

THE RESURRECTION

Date: April 11, 2020

Scripture: John 20

Hey church, this is pastor Joby here and we want to thank you so much for being on this podcast Lent journey as we have prepared our hearts and minds and soul and bodies to celebrate Jesus this resurrection Sunday. And so with that, this is the last of all the installments. I'd like for you to turn to John 20 where the Bible records the most important historical event in all of history.

Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. ^{2a} So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, John 20:1-2a

And as we know, this disciple is referred to John in the book of John, written by John.

^{2b} and said to them, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him." ³ So Peter went out with the other disciple, and they were going toward the tomb. ⁴ Both of them were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. ⁵ And stooping to look in, he saw the linen cloths lying there, but he did not go in. ⁶ Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen cloths lying there, John 20:2b-6

Now I do want you to just see the humanity of the gospel writer here. The apostle John wants us to know over and over and over that in a foot race that the apostle John can outrun Simon Peter. Now while I find that humorous, there's something very

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important here. You see every single one of us approach Easter Sunday, every single one of us approach Jesus and approach the empty tomb with our very own humanity, with our own ego and our own insecurities and the beauty of the grace of God is that He meets us right where we are.

⁶ Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen cloths lying there, ⁷ and the face cloth, which had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen cloths but folded up in a place by itself.

John 20:6-7

Now, what's interesting here is that in First Century etiquette, when you finish eating, if you were going to leave the table, but you wanted the waitress or waiter or servant to know that you were coming back, then you wouldn't crumble your napkin and throw it on top of your plate. That meant you could take it away because I'm not coming back. But if you wanted the servant to know that you were going to return, then you would fold up your linen and you would place it in your seat.

⁸ Then the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; ⁹ for as yet they did not understand the Scripture, that he must rise from the dead. ¹⁰ Then the disciples went back to their homes.

¹¹ But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb, and as she wept she stooped to look into the tomb. ¹² And she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had lain, one at the head and one at the feet. ¹³ They said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him."

John 20:8-13

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By the way, I just want to point out that none of the disciples showed up to the empty tomb expecting to find a resurrected Christ, even though Jesus had prophesied about this over and over and over. And let me tell you why that's good news for you and I, if you're a little slow on the uptake, if it takes you a little longer in your disciple group to understand what the Bible is saying, then I've got really good news. That you can make a great disciple!

¹⁴ Having said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing, but she did not know that it was Jesus. ¹⁵ Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? 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." ^{16a} Jesus said to her, "Mary."

John 20:14-16a

He called her by name.

¹⁶ Jesus said to her, "Mary." She turned and said to him in Aramaic, "Rabboni!" (which means Teacher). ¹⁷ Jesus said to her, "Do not cling to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to my brothers and say to them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'" ¹⁸ Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, "I have seen the Lord"—and that he had said these things to her.

John 20:16-18

You see, what's most interesting, in my opinion here, is just like John and Peter come as they are to the tomb, Mary comes as she is to the tomb and Jesus meets them right

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where they are and it's not until Jesus calls her name that she recognizes who He is. We see this as we continue to read in John 20:19.

¹⁹ On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you." ²⁰ When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. ²¹ Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you." ²² And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit.

John 20:19-23

I believe this is a picture referring back to the creation account in Genesis where God Almighty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit breathed the ruach of life into the very first man, Adam. And then what, the second Adam, what Jesus, the greater Adam who has conquered sin and death, He is recreating creation here with the new man through His blood and He is breathing new life into His followers.

²³ If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you withhold forgiveness from any, it is withheld."

²⁴ Now Thomas, one of the twelve, called the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came. ²⁵ So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see in his hands the mark of the nails, and place my finger into the mark of the nails, and place my hand into his side, I will never believe."

²⁶ Eight days later, his disciples were inside again, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." ²⁷ Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and see

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my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side. Do not disbelieve, but believe." ²⁸ Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!"

