

## He Lives!

### The Gospel of John: That You May Believe | John 20:1-18

Southern Hills Baptist Church

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**Introduction/Context:** There is no denying that Jesus has forever changed the world that we live in, but His public ministry was only 3 years long. How is it that someone could have had such an impact on the world in only 3 years? Simple answer. The resurrection. Jesus did what no one else could, overcome death. The miracle was far more than a cool twist ