

## John 20:11-18 ▪ From Tears to Triumph

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Ryan Perz ▪ April 4, 2021

Jesus' Resurrection and Ascension

Encountering the Risen Jesus brings triumph, joy, and purpose.

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Intro: Since we have been in 1 John, it seems natural to go to John for a Resurrection message. In the Gospels, there are a variety of angles we see the Resurrection from—but they all carry this same basic message:

*Death is Swallowed up in Victory.*

—The Death of the Lord Jesus Christ was not the end; confessing Christians for centuries have all agreed on one basic Truth:

“the third day he rose again from the dead.”

It's Christ's resurrection that makes us *people of hope*.

—This particular story—Mary's encounter, reflects the truth of Ps 30.

“Weeping may stay overnight, but there is joy in the morning” (Ps 30:5 CSB)

It's the resurrection that turns our mourning into dancing.

—Our approach this morning is to hear two questions that Mary is asked.

Outline

—Why are you weeping? (v13)

—Who are you seeking? (v15)

So much is packed into those questions—they do not call for just one-answer replies; they shape worldview, outlook, and hope.

—Before we get to the first question, let's get some context.

Context:

- This is really scene #2 at the empty tomb.
- (v10) Mary is at the empty tomb; she had already seen the stone rolled away early in the morning and ran to get Peter and John.

- Mary Magdalene: she stands out with a stellar reputation with her commitment to the Lord Jesus:

—She is one of the few who faithfully stood near the cross when Jesus died (Jn 19:25)

—And she is the first eyewitness of the empty tomb.

- (v8-10) Peter and John, arrive, see the empty tomb and believe —yet they return back home; (v19) they are also still gripped by fear.

*Mary is faithful, reliable, and bold., but she is also broken.*

The Bible is for broken people to read.

### **Psalm 51:17 ESV**

The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit;  
a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

- It's in her brokenness that Jesus meets her.

### **Why are you weeping? (v13)**

- This question comes from one of the angels
- When the angel calls Mary “Woman”, to our ears, in our culture that may sound disrespectful...but it would have been the polite way to address a female.

Some have made the charge that the Bible—even in Christianity, is anti-woman. Nothing can be further from the truth!! (especially if you consider the context the Bible was written in)

*Notice even here that Mary is a bold and faithful model of discipleship.*

Even though Jesus does not call women to be apostles; women are prized and valued as disciples!

- Furthermore, in Jewish culture a woman's testimony was generally assumed as unreliable so it didn't stick—but who did God send as the first witness: a woman.
- The question is about Mary's tears—why are you weeping?
- This is not a question to get information; it's a question that has a mild reproof behind it.

If we have a friend who is fretting about something we think trivial, we may say—why are you worried about that? Implying that it's not really a big deal.

## Tears

—We weep over things that are broken. Broken relationships. Broken bones. Broken emotions. Broken health.

We weep when something is out of joint, or broken, not right.

- We are familiar with Jesus weeping when his friend Lazarus, died (John 11:35)— we see the fullness of Jesus's humanity.

### **Hebrews 5:7 CSB**

During his earthly life, he offered prayers and appeals with loud cries and tears to the one who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence.

- So we see that it's not beyond Jesus to be broken to the point of tears.
- Yet there is another side of brokenness that we must give attention to.
- If we were finishing out John's Gospel, we would come to the beautiful ending which is the restoration of Peter.

The backstory is Peter's denial; his failure; his sin.

### **Luke 22:62 ESV**

And he went out and wept bitterly.

Peter recognized that something was out of joint; something was broken—his faith.

Gospel—this is always the first step to knowing Christ—spiritual brokenness. *Brokenness over our lack of faith, our sinful heart that induces hurtful words and actions.*

Why are you weeping? It's not wrong to weep. Jesus wept. Broken people weep. Over life's sorrow...and at time over our own sins and shortcomings; if it's a true godly sorrow.

### **2 Corinthians 7:10 ESV**

For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death.

- › But Jesus told his disciples that they are not to stay in a place of sorrow.

### **John 16:20 ESV**

Truly, truly, I say to you, you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice. You will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will turn into joy.

### **John 16:22 ESV**

So also you have sorrow now, but I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you.

What a promise in the Lord Jesus! A joy that can't be taken away!!

It foreshadows the ultimate *lifting of all sorrow* in the new heavens and new earth.

