



From Betrayal to Belief
John 20:1-29
Easter Week 4/21/19

INTRODUCTION

What would be an example of a lesson from your early childhood that you learned that has formed your life today as a man or woman? What doubts did you encounter in your life? Were there any lessons that you learned that you would call “life-changing”?

Transition: Doubts are powerful and show us that we are human. We deal with the questions of if it is worth it and if it is true? Reflect upon the doubts that you may have in your life. John’s record of Jesus’ resurrection gives us a clear picture of the gospel and calls us to a place of belief over doubts.

UNDERSTANDING

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ JOHN 20:1-9.

Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene *came early to the tomb, while it *was still dark, and *saw the stone already taken away from the tomb. ²So she *ran and *came to Simon Peter and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and *said to them, “They have taken away the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid Him.” ³So Peter and the other disciple went forth, and they were going to the tomb. ⁴The two were running together; and the other disciple ran ahead faster than Peter and came to the tomb first; ⁵and stooping and looking in, he *saw the linen wrappings lying there; but he did not go in. ⁶And so Simon Peter also *came, following him, and entered the tomb; and he *saw the linen wrappings lying there, ⁷and the face-cloth which had been on His head, not lying with the linen wrappings, but rolled up in a place by itself. ⁸So the other disciple who had first come to the tomb then also entered, and he saw and believed. ⁹For as yet they did not understand the Scripture, that He must rise again from the dead. ¹⁰So the disciples went away again to their own homes.

There are two responses to see in this passage. First look at the response of Mary. In verse 2, Mary thought that Jesus’ body had been taken. She thought about the reasonable explanation instead of the miracle and promise of the resurrection.

When we go through moments that ask of us to trust in God's plan over our own, how can we often go only with what is reasonable?

From your personal experience, how have you acted like Mary in how we respond in trials?

The second response is to see of the disciples. In verse 8, we can see a moment of belief that John experienced when he saw the empty tomb. However, when you read verse 9, we can see that the disciples did not see how Jesus came to fulfill the prophecies of His death and resurrection. Jesus Christ knew what He was getting into as it was foretold in Genesis 3, Psalm 22, Isaiah 53. He knew He would die, and He told the disciples after He died, He would be raised back to life on the third day (John 2:19; Luke 9:21-22). The idea of their leader dying was difficult, and they missed out on Christ's glimpse into God's plan. They did not believe because they were heartbroken over His death, and resurrection seemed impossible. The verses state that they went home again (verse 10).

How could the actions of Mary and the disciples be viewed as showing doubts?

Compare and contrast Mary's reaction to the open tomb to John's. Would you have reacted more like Mary or John? Why?

The point is made that if you keep your doubts silent then you miss on the journey of growing in your faith. When we voice our doubts, we can begin to show our transparency and help us to experience breakthrough.

IMPORTANT: The point is made of how the resurrection is the anchor of our lives. This statement means that the resurrection of Jesus Christ stands to be central to all of Christianity! This unique event showed Jesus was not only a man, but He was the God-man that overcame death and the penalty of our sin. So, His walking out of the grave stands to be the truth for us to know that we see not only his sacrifice as the forgiveness of our sins, but the resurrection is the promise of eternal life fulfilled!

What would be evidences in your life that you embrace the resurrection as a central truth in your life?

How did the event of Jesus' death and resurrection prove that He is not only our Savior but also our Lord? What does it look like for us to live under His authority? What can be some areas that we try to hold back from the authority of God?

How should our lives look different in light of believing in the resurrection of Jesus?

Sermon Notes

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ JOHN 20:11-18.

