

The Next 40 Days – Week 1 – John 20:11-18 – Jesus Appears first to Mary Magdalene

John 20:11-18: *Now Mary stood outside the tomb crying. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb ¹² and saw two angels in white, seated where Jesus' body had been, one at the head and the other at the foot.*

¹³ *They asked her, "Woman, why are you crying?"*

"They have taken my Lord away," she said, "and I don't know where they have put him." ¹⁴ *At this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not realize that it was Jesus.*

¹⁵ *He asked her, "Woman, why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?"*

Thinking he was the gardener, she said, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him."

¹⁶ *Jesus said to her, "Mary."*

She turned toward him and cried out in Aramaic, "Rabboni!" (which means "Teacher").

¹⁷ *Jesus said, "Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father. Go instead to my brothers and tell them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'"*

¹⁸ *Mary Magdalene went to the disciples with the news: "I have seen the Lord!" And she told them that he had said these things to her.*

INTRO to series "The Next 40 Days" – After He walked out of the grave on that first Easter Sunday, Jesus spent the next 40 days teaching and preparing His followers for what was coming next. As each day passed, the power of the Holy Spirit and the birth of the Church drew nearer. Though many were struggling with fear, failure, and doubts, Jesus cut through their confusion as light breaks into darkness. Jesus also gave some of His most important teaching during this time, including the "great commissions"—and then He ascended to heaven.

INTRO to **John 20:11-18:** Following the account of the women and the male disciples viewing the empty tomb after Jesus' resurrection (**John 20:1-10**), John describes Mary Magdalene standing outside the tomb. There, Jesus appeared to her in person first, before anyone else.

I. Mary Magdalene had not yet discovered the Living Hope of Christ risen from the dead. (vs. 11-13)

-Mary had stayed by the tomb all through the first night and was back again as soon as possible on the morning after the Sabbath – that first Easter morning.

-Mary was standing outside of the empty tomb, believing at first that someone had stolen Jesus' body, and she was sobbing in her grief. Because proper burial was very important in the Jewish faith, Mary was likely worried that Jesus' body would be desecrated.

-Two angels appeared to Mary standing on each end of where Jesus body had been laying, and they asked her, *“Woman, why are you crying?”*

-Mary replied, *“They have taken my Lord away,” she said, “and I don’t know where they have put him.”*

Question: Do you know the greatest hope a person can know—the Living Hope of Jesus Christ, risen from the dead?

II. Jesus came to Mary Himself, and He called her by name. (vs. 14-16)

-Jesus appeared to Mary first, before anyone else, but she did not immediately recognize Him. Thinking He was the gardener, she asked for help in finding the body.

-Jesus revealed Himself to Mary simply by calling her name - *Jesus said to her, “Mary.”*

-Mary *turned toward him and cried out in Aramaic, “Rabboni!” (which means “Teacher”).*

-Mary’s grief was overwhelmed by joy at the sound of Jesus calling her name. As Jesus said in **John 10** (see below), He is the Good Shepherd who calls His sheep by name!

Question: Do you know Jesus so personally that you know how to recognize His voice?

III. Jesus sent Mary to “go and tell” the Good News of the Living Hope of Christ risen from the dead! (vs. 17-18)

-Jesus’ resurrected body was clearly different than His body before His death on the cross. Later in the New Testament, Scripture describes the resurrected bodies we will have in Christ in much the same way. (see **1 Corinthians 15** below)

-When Mary attempted to grab onto Jesus, He said to her: *“Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father.”* In other words, Jesus was saying: “I’m not leaving you yet. A new work of God is beginning, and now is not the time to grieve or to wait but rather to go and tell.”

-As Mary went to go and tell, her first testimony was: *“I have seen the Lord!”*

Question: Can you testify to the ways in which you have seen the Lord actively at work in your own life?

Other Scriptures Referenced:

John 10:1-7: *“Very truly I tell you Pharisees, anyone who does not enter the sheep pen by the gate, but climbs in by some other way, is a thief and a robber. 2 The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. 3 The gatekeeper opens the gate for*

him, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. 4 When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice. 5 But they will never follow a stranger; in fact, they will run away from him because they do not recognize a stranger's voice." 6 Jesus used this figure of speech, but the Pharisees did not understand what he was telling them.

1 Corinthians 15:35-44, 50-57: *But someone will ask, "How are the dead raised? With what kind of body will they come?"* ³⁶ *How foolish! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies.* ³⁷ *When you sow, you do not plant the body that will be, but just a seed, perhaps of wheat or of something else.* ³⁸ *But God gives it a body as he has determined, and to each kind of seed he gives its own body.* ³⁹ *Not all flesh is the same: People have one kind of flesh, animals have another, birds another and fish another.* ⁴⁰ *There are also heavenly bodies and there are earthly bodies; but the splendor of the heavenly bodies is one kind, and the splendor of the earthly bodies is another.* ⁴¹ *The sun has one kind of splendor, the moon another and the stars another; and star differs from star in splendor.*

⁴² *So will it be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable;* ⁴³ *it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power;* ⁴⁴ *it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body.*

If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body.

⁵⁰ *I declare to you, brothers and sisters, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.* ⁵¹ *Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed—* ⁵² *in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.* ⁵³ *For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality.* ⁵⁴ *When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: "Death has been swallowed up in victory."*

⁵⁵ *"Where, O death, is your victory?*

Where, O death, is your sting?"

⁵⁶ *The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law.* ⁵⁷ *But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Other Quotes/Resources:

"Then He said, 'Mary.' I cannot interpret that in any tone of voice of which I am capable, so as to reveal the significance of that 'Mary.' It is possible to utter a name in such a way as to call back all memories, and reveal all endearment. That is what Jesus did."

—G. Campbell Morgan