### **Revelation 21:4 ESV**

He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.”

In light of the empty tomb, we can trade tears for triumph if our eyes are open.

How often are we anxious when there is no just cause for anxiety! How often do we mourn over the absence of things which in reality are within our grasp, and even at our right hand! Two thirds of the things we fear in life never happen at all, and two thirds of the tears we shed are throw away and shed in vain. Let us pray for more faith, more patience....Let us believe that things are often working together for our peace and joy, which seem at one time to contain nothing but bitterness and sorrow.”

(J.C Ryle—John Commentary)

### **Who are you seeking? (v15)**

- This second question comes from Jesus (v15)
- In addition to why are you weeping, Jesus asks: Whom are you seeking?
- At this point Mary does not recognize Jesus by sight — (either spiritual blocking, his different resurrected body, maybe it's still dark, or her eyes are filled with tears—or all of the above)

Here we see Jesus in 3 different, yet crucial ways *which every disciple will see Jesus*.

### Shepherd

- It's striking that Mary does not know it's Jesus until he calls her by name.

### **John 10:3–4 ESV**

To him the gatekeeper opens. The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice.

This is also a small reminder that Jesus knows us by name. We are not numbers; or generic—man, woman, or sir; the faith is highly personal.

Gospel: Would Jesus call you by name? Does he know you personally, do you know him as Shepherd? If so, take great comfort in that fact.

### Teacher

- Mary responds with calling Jesus the Aramaic word for teacher: Raboni (my teacher).

Mary understands what being in relationship to Jesus looks like. It's being a learner.

Christians have often been called "churchgoers"—but at the essence is to be a learner (disciple).

### **John 13:13 ESV**

You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am.

### Exalted Lord

- The third thing we see is Jesus saying something that may seem strange (v17)--
- › Yet this is exactly where we see the turn from tears to triumph—the focus of this verse is on the victory!

The picture is Mary clinging desperately to Jesus—probably holding on to his feet.

I still vividly remember my first day of pre-school. I was the shy and quiet kid, so I was not that excited.

The pivotal, life-changing moment came when My mom attempted to drop me off. As I exited her car, I had a sudden change of heart that I was not up for this. So, I hooked my foot under the rocker panel as two teachers were trying to drag me into the building.

What I think was going through my little 5yr old mind—not that I was shy or afraid of the teachers--- *I was afraid that my mom would not come back to get me. I was afraid of losing her presence permanently.*

- That's likely Mary's thinking.
- By Jesus shifting to his Ascension, he is reminding Mary—and the other disciples, that his permanent presence will be with her, but in another way—from the Holy Spirit (Jn 16:7).

### **John 16:7 ESV**

Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you.

*As Jesus is exalted, his presence comes in a more personal way in one sense—into our hearts by His Spirit.*

- Jesus' comments about "my God, and your God" does not deny his divinity—just jump to Thomas's confession (20:28); and the very beginning (Jn 1:1).

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

- Yet take now how Mary speaks of Jesus (v13; 18)—Lord.

Many people are fine with a Jesus who is a friend who forgives; a Savior who dies but a Lord who rules? As Jesus puts the focus on his Ascension—the focus is on his rule.

"he ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty, from there he shall come to judge the living and the dead."

So we see that through the resurrection there is a new way of relating to Jesus: Exalted Lord (Jesus is Lord).

### **Philippians 2:9–11 ESV**

Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Every disciple will relate to Jesus as Shepherd, Teacher, and Lord.

### Conclusion:

This is a story of tears traded for triumph.

As we close, let's look at two ways that the Risen Lord Jesus.

1. Showering grace on failures. Some of the most important, yet overlooked verses in the text: "go to my brothers." Those men who were cowards; abandoned; or worse, denied they even knew Jesus (Peter).

- Even when Jesus meets them next- his first words are: Peace.

There may be some here who have felt like massive spiritual failures. Jesus has grace.

2. Calls to commitment. Jesus has an assignment for Mary—Go and tell. Encountering the Risen Lord Jesus means we are called to commit our lives to him.

Believing in Jesus is always expressed by a commitment to him in full obedience.

There may be some here who need to take that serious today. You know about Jesus. But have you committed your life to Jesus...all of it?

The way to trade tears for triumph is to encounter the Risen Lord Jesus by faith.

We are those who don't get to see—yet are blessed if we still believe.

**John 20:29 ESV**

Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."