

Christ is Risen For You

John 20:1-18

[1] 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. [2] So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, 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, [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. [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." [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." [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. (ESV)

Early in the morning, sometime right at dawn according to the language of John's Gospel Mary Magdalene heads to the tomb of Jesus. From the other Gospel accounts, we know that she was with some of Jesus' other female followers, to go and anoint his body, as was the Jewish custom for burial. The fact is that Mary and the others went and definitely expected to find a body there, and they didn't expect Him to be risen from the dead. Despite the years of following Jesus and His ministry, having been set free from demons as recorded in Luke's Gospel, and hearing His Word of cleansing for her, Mary was upset that His body was missing from the grave. Yet we are told, after going to the tomb that she "saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. [2] So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him." (John 20:1-2) Mary doesn't understand, or expect a Risen Lord, but really thinks someone has taken Him away or stolen His body. So we are told that she went back to the tomb having missed Peter and John who had already left there after she told them He was missing, and she weeps right there by His tomb. We know this because when the two angels ask why she is weeping, and she answers, " , "They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him." (vs. 13) Then Mary comes face to face with the risen Jesus, who is standing right in front of her but she doesn't even recognize Him. This is the One that she had spent so much time hearing,

talking, and watching Him do all kinds of incredible things, for Mary Magdalene was in the inner circle of His friends and followers, and is mentioned in the Gospels 12 separate times, which is more than many of the apostles. Mary, however, doesn't recognize Him. We can look at this and see how she should have known He would rise on the 3rd Day. Jesus had not been secret about predicting His own resurrection. Again and again He had spoken of it, and even said specific things like, John records in Ch. 2 verse 19

““Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.”

Or in Matthews Gospel where he records,

[Matthew 16:21 \(NIV\)](#) *“From that time on Jesus began to explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life.”*

Again in Mark 8:31

“[31] And he began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes and be killed, and after three days rise again.”

Mary needed, the very same thing that you and I need this Easter, for Mary was a sinner, like you. Mary didn't have the ability by her own reason or strength to believe in her Lord Jesus Christ, or come to Him, for faith is a gift. She needed Jesus to show Himself to her and open her eyes as to who He is. She needed to believe. Jesus, doesn't, as we might expect, condemn her for her lack of faith, but out of His love for her, He calls Mary by name. “Mary” he calls to her by the name he had spoken so any times before. This is the Risen Jesus standing beside her and saying her name with a most familiar tone. She immediately recognizes and knows that He is risen and truly present with her, not missing, so she immediately says “Rabboni!” Which means Teacher or master teacher. The next thing John records here is that Mary went and told all of the disciples that she had personally seen the Lord. She can't help but get the word out about Jesus being alive.

Our text this early Easter morning is such a beautiful picture of how the Risen and Victorious Christ, comes to each individual, so personally, to give faith, and personally love and cleanse you by name. Now He comes to you, a sinner, who can't believe on your own, but Jesus, who specifically died and rose for your sins, turns you to Him, like He did to Mary and calls you to faith in His work on the cross for you. Jesus said, “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.” In John 10:27 and Mary, who was one of those sheep, heard Him speak her name. Jesus does the same for you in Holy Baptism, where He calls you by name and then puts His very name on you, joining you with Him in His death and resurrection to be called holy as He is holy, by pure gift. He personally uses the office of the pastor to absolve you and tell you as He brings you to His altar, and feed you His actual Body and Blood to make certain as He feeds you personally, so that you will believe that He is Risen and Risen FOR YOU. “for we are saved by grace through faith, this is not of yourselves, but it's a gift from God.” (Eph.2:8-9) and the Risen Jesus gives this through His Word. “So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.” Rom. 10:17 The same Risen Jesus who came to Mary, comes to you by name to tell you that His dying on Good Friday and His Rising this Easter Sunday is FOR YOU and your salvation. He is risen, and risen indeed.

In the Name of Jesus, AMEN