11 But Mary was standing outside the tomb weeping; and so, as she wept, she stooped and looked into the tomb; 12 and she *saw two angels in white

sitting, one at the head and one at the feet, where the body of Jesus had been lying. ¹³ *And they *said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping?” She *said to them, “Because they have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid Him.”* ¹⁴ *When she had said this, she turned around and *saw Jesus standing there, and 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 [a]Hebrew, “Rabboni!” (which means, Teacher).* ¹⁷ *Jesus *said to her, “Stop clinging to Me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to My brethren and say to them, ‘I ascend to My Father and your Father, and My God and your God.’”* ¹⁸ *Mary Magdalene *came, announcing to the disciples, “I have seen the Lord,” and that He had said these things to her.*

Where all the other disciples went home, here we find Mary sitting beside the tomb (verse 11). This passage indicates that Mary was greeted by two angels and by Jesus Himself, yet she did not recognize Him (verse 12-13). Supposing He was the gardener for the tomb area, Mary asked if He (not knowing it was Jesus) had taken the body somewhere (verse 14-15). Her goal at first was to complete the proper burial process. Then, as Jesus called her name, Mary recognized Him (verse 16-17). At the end of the crisis, it was not the empty tomb that opened Mary’s eyes; it was the risen Savior and His revealing of Himself to her (verse 18).

What does the statement mean: the empty tomb points to our risen Savior and Lord? How do we see that reflected in Mary's interaction with Jesus?

What does Jesus’ revealing of Himself to Mary tell us about Him? What does it tell us about our need of a relationship with Him?

Mary responded to the disciples, “I have seen the Lord!”; How do you see the good news of the gospel in Mary’s interaction with Jesus? What are ways that you can make the same expression in your life?

Sermon Notes

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ JOHN 20:19-29.

*¹⁹ So when it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and when the doors were shut where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst and *said to them, “[b]Peace be with you.”* ²⁰ *And when He had said this, He showed them both His hands and His side. The disciples then rejoiced when they saw the Lord.* ²¹ *So Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you; as the Father has sent Me, I also send you.”* ²² *And when He had said this, He breathed on them and *said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³ If you forgive the sins of any, their sins [c]have been forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they have been retained.”*

²⁴ But Thomas, one of the twelve, called [d]Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. ²⁵ So the other disciples were saying to him, “We have seen the

Lord!” But he said to them, “Unless I see in His hands the imprint of the nails and put my finger into the place of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe.”

²⁶ [e]After eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus *came, the doors having been [f]shut, and stood in their midst and said, “Peace be with you.” ²⁷ Then He *said to Thomas, “Reach here with your finger, and see My hands; and reach here your hand and put it into My side; and do not be unbelieving, but believing.” ²⁸ Thomas answered and said to Him, “My Lord and my God!” ²⁹ Jesus *said to him, “Because you have seen Me, have you believed? Blessed are they who did not see, and yet believed.”

The disciples’ fear was most likely rooted in their continued confusion concerning the plans of Jesus. Though they had faith in His power, they did not yet comprehend His purpose and so they hid and doubted. When Thomas was at last presented with the opportunity to touch the scars and verify the resurrection of Jesus, he either lost the nerve or the need. Instead of doubting and inspecting, Thomas responded to the sudden appearance of Jesus by worshiping. Jesus may not appear bodily in the room right now, but like they were for Thomas, His words are all you need. They are all you need for faith and they are all you need for blessing.

Why do you think He showed the disciples His hands and side?

Why do we experience moments of doubt even as we believe? What difference does it make to our faith that Jesus comes with such graciousness in our doubting?

What are the blessings for those who believe without seeing? How have you experienced this?

Read Acts 1-2 and see the difference in the disciples’ attitude after seeing the resurrected Lord. How does this encourage you?

Sermon Notes

APPLICATION

Read 1 Corinthians 15:1-5. How does the gospel message help us to overcome our doubts that we face? How does it build our life upon the truth of God’s love for us?

Spend time in reflection of what direction your life is turned. Are you heading towards the Lord each day or are you moving away? Challenge each other to spend time in God’s Word this week and remain focused on Christ?

Share with someone how the resurrection of Christ makes a difference in your daily life? What hope does the truth of Christ’s resurrection give you?