

BUMC Weekly Bible and Sermon Study

Sermon: “Grace Disguised” (from the “Cross Culture” Lenten sermon series)

Scripture: John 20:1-18

Key take-aways from the Scripture

- In this section of the Book of John, we read about the Resurrection of Jesus.
- In verses 1-10, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb that Jesus’ body had been laid in, and “saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb.” Since she was the first person to arrive at the tomb, she immediately ran to Simon Peter and John telling them “They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid Him.” When they arrived at the tomb, they found only Jesus’ burial clothing. At this point, none of them realized that Jesus had been resurrected! They then returned to their homes. Verses 6-7 says: “He (Simon Peter) saw the linen wrappings lying there, and the cloth that had been on Jesus’ head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself.” The New Interpreter’s Study Bible commentary explains: “The detailed description of the burial clothes establishes a contrast with the Lazarus story. Lazarus emerged from the tomb still wrapped in his burial wrappings (11:44) but, for Jesus, the wrappings of death are completely left behind.”
- In verses 11-18, Mary remained at the tomb of Jesus, weeping, while the others departed. All of the sudden, two angels appeared to her and said: “Woman, why are you weeping?” Mary replied to them, “They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid Him.” She then turned around and saw Jesus standing behind her but did not recognize that it was Him. Jesus said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?” At this point, Mary believed that she was speaking with the grounds keeper/gardener and replied, “Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.” In the emotional high point of the Gospel, Jesus said to her “Mary!” and she turned to Him and said, “Rabbouni” (Rabbi or Teacher)! Jesus then told her in verse 17 not to touch Him because He had not yet ascended to the Father. reported predictions that would be fulfilled only after the work’s conclusion.”
- Jesus then instructed Mary to go to the disciples and tell them. Mary left at once and told the disciples when she caught up with them: *“I have seen the Lord!!!”*

Key take-aways from the Sermon

- Mary was the first to discover Jesus' empty tomb. The name Mary means "bitter tears" in Hebrew. Magdalene is not her last name but was where she was from. She is often referred to as "the apostle to the apostles" from her telling the others about what she witnessed at Jesus' tomb.
- *Silent Saturday*: the day between Jesus' death on Good Friday and the Resurrection on Easter Sunday. Through our own pain and suffering we get a glimpse of what Jesus went through for us.
- Silence does NOT mean absence. It is a "not-yet" moment. "Silence is God's first language; everything else is a poor translation." Keating
- Mary came to the tomb at night when it was still dark. This is not just a temporal statement but an existential one, as it also speaks of the condition of her soul: it was dark. Her eyes were open, but she cannot see. She is disoriented by grief.
- Soon, Mary's grief turns into fear as she notices the stone that had covered Jesus' grave was removed. She runs to Peter and John assuming it was grave robbers.
- To make sense of this, the disciples turn to Scripture (they only had the Hebrew Bible text), to Psalm 16 and Isaiah 53. We see that the written word points to the living Word! This is why Bible study is essential!
- The necessity of spiritual formation: you cannot remember something that you don't know! (Luke 24:8)
- When the other disciples left the tomb, Mary stayed behind weeping. She was grieving but she was not leaving. Jesus is behind her, but she does not know it!
- Jesus then calls her name, "Mary!" When she hears her name, she knows it's Jesus!
- The Christian confession is not an abstract hypothetical truth. *It's personal!* We don't worship a distant God. He knows each of us personally.
- If you listen in silence, you will hear Jesus calling your name. Silence is not absence...it's just "not-yet". You may weep at night, but joy comes in the morning.
- The greatest evidence of the Resurrection is not just the empty tomb, but a changed life. A life no longer afraid of the dark and lives in the light.
 - Easter means two things: (1) a life that never ends; and (2) and a love that never fails.
- What God has done in an empty tomb will enable you to stand up, and stand stand fast and stand firm, because we know on this day that life never ends and love never fails.

Questions for Personal Reflection or Group Discussion

- What were your key take-aways from the sermon? How can you apply this to your everyday life?
- Why wasn't Mary able to recognize Jesus at first? When she did, why couldn't she touch Him? What is the significance of Jesus' ascension status?
- Jesus tells Mary to tell the other disciples what she has seen and heard (v. 17). What is the significance of her being the bearer of the good news of Jesus' resurrection?
- How can we avoid feeling that God is silent in the midst of our pain and suffering?
- What is the significance of Mary remaining at the tomb of Jesus when the other disciples had left?
- How have you grown closer in your love for God and neighbor this Easter season? How will you incorporate this into your everyday life?



NOTES

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