

JESUS' VICTORY OVER DEATH Text: John 20

Jesus is the Resurrection and the Life *—Bill Turner*

1. The Disciples Witnessed Some Amazing Things with Jesus...

- a. They heard the greatest teaching ever taught by the greatest teacher who ever lived
- b. They saw Jesus Walk on Water / Calm the Storm / Cast Out Demons,
- c. Give sight to the blind / heal the sick / raise the dead...
- d. His power of Nature, Disease, Demons and Death...

2. But they were not prepared for what Jesus was going to endure from His enemies

- a. The Betrayal of Judas under cover of darkness / the arrest in the dead of night...
- b. the powers that be—organized against the great I Am
- c. The Trials / the Scourging / the Mocking / the Beating / the Spitting
- d. The Robe of Purple / and Crown of Thorns / The Nails in His Hands and Feet
- e. The Crucifixion and all its horror

3. While Jesus was nailed to the Cross—There were 3 hours of Darkness,

- a. Jesus cried out it is finished / there was an earthquake / graves were opened
- b. the veil of the temple was torn / graves were opened / and When the battle hardened
centurion saw everything that happened, he said “truly this was the Son of God.”

4. The Disciples were Traumatized and Fled in Fear...

- a. Two Secret Disciples stepped out of the shadows...
- b. Joseph of Arimathea was on the Sanhedrin Council and went to Pilate to ask for Jesus body
- c. Nicodemus and Joseph gave Jesus a dignified burial in this rich man's tomb
- d. A large Stone was rolled across the entrance and Roman soldiers set a seal—
- e. an authentication of the Imperial Seal of the Roman Government itself to prevent anyone on
penalty of death from tampering with the seal or opening the tomb.

• **But Now it is Sunday Morning before first light (John 20:1-10) <—**

I. THE REACTIONS OF THE RESURRECTION

A. MARY MAGDALENE—SORROW (v.11–18)

1. Mary Magdalene was a devoted disciple of Jesus

- a) Jesus had cast seven demons out of her
- b) Mary is also the first to the Empty Tomb and the first to see the Risen Savior!

2. But Her Sorrow Obscured the Truth so that she could not recognize Jesus

a) FIRST: She did not recognize Jesus through her tears... (v.12-13)

- (1) Mary Was Weeping — She thought someone took the body of Jesus
- (2) First she's oblivious to the fact that she is talking to angels
- (3) Then she's oblivious to the fact she is talking to Jesus
who she thinks is a Gardener who took the body of Jesus away
- (4) Sometimes when we are so overwhelmed by grief and sorrow we cannot see
anything except through the lens of our tears
- (5) We cannot see past our loneliness and loss—and it distorts everything else

b) **SECOND: She did not recognize Jesus because she was facing the Wrong Direction...¹ (v.14)**

- (1) She could not take her eyes off the tomb so she had her back toward Jesus
- (2) In our Grief our eyes stay focused on the cold hopeless grave
- (3) But that is not where our loved ones are...
- (4) That's where their body is but their spirit is with the Lord

3. Our Sorrow Can Obscure the Truth...

- a) And cause us to miss the good news of the Resurrection.
- b) We have to change our focus from Death to Life—from the grave to the Lord

B. THE DISCIPLES—FEAR (v.19–23)

1. **Jesus was crucified as an enemy of the State—so the Disciples are now hunted criminals and hiding in fear...**
2. **Their Hopes were Crushed—They Were Afraid to Hope Again**
3. **Notice their response when Mary told them the news... (Mk 16:9-11)**
They Didn't Believe Her!
4. **Then when two disciples on the road to Emmaus told them... (Mk 16:12-13)**
They Still Didn't Believe!
5. **Then Jesus Appears and Rebukes their Unbelief! (16:14)**
6. **Their Fear Obscured the Truth—that Jesus was alive from the dead!**
(Lk 24:36–43)

C. THOMAS—DOUBT (v.24–29)

1. **Thomas had not been with the other disciples when Jesus appeared...**
 - a) He apparently isolated himself while dealing with the Trauma of Jesus death
2. **But when they told him they'd seen the risen Savior he refused to believe!**
—His doubt obscured the truth of Jesus Resurrection (v.24-25)
 - a) Eight long days while Thomas is grieving & wrestling with his doubts and fears
3. **But Jesus appears again to them and turns to Thomas specifically (26-28)**
 - a) Jesus shows him the wounds in His hands and His side
4. ***“Do not be unbelieving, but believing.”***
 - a) And then Jesus gives a blessing for us! (v.29)

II. THE IMPLICATIONS FOR US

A. WHAT ABOUT US? What Do You Believe?

1. **Some see the world through their own Sorrow... (like Mary)**
 - a) Their focus is on the broken world—rather than the Savior of the World
2. **Some see the world through their own Fear... (like Disciples)**
 - a) Their Dreams Were Crushed and they are too Afraid to Hope Again

¹ I like these two points about Mary, made by William Barclay, Daily Bible Study Series, John (Vol. 2, p. 314).

3. Some see the world through their own Doubts... (like Thomas)

- a) Their Doubts are so Loud they cannot hear the still small voice of Truth

Maybe your Sorrow is so strong—that now the world is just dark and cold

Maybe your Hopes were crushed and your afraid to hope again

Maybe your Doubts are so loud that they drown out the still small voice of Truth

Who Will You Believe? Your Sorrow, Fear & Doubts? — Or Your Savior?

Most assuredly, I say to you that you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice; and you will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will be turned into joy. (Jn 16:20)

B. GOD TOOK THE WORST POSSIBLE THING IN ALL THE UNIVERSE...

- 1. The Horrible Torture and Death of the Son of God, as a Criminal on a Cross
And Turned it into the Best Possible Thing in all the universe For Us!**
- 2. Jesus opened the way to Heaven by His Blood—for all who Follow Him!
(Revelation 1:5–8)**
- 3. Jesus Left the Eternal Glory of Heaven...**
 - a) The Creator of Time and Space Entered Time and Space
 - b) To Experienced the Worst Possible Death in order to Overcome Death!
 - c) Jesus Defeated Death **(Revelation 1:17–18)**

C. IF GOD CAN TAKE THE WORST POSSIBLE THING IN ALL THE UNIVERSE

- 1. The Horrible Torture and Death of Jesus the Son of God**
 - **And Turn it Into the Greatest Possible Thing To Ever Happen in all the Universe—the opening of heaven for who Follow Him...**
- 2. THEN WHY WOULDN'T HE HELP YOU AND STRENGTHEN YOU
THROUGH ALL YOUR STRUGGLES & TRAILS IN THIS LIFE?²**
 - a) If God Gave You the Very Best of Heaven in order to Save You...
 - b) then Why Wouldn't He Help You In Your Time of Need Now? **(Rom 8:31-32; 38-39)**
- 3. You Don't Have to Be Enslaved—you can be free **(Hebrews 2:14–15)****
- 4. God raised Jesus from the Dead and death no longer has power over Him
and that has massive implications for us! **(Romans 6:4-5; 8–9)****

CONCLUSION:

- 1. Maybe your Sorrow is so strong that now the world is just dark & cold**
 - Maybe your hopes were crushed and your afraid to hope again
 - Maybe your Doubts are so loud they drown out the Truth
- 2. But What does Jesus say? **John 11:25–26****
- 3. Jesus Died for us so we can live in Him**
 - Born again in Baptism, raised to new life **(Romans 6:4)**

² Appreciation for Lee Strobel who made this point on the Resurrection in an interview w/ Mike Huckabee