

He's Alive!

Jesus was killed on a Roman cross, He was buried in a tomb, and a stone was rolled over that entrance. BUT WAIT! THERE'S MORE!

WHEN JESUS DIED, HE WAS ONLY GETTING STARTED!

What did Jesus do after He died?

In our text today of John chapter 20, we will discover 4 actions of Jesus which He did after He died.

Action #1 - He left His grave clothes behind. 20:1-7 (particularly vs. 6 & 7)

Sunday is the first day of the week. It's the day of the week Jesus rose from the dead. It's the very reason why, traditionally, the Church has met on Sunday. Early on, we read in the Bible that Sunday was the day of corporate worship for believers (Acts 20:7).

Mary is Mary of Magdala. She is mentioned by name 13 times in the Bible. Magdala was her home town. It was on the western shore of the sea of Galilee. She was a disciple of Jesus along with the 12, but her background is interesting. Early on in Jesus' ministry, she was under demonic oppression and even possession. 7 demons had control over her, but Jesus removed the demonic influence from her. She became a full time follower of Jesus. She even financially supported Jesus' ministry.

Mary was one of the women who, watching from a distance, saw Joseph of Aramathea and Nicodemus place Jesus in the tomb. So, she and three other women knew where Jesus' body had been lain.

John is focusing on three people at the moment - (1) John, (2) Peter, and (3) Mary. These are three disciples of Jesus who had given everything to follow Him. They banked their whole life on Jesus, but in a short matter of time, everything began to fall apart. On Friday morning, they heard the crowds yell out, "Crucify him!," and I can't imagine what was going on in their heads as Jesus was hung up on that cross and breathed His last.

Mary told the devastated disciples what she saw. She made an assumption and gave them a story that wasn't true - that Jesus' body was stolen. The disciples took her word for it, and they took off. When they got to the tomb, they saw grave clothes, but no body. Jesus had left the grave clothes behind.

Action #2 - He left the tomb empty. 20:8-10 (the empty tomb is implied in the text)

What did He believe? Did he understand everything and believe in that moment that Jesus had risen? I don't think so. I think he understood that Jesus was gone, but he believed Mary's made up story. He believed that the body was stolen and taken somewhere else.

Why do I say that? Because verse 9 tells us that they still didn't understand at this point.

These guys were at an all time low, and it's as though they had lost all hope, but they had no idea what joy was coming for them. They had no idea what God had already done and what they were about to see.

Action #3 - He called a disciple by name. **20:11-16**

As Peter and John leave the scene, the focus returns to Mary. She becomes the first eye witness of the resurrection. She formerly was demonically oppressed and possessed. She was delivered from darkness by Christ, and her desire to seek Him provided her the privilege of seeing Jesus first.

At first, she did not recognize Jesus. Either He must have looked a little bit different, or maybe she was just blinded by her sorrow.

I think Jesus asks a wonderful question for all of us to consider. Whom are you seeking?

Supposing Him to be the gardener, she said to Him, “Sir if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.” Her only care was Jesus. She said give me Jesus. Nothing else. Mary sought to Lord.

Jesus was standing there in front of Mary, but in His new, resurrected body she didn’t quite recognize Him. So she said, have you taken my Lord away whom I am seeking? She probably looked down to the ground in tears, and at that very moment, Jesus called her by name.

This may have been the day Jesus arose from the grave, but nothing has changed since then. He is still in the business of calling His sheep by name.

Action #4 - He told that disciple to spread the good news. **20:17-18**

Jesus said do not cling to me. In other words, He was telling her that fellowship with Him may be good now, but it will be even better after He ascends to the Father and continues His fellowship with the disciples through the Holy Spirit.

After telling her not to cling to Him, He gives her a mission - “Go tell my brothers.”

It’s the cross of Christ that makes one a brother of Jesus, and it’s the cross of Christ that makes one a child of God. John 1:12 - *but to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.*

What a privilege it would have been for Mary to be the first evangelist of the resurrection of Jesus. She went out and told the brothers that she had seen the Lord, and she told them what Jesus told her.

When Jesus died, He was only getting started. He left the grave clothes. He left the tomb. He’s been calling His own by name and calling His own to spread the good news - the gospel.