

## “The Broken Hearted” - Resurrection Sunday Sermon, John 20:1-18 - April 16<sup>th</sup>, 2017

John 20:1–18 (NKJV) — 1 Now the first day of the week Mary Magdalene went to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. 2 Then 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.” 3 Peter therefore went out, and the other disciple, and were going to the tomb. 4 So they both ran together, and the other disciple outran Peter and came to the tomb first. 5 And he, stooping down and looking in, saw the linen cloths lying there; yet he did not go in. 6 Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb; and he saw the linen cloths lying there, 7 and the handkerchief that had been around His head, not lying with the linen cloths, but folded together in a place by itself. 8 Then the other disciple, who came to the tomb first, went in also; and he saw and believed. 9 For as yet they did not know the Scripture, that He must rise again from the dead. 10 Then the disciples went away again to their own homes. 11 But Mary stood outside by the tomb weeping, and as she wept she stooped down and looked into the tomb. 12 And she saw two angels in white sitting, one at the head and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. 13 Then 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 Now 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?” She, supposing Him to be the gardener, 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, “Rabboni!” (which is to say, Teacher). 17 Jesus said to her, “Do not cling to Me, for I have not yet ascended to My Father; but go to My brethren and say to them, ‘I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God.’” 18 Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that He had spoken these things to her.

- I would like to begin my Resurrection Sunday sermon by pointing out a few of the many details that are here in the narrative.
- Specifically, as it relates to Mary of Magdela, also known as Mary Magdalene, who we’re first introduced to in Luke’s gospel.
- The reason I feel led to do this is that when we first meet this woman, we’re told that she was possessed by seven demons.

Luke 8:1–2 (NKJV) — 1 Now it came to pass, afterward, that He went through every city and village, preaching and bringing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God. And the twelve were with Him, 2 and certain women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities—Mary called Magdalene, out of whom had come seven demons,

- It’s because of this account of what Mary was that some suggest it’s the same Mary who anointed the feet of Jesus with oil.
- While we can’t really know for sure if it was, it does seem that there were two Mary’s that did this on two separate occasions.
- I’m personally of the belief that the account in Luke’s gospel chapter seven could very well be speaking of Mary Magdalene.

Luke 7:36–38 (NIV) — 36 When one of the Pharisees invited Jesus to have dinner with him, he went to the Pharisee’s house and reclined at the table. 37 A woman in that town who lived a sinful life learned that Jesus was eating at the Pharisee’s house, so she came there with an alabaster jar of perfume. 38 As she stood behind him at his feet weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears. Then she wiped them with her hair, kissed them and poured perfume on them.

- One reason I believe this is Mary Magdalene is because of the parable that Jesus teaches after the Pharisees excoriate her.
- Namely, that of the one who has been forgiven of much, loving much, and conversely being forgiven of little, one loves little.
- Another reason I believe this is Mary Magdalene is because in she’s weeping at the feet of Jesus like at the tomb of Jesus.

- Here’s where I’m going with this, it’s the Mary Magdalene’s of this world that Jesus will first and foremost reveal Himself to.
- It’s interesting to note that Jesus didn’t reveal himself to the disciples or the others there; rather it’s first to Mary Magdalene.
- I would suggest that it’s because Mary was the one who was the most broken hearted and as such Jesus reveals Himself.

In Luke’s gospel the fourth chapter Jesus reads from the book of Isaiah, and in so doing, declares that He is the one Who fulfills Isaiah’s prophecy. Listen to what He says in verses 18-19, 18 “The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; 19 To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD.”

- I’m hoping you’ll kindly indulge me as I focus our attention on Mary Magdalene as the recipient of the Lord’s love and comfort.
- Notice the detail we’re given in verses ten and eleven where the disciples, we’re told, left and went home while Mary stayed.
- It’s my belief she couldn’t have left even if she wanted to by virtue of how she was crying so hard she was likely unable to.

- I find it interesting when she stoops down and looks into the empty tomb, she sees two angels who ask her why she’s crying.
- I find her response to these two angels even more interesting in that, she’s un-phased, only wanting to know where Jesus is.
- Here are two angels positioned as those over the Ark of the Covenant one at the head, one at the feet. She only wants Jesus.

