

Three Days Later: The Moment That Changed Everything

A Special Easter Message

John 20:11-16

April 21, 2019

BIG IDEA

Scripturally speaking, no one played a bigger role on the morning of the Lord's resurrection than Mary Magdalene. She'd been at the cross. Three days later, she came to the empty tomb. She lingered there in agony. She thought the body of Jesus had been taken away by robbers. But in one stunning moment the Lord appeared to her. Now, through her eyes, we can experience the moment that changed everything.

THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURE

Context:

This text is set on resurrection morning. Mary Magdalene (not Mary the mother of Jesus) had come to the tomb early. She found the tomb empty. She ran back to tell Peter. He came running, went in, and found the grave clothing but no body. Then, John went in and the Bible says he believed.

John 20:11-16

Jesus Appears to Mary Magdalene

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).

1. The Resurrection Is Real

John 20:14 – *Having said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing, but she did not know that it was Jesus.*

The list of people that saw Jesus after the resurrection is a long one.

- **On Resurrection Sunday:** Mary Magdalene ([Mark 16:9-10](#)); and by the other women ([Matthew 28:9-10](#)); by two disciples on the road to Emmaus ([Luke 24:13-32](#)); by Peter ([Luke 24:34](#)); by the apostles (with Thomas absent) gathered in the upper room ([Luke 24:36ff](#); [John 20:19ff](#)).
- **Over the next 40 days:** ([Acts 1:3](#); cf. [10:41](#); [13:31](#)), the Lord was seen by the apostles (with Thomas present, [John 20:26-31](#)); by seven apostles at the Sea of Galilee ([John 21](#)); by His disciples in Galilee ([Matthew 28:16-20](#)); by 500 brethren at once ([1 Corinthians 15:6](#)); by James ([1 Corinthians 15:7](#)); by those who saw Him ascend to heaven ([Acts 1:9-10](#)); and Paul ([1 Corinthians 15:8](#); cf. [Acts 9:3-7, 27](#)).

© The Tomb Was Found Empty (Jason Jackson, Christian Courier)

- a. If you were Mary, would you have been looking for Jesus at that moment, or would you have assumed that He was dead? I fear that I would have not believed because there are times that I don't believe, even now. What are times that you struggle to believe?**

- b. Mary was a devoted disciple. Jesus gave her the honor of seeing Him first. Can you think of some times in your life that you really saw or experienced the work of Jesus? How did your life change?**



3. The Power of the Resurrection Saves Souls

1 Peter 1:3-4 – *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you...*

The eternal inheritance that Peter talks about is available to you. While all of your stuff will decay and fade away, a relationship with Jesus Christ will provide eternal riches. The amazing moment of the resurrection provides for future hope and it saves souls.

- a. The Bible says that sin came into the world through one man's actions. Adam sinned and cast all of mankind into turmoil. What does this turmoil look like in today's world?**

The Bible gives us hope. It tells us clearly that Jesus Christ has come to make things right.

1 Corinthians 15:21-22 – *For as by a man came death, by a man has come the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive.*

- b. Jesus came to make right all that sin has made wrong. Through Jesus Christ your questions can be answered. Why do you think God made you? Do you believe that He has something special for you to do? What might that be?**

4. Be Like Mary and See the Risen Christ

Don't wait another minute. Today is a day of salvation. Today is the day that Jesus is speaking to you. Though others may not hear Him, you clearly hear Him. The pounding in your chest is the voice of God calling you to come to Him: "Come home, sinner. Seek forgiveness. Live forever with me." Be like Mary. Come and see Jesus. Come and experience salvation.



Sin and death are so powerful that without the intervention of Jesus they lead to the penalty of eternal death and suffering in hell. But Jesus roundly defeated them both, first at the cross, and then three days later at the amazing moment of the resurrection. This is the moment that changed everything.

Death no longer reigned as an enemy of the human race. *Jesus said: "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me...even though he dies...will live."*

Your body will die, but you don't have to. Be like Mary. Come and see. Come and enter in to the salvation of your soul. Here's how:

a. Believe that Jesus is real.

b. Repent of your sin.

c. Submit your life to Christ.

Romans 10:9 tells us that if you simply: "Confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved." And ***verse 10*** says that: "For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved."

PRAY

Dear Jesus, thank you for dying on the cross and rising again. Thank you for your saving power. Thank you for saving me. I don't deserve to be saved. I have sinned so much! I trust in your grace and in the power of the resurrection to save me and am thankful for it. Amen.

DIG DEEPER

For further study this week:

- [*The Case for Easter: A Journalist Investigates Evidence for the Resurrection*](#) – a book from Lee Strobel
- [*Who Is Jesus? \(Crucial Questions\)*](#) – a book from R.C. Sproul

NEXT WEEK'S BIG IDEA

The "I Am" Sayings of Jesus: Saying #2 – "I Am the Light of the World" (John 8:12-9:5)

