resurrection experience, you should have a hard time recognizing me from what I used to be before.
  - c. We've been changed.

*<sup>15</sup>Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? Whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away.*

*<sup>16</sup>Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master.*

*<sup>17</sup>Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God. <sup>15</sup>Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? Whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away. <sup>16</sup>Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabbani; which is to say, Master. <sup>17</sup>Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.*

15. Jesus asks the same question as the angels, why are you still crying? Now she has seen the stone moved, witness two people come and leave changed, saw some things she never saw before, saw two angels sitting down where Jesus should have been, and is talking to Jesus but doesn't know it, and still crying.
  - a. Who are you looking for? When you find what you're looking for, then you can stop crying.
  - b. Another assumption, which is wrong, she thought he worked there. When you have the wrong assumptions, you ask the wrong questions.
16. Jesus called her by name....He knows her name. She must have turned away again, but when she hears her name, she turns back toward him and recognizes him and calls him Master.
  - a. Notice seeing him didn't spark a change...it was what he said, the word, which caused her to believe. You better believe the word!
17. She was going to touch him but he tells her not to. Don't touch or hold him back from what he needed to do as our high priest. Notice, after the resurrection, he still has a mission to accomplish for us. Intercession for us. Doesn't want anything to keep him from going all the way up.
  - a. Even after your resurrection, don't let anything keep you from going all the way up. There is still another level after this.
  - b. She experiences the true resurrection. So she gets new instructions. There is a word and instructions for every season you enter. Her instructions now are to go tell the brothers where I'm going.....a place where we can go too because He's is our Father and God too.
  - c. Notice the close connection we have and will have with his resurrection, he calls them his brothers...wow!

*<sup>18</sup>Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the LORD, and that he had spoken these things unto her. <sup>19</sup>Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. <sup>20</sup>And when he had so said, he shewed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the LORD.*

*<sup>21</sup>Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. <sup>22</sup>And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost:*

*<sup>23</sup>Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained.*

18. Obedience is always required. Now she has a greater testimony. We should too. The same woman who had seven demons now honored (Luke 8). She is the first one to see and speak to Jesus after his resurrection.
19. Same day, doors were shut. Why? Because of fear from others outside so they shut themselves in. They were closed up and trapped with their fear of what could happen. But Jesus shows up in the middle of their fears and proclaims peace for them.
20. They were sad and in fear. How does Jesus change that around so that by the end of the visit, they are glad?
  - a. First he tells them peace be unto them. So they must have been lacking peace. So he stops by specifically to give them what they lack which is peace. He shows them what he went through before, but he wasn't still in that state, he was still standing after all that. They were glad that the one they loved was still there, their Master was still there, and if he could recover after all he had suffered, we ought to be glad too. They were sad because their hope was dead but now they see Jesus is alive and so is now their hope.
  - b. Application for Today: Where is your hope? When your hope is in Jesus, you can feel good about your situation.
  - c. Notice, he still had the wounds...I mean it happened, but it wasn't holding him back. Didn't hinder him any longer. No pain now. It seems important for him to show them his wounds. Why? Perhaps because Jesus is the first fruit of those who will get up from dead situations. There are some things God wants us to see and experience so we can apply. For example, the stone rolled away, the grave clothes left behind, the wounds that are no longer holding him down.



- d. Application for Today: God is a way maker (He still rolls stones away); God helps us to leave our past behind (when we are crucified with him through our belief in his gift to us); God can give us new life (we are risen with him) despite what we may have gone through. We can get up from sin and death.
21. Jesus tells them a second time, peace be unto them. Why? Perhaps to confirm that his peace is available still for them to enjoy. Perhaps it is to let them know they can have his peace in the new assignment he is giving them. There is a mission or something to do after your resurrection. He is going to send you to someone else after you get up.
22. Receiving the Holy Ghost must be critical to the next phase of your journey in going higher. The indwelling Holy Spirit is absolutely necessary for you to be successful in this phase of your Christian walk. You can't really do what he calls us to do effectively without the power of the Holy Ghost.
23. Power to deal with sin. Remit = to send away.

*<sup>24</sup>But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. <sup>25</sup>The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the LORD. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe. <sup>26</sup>And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you. <sup>27</sup>Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing.*

*<sup>28</sup>And Thomas answered and said unto him, My LORD and my God.*

*<sup>29</sup>Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.*

*<sup>30</sup>And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book:*

*<sup>31</sup>But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.*

24. Thomas wasn't there when Jesus showed up the first time. He didn't experience this visitation.
25. So since he missed it, the disciples told him what they had seen. They gave him a good word and testimony but he wouldn't believe based upon this alone.

- a. Don't be surprised if some folk don't believe your testimony of what you've seen and been through.
  - b. Powerful statement...."I will not believe". Today, people still will not believe that you can recover from some things. But Jesus tells us and demonstrates to his followers that you can get up again.
26. Eight is the number of new beginnings. Doors are shut again and Jesus shows up with the same message as before, Peace be unto you. He must really want them and us to have peace. How can we have peace today? It must be found in the resurrection.
27. Jesus addresses Thomas specifically. Believe!
28. Thomas' response is correct now.
29. Thomas is now a believer but he had to see it first before he would believe. Jesus however, proclaims a greater blessing on us who believe but yet have not seen it in person.....we are more blessed because we believe from the word and testimonies. Doesn't mean we will not see...just means we haven't seen it yet....that's great faith and blessings....believing before it gets to you or happens for you.
30. Did many other signs where they could see.
31. We don't need to know the other signs and thing he did. The most important things that Jesus did are written here and that is all we need to draw into closer relationship and faith in him. What we need to know in order to have faith and believe in Jesus is already written here. So we have exactly what we need in order to live and have a life of victory through Jesus. So if we are lacking anything, it is not because we don't have the words we need to obtain it. It must be due to unbelief or not reading and understanding the word, but we have available to us what we need to learn how to live.

#### General Questions to Consider:

Peter and John found evidence they could see and touch to convince them that Jesus was no longer entombed. What evidence of the resurrection do you have?

What are some of the barriers that can keep people today from understanding and accepting the facts of the resurrection? Would you say the answer is more facts or more faith? Explain.

How can you demonstrate faith in God and His Word even in times when you don't fully understand what He is doing?

Why do you think John (the other disciple) believed after he entered the tomb and saw what was there? What exactly did he believe at this point?



How could he have believed if he did not yet understand the Scripture that explained what he was seeing?

Does knowing that the resurrection of Christ was predicted in Scripture make it easier to believe? Why or why not?

How much does a person need to understand today in order to believe? When we believe, who or what are we believing?