- It actually gets even better in verse 13 with respect to these two angels when Mary tells them that “they” have taken Jesus.
- After saying this she turns around and sees Jesus standing there, but she doesn’t recognize him thinking He’s the gardener.
- Then when Jesus asks her why she’s crying, and whom she’s seeking, it’s almost as if she’s accusing him of taking Jesus.

- Then, in verse 16, Jesus reveals to her that it’s Him, and He does so not by what she sees, rather, it’s by what she hears.
- The reason I point this out is because, as soon as she hears Jesus say her name, she recognizes that it’s the voice of Jesus.
- To me, this is a textbook case of the sheep knowing the Shepherd’s voice, and oh how hearing His voice did comfort her so.

- I’d like to draw your attention to this last detail in verse 18 where Mary tells the disciples she saw Jesus and He spoke to her.
- I can’t even begin to imagine the excitement in her voice when she runs instead of walking to tell the disciples the good news.
- This because Mary’s weeping has been turned to rejoicing; her fear has been replaced with faith and hope in the risen Lord.

- I’ll take it a step further and suggest that were it Mary not so broken hearted, it’s doubtful she would have been so blessed.
- I say that because replete throughout scripture, brokenness always precedes the blessing and it always precedes the victory.
- I think of Gideon who’s outnumbered army of 300 men had to break the clay vessels before their victory over the Midianites.

- In the aforementioned account of Mary anointing the feet of Jesus, the alabaster jar of perfume would have to be broken first.
- One of my personal favorite examples of this is Jacob wrestling with the Lord all night demanding a blessing be given him.
- However, in order for the Lord to bless Jacob, He had to first break Jacob by touching his hip, which would have been painful.

- The problem is that innate within our sin nature is this unwillingness to break even to the degree in which we fight against it.
- We don’t like broken things because we see them as having little to no value, however, the opposite is true in God’s economy.
- I suppose you could say that those who remain unbroken pay a terrible price in the sense that they also remain unblessed.

A.W. Tozer says it best in one of his writings, “The fallow field is smug, contented, protected from the shock of the plow and the agitation of the harrow.... But it is paying a terrible price for its tranquility: Never does it see the miracle of growth; never does it feel the motions of mounting life nor see the wonders of bursting seed nor the beauty of ripening grain. Fruit it can never know because it is afraid of the plow and the harrow [till]. In direct opposite to this, the cultivated field has yielded itself to the adventure of living. The protecting fence has opened to admit the plow, and the plow has come as plows always come, practical, cruel, business-like and in a hurry. Peace has been shattered by the shouting farmer and the rattle of machinery. The field has felt the travail of change; it has been upset, turned over, bruised and broken, but its rewards come hard upon its labors. The seed shoots up into the daylight its miracle of life, curious, exploring the new world above it. All over the field the hand of God is at work in the age-old and ever renewed service of creation. New things are born, to grow, mature, and consummate the grand prophecy latent in the seed when it entered the ground. Nature’s wonders follow the plow.”

- I have to confess, that while I always look forward to Resurrection Sunday every year, this year is the best and most blessed.
- And, it’s not for the reasons one might think. Yes this is our first Resurrection Sunday in our new church, but that’s not why.
- The reason this year is the best and most blessed for me personally, is because of what Christ’s resurrection really means.

- Like for Mary Magdalene, Christ’s resurrection means my once broken heart can be healed, as my weeping is turned to joy.
- Christ’s resurrection means that my paralyzing panic and formidable fear can be replaced with unflinching faith hope and love.
- Moreover, Christ’s resurrection means that now I can be saved by confessing this with my mouth and believing in my heart.

Romans 10:6–10 (NKJV) — 6 But the righteousness of faith speaks in this way, “Do not say in your heart, ‘Who will ascend into heaven?’ ” (that is, to bring Christ down from above) 7 or, “ ‘Who will descend into the abyss?’ ” (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). 8 But what does it say? “The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart” (that is, the word of faith which we preach): 9 that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

- In closing, let me say if you’ve never called upon the name of the Lord Jesus to be saved, I would implore you to do so today.
- I’ll explain how, by sharing with you what’s known as the ABC’s of Salvation. The A is for Admit. Admit that you’re a sinner.
- The B is for Believe. Believe in your heart Jesus is Lord. The C is for Call. Call upon the name of the Lord; you’ll be saved.