

RESURRECTION - THE DAY EVERYTHING CHANGED! - John 20:1-18

As this young man discovered, *the resurrection of Christ changed everything!* Today, you don't have to walk out the *same* way you walked in! God sent His Son to announce to mankind we no longer have to believe the lies of *hopelessness* and *despair!* **Because Christ lives, everlasting hope is alive today!**

There was a woman by the name of **Mary Magdalene** who showed up at the tomb of Jesus on that resurrection morning, long ago. **Some of you might relate to Mary.** She had a rough life. The Bible tells us, *before meeting Jesus*, she was *possessed* by seven demons. She was a hooker, a woman of the night, *she had gone from relationship to relationship, for profit*, but found **no** profit for her soul! She was hopeless, at *rock bottom!* But then one day she met Jesus, and ***everything* changed!**

But now the hope she once *possessed* has died, crucified on a rugged Roman cross. Still, she comes to the tomb of Christ; *Luke's account records other women were with her.* **Mary is broken!** Maybe you can relate. Surrounded by friends but utterly alone; *no one could feel the pain she felt!* **Read: (v.1-10)** **Along with Mary's reaction to the *empty tomb* we find two others: that of **Peter and John.** John's reaction represents that of those who come to *just* look into the tomb, just as some are gathered here today; you've come to simply look! But the Bible says, ***"Oh taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man/woman who trusts in Him!" (Psalm 34:8).*****

Peter took it a *step* further; he *enters* the tomb. He represents those who come into the church. They enjoy church, *the songs, programs* – they **believe**, but *remain* unchanged! **(James 2:19) You believe that there is one God. You**

do well. Even the demons believe — and tremble! Jesus did not rise from the grave to give us a new *philosophy*; He is not risen to provide us a new *religion*; but He conquered the grave that we might have a **living** relationship with the **Living God!** That we might be a **new creation**, through faith in Christ! **(2 Corinthians 5:17) Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.** But sadly, as with Peter and John's first reaction, many will return home unchanged! **Read: (v.9)**

"But Mary!" stood outside the tomb! **And why not?** She's got no place to go. She couldn't go back to her *former* demons, or to yet *another man* promising to love her, *only* to use her! **She is going to stay there, until her change comes!** *This was an act of desperation!* **Only desperate people can be filled!** **(Matthew 5:6) Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, For they shall be filled. Read: (v.11-13).**

Mary wept, but she wept in hope! Because, as she *wept*, she stooped! *Humbled herself!* **(James 4:6) "God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble."** The angels asked, "Woman, why are you weeping?!" Heaven knows that our tears have meaning! **(Psalm 56:8) You number my wanderings; Put my tears into Your bottle; Are they not in Your book? Only God knows the true meaning behind *your* tears!**

Read: (v.14-15) Notice: Mary's sorrow had blinded her to the truth! Like many people today, her search for hope has been hindered by life's *circumstances, personal weaknesses, and sorrows.* These have often blinded us to **eternal hope**, standing right in front of us! **Psychologists call this condition "inattention blindness," or "perceptual blindness."** Some of you

have come in today with **perceptual blindness!** Your *perception* of God has been molded by Hollywood, an abusive mother or father, a *failed* pastor, or church member!

But I *challenge* your perspective, by asking you to consider the One risen from the grave! Pilate examined Him, and despite the opinion of an angry crowd, declared, "*I find no fault in this Man!*" Don't allow your *negative* perception (experiences) to blind you to the truth! (John 3:16-17) For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

Notice: Jesus asked Mary the same question the angels asked her (v.13). The Lord *always* exposes the heart of the matter before He heals us. *Why are you weeping today?* Could it be, like Mary, you've spent your life seeking the living – *that which will bring you life* – among the dead?! In **Luke 24, Luke records, the *angels* said to the women, "***Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen!***" God is saying today, abandon those *old, dead paths* you have *continually* run to; stop living out the *definition* of insanity! "***Repeating the same thing over and over again, expecting different results!***"**

In (v.14), for Mary, everything changed! With one word: "**Mary!**" There's nothing more *life-changing* than when God calls ***your name!*** He's calling your name today! He calls, knowing your *weaknesses and failures, the hidden things of your heart!* Mary responds, "**Rabboni**" (teacher)! "Teacher" – *the One who taught me how to live, when I wanted to die; how to have peace in*

troubled times; how to love, when my heart was filled with hate! The One who showed me the path to life everlasting! (John 14:6) “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.”

He said this because His sacrifice *for our sins* was the only acceptable sacrifice before God! Read: (v.17) Why did Jesus say this? Because He was on His way to complete our atonement, *as our everlasting High Priest and sacrifice* before God, His Father! (Hebrews 9:12b) “...but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.” I believe Jesus paused because He could not resist Mary’s broken and contrite spirit at the tomb! (Psalm 34:18) The Lord is close to the brokenhearted; He rescues those whose spirits are crushed. NLT Jesus came to heal the brokenhearted! Read: (v.18) *Mary went and told the disciples about her encounter with the risen Savior, not an empty tomb!*

CONCLUSION: The recent discovery of a black hole in space *amazed* the world. The black hole is 55 million light years away from earth; that’s 6 trillion miles! *Scientists affirm Einstein’s theory of general relativity was right!* One scientist said, “We delight to report to you today that we have seen what we thought was unseeable.” www.foxnews.com/science.

Today, I’m delighted to report to you that we have seen what the world believed was “unseeable!” Christ is risen! And we are witnesses of this fact! What fact? (Romans 6:23) For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. Notre Dame Cathedral, in France, nearly burned down the other day. The president of France vowed to rebuild it within 5 years! The good news is, in Christ, it doesn’t take 5 years to restore a life. He is risen: “To console those who mourn in Zion, To give them beauty for ashes, The oil of joy for mourning, The garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.” (Isaiah 61:3) He knows your name!