John 20:23-28

You see, once again, Jesus meets His disciples right where they are. He meets Mary in her sadness. He meets Thomas in his doubt and He does not scold them. He does not condemn them. He just moves towards them. Speaking of moving towards people, in chapter 21 it's a very familiar story. Peter essentially says to the other disciples, "Hey boys, I'm going fishing." Now, this wasn't just a hobby.

I think what was happening here is that Peter was returning to his old lifestyle and the Bible says that he goes out fishing and many of the disciples go with him and they fish all night long and Jesus shows up on the seashore and cries out to the men in the boat, "Have you caught any fish?" And they say, "No, we haven't caught any." And then He says, "Well, why don't you try it on the other side of the boat?" And they throw the net into the other side and they catch a huge haul of fish. And then if you pick it up in chapter 21 verse seven the Bible says:

⁷ That disciple whom Jesus loved therefore said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on his outer garment, for he was stripped for work, and threw himself into the sea. ⁸ The other disciples came in the boat, dragging the net full of fish, for they were not far from the land, but about a hundred yards off. ⁹ When they got out on land, they saw a charcoal fire in place, with fish laid out on it, and bread.

John 21:7-9

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Now the last time a charcoal fire is mentioned in the book of John, Peter and the other disciples, Peter was warming his hands by a charcoal fire and he denies knowing who Jesus is three times. And now Jesus meeting Peter right where he is, sets the scene to recreate a charcoal fire for them to have another encounter.

¹⁰ Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish that you have just caught." ¹¹ So Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish, 153 of them. And although there were so many, the net was not torn. ¹² Jesus said to them, "Come and have breakfast." Now none of the disciples dared ask him, "Who are you?" They knew it was the Lord. ¹³ Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and so with the fish. ¹⁴ This was now the third time that Jesus was revealed to the disciples after he was raised from the dead.

¹⁵ When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." He said to him, "Feed my lambs." ¹⁶ He said to him a second time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." He said to him, "Tend my sheep." ^{17a} He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" Peter was grieved because he said to him the third time, "Do you love me?"

John 21:10-17a

And I think Peter at this point again, Peter is always a little slow on the uptake. And Peter realizes, okay Jesus, I see what you're doing. I denied you three times. Now you're going to ask me three times if I love you and Peter replies:

^{17b} "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my sheep. ¹⁸ Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were young, you used to

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dress yourself and walk wherever you wanted, but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will dress you and carry you where you do not want to go." ^{19a} (This he said to show by what kind of death he was to glorify God.)

John 21:17b-19a

Let me explain. What Jesus is saying to Peter is, "Peter, I know that you have denied me three times, but my grace is sufficient for you. That when I pushed up on my nail pierced feet on that cross and I said, 'It is finished.' Then the price was paid for every one of your sins. Paid for the things that you had done and you will do, even the denial. So no matter how egregious you think your sin is, my grace is infinitely bigger."

And He even goes on to say, when you were young, you dressed yourself, you went where you wanted. When you're old, somebody else will dress you and they will take you where you don't want to go. Church history tells us that Peter was crucified upside down on a cross. Jesus basically says, "Peter, it would be better for you to follow in a close relationship with me and live a shorter life that ends in crucifixion than it would be to live a life without me." And then He says this to Peter:

^{19b} And after saying this he said to him, "Follow me."

John 21:19b

Interestingly enough, that the first words recorded in the gospels that Jesus ever has for Peter on the same shore, next to the same sea after a day of fishing, Jesus's invitation to Peter to follow Him is this, "Follow me and I will make you fisher of men."

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And now after the resurrection and after one of Peter's greatest moral failures, Jesus comes back to him with that same invitation. Follow me. You see, God is not just a God of second chances because you and I need more than a second chance because if you and I have a second chance of life, we'll just screw up a second time. We don't need a second chance at life. We need a new life and what we find through the life, death and particularly the resurrection of Jesus Christ is this invitation into a new life to follow Jesus. Amen.