

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

JULY 23RD, 2023 // GOSPEL OF JOHN

EMPTY (JOHN 20:1-10) DIFFERENT ACCOUNTS

The four Gospels provide different accounts of the resurrection of Jesus and the appearances afterward.

- John had a very evangelical approach to his writing. **He wrote so that the world would believe. This is not just for unbelievers but also to stir up the Believer's faith.**

THE BEAUTY OF SPICE

Mary Magdalene (along with others) had come to anoint the body of Jesus with spices and saw that the body was gone.

- **These women, during the time in which they lived, could not do "great things" for Christ, but they always did what they could. We are called to act in kind, taking the advantages given to us.**

MARY TELLS THE DISCIPLES

Mary ran to Peter and the other disciples to tell them that Jesus' body had been moved. According to other gospel accounts, they did not believe her.

- Peter and John decide to go and evaluate the situation for themselves. Even though it was very **culturally inappropriate**, they found themselves running to the tomb...

THE TOMB IS EMPTY

Even though John made it to the tomb first, Peter was the first to enter. This may have been from the shame of denying Jesus.

- Upon entering the tomb, Peter noticed how the burial clothes were lying. **It was not as when Lazarus was raised. They had been left very intentionally with no indications of being disturbed.**

JOHN ENTERS

After Peter had been in the tomb and seen the burial clothes, John mustered the courage to enter. **Upon entering, he believes.**

- Sometimes it may be difficult to take the next steps of faith. **That is why being with other Believers is so important. We help encourage each other to take that next step.**

WHO ARE YOU LOOKING FOR? (JOHN 20:11-18) MESSENGERS

When we think of angels, we tend to think of halos, harps, and wings. Throughout Scripture, they are seen in human form, proclaiming a message and executing God's plan.

- Just as at the beginning of Jesus' story in a manger, the angels once again want to proclaim **the good news.**

"WHY ARE YOU CRYING?"

The angels ask Mary why she is crying. Soon after, Jesus asks that and more, but Mary failed to see Jesus because of her grief.

- We all will go through tragedy, but **we can't let that tragedy keep us blind and forgetful of Jesus. It should help us see Him in a new way while remembering His promises to us.**

JESUS' HUMILITY

When Jesus was resurrected, He didn't confront the religious leaders, Pilate, or the crowds. Instead, He chose to go to the woman who stayed at the cross and the tomb.

- **Jesus responded to those who were seeking Him. He does the same for us. Even when our faithfulness may waiver, He faithfully stays with us.**

HE IS CALLING OUT YOUR NAME

Mary's grief blinded her to the fact that Jesus was before her. **As great as her devotion was to Him, her vision of who He was, was still far too small.**

- **Suffering does not mean you have been forgotten and Christ isn't walking with you. His body is right before your face, but can you see Him?**

"DON'T CLING TO ME."

This statement to Mary is fascinating. Why can't she touch Him when Thomas is encouraged to touch Him?

- **Jesus was proclaiming a new era of His presence. Physical contact is no longer appropriate because they are to live in supernatural faith. One that is new, intimate, and spiritual.**

MARY'S PROCLAMATION

Mary is told to tell Jesus' brothers that He is ascending to not only His Father and God but theirs also.

- **Because of the work on the cross and Jesus' ascension to the Father, we all are brought into sonship. Our identity is now as sons and daughters and no longer our sin.**

LOCKED DOORS (JOHN 20:19-23) BEHIND LOCKED DOORS

The disciples, even though they had heard the testimony of Mary, still feared the Jews. But Jesus comes to bring peace in the midst of our fears and to send us on His mission.

- **What fears have caused us to hide behind closed doors? Jesus will meet us behind closed doors, but He won't unlock the door for us. Do you want His peace?**

HE BREATHED ON THEM

Before they could go out and represent Jesus, understanding and teaching, they needed the empowering of the Holy Spirit.

- This moment was to bring up the imagery of the Garden. **Just as the first breath from God brought life, this breath from Christ starts the life of the new creation, an awakening of the dead.**

A MESSAGE OF FORGIVENESS

Jesus is not giving people the authority to forgive sins because that is something that only God can do. Jesus is giving them their mission.

- **This mission is the same we all share, which is: make disciples, baptize, and teach. Teaching that we all have been forgiven because of the cross.**

THE INVITATION (JOHN 20:24-31) THOMAS WAS NOT WITH THEM

The disciples tell Thomas of everything they had experienced with Jesus. Though Thomas was pessimistic, he was also loyal (John 11:16).

- **Faith for Thomas seemed impossible. We are being challenged similarly. We hear, we read, and then we are challenged to believe. What will you believe?**

SEEING IS BELIEVING

A week later, Jesus again appears in the room with the disciples, who still are behind locked doors. He presents the evidence that Thomas sought. Now Thomas believed.

- **Jesus met Thomas where he was at and, through Thomas, gave a blessing for those to come: "Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe."**

WHY THIS GOSPEL?

In the last two verses, John explains the purpose of his gospel. It was written so we would believe and that we may have life.

- **Just like with the disciples, we have been shown the evidence for Jesus to believe so we can have life. A new life not only to come but a new life with purpose now.**

RESURRECTED LIFE

- 1 Corinthians 15:17: "...if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins."
- **This is the most radical event in history! We are no longer children of Adam but of God!**
- **Not only do we get resurrected life when this life is over, we get resurrected life now.**

BREATH OF THE SPIRIT

- Jesus desires intimacy with us. The vehicle for that intimacy is His Spirit.
- **We need the Holy Spirit so we can carry out the work He has prepared for us to do and conform us more to Jesus' likeness.**
- **How do we let the Holy Spirit do this?**
- **Prayer, Reading the Scripture, and Fellowship with other Believers.**

NECESSITY OF FAITH

- Faith springs from a relationship with Jesus through His Spirit and confidence in what He has done.
- **Our faith is meant to be shared to impact a broken world with truth and love.**
- **So where are we putting our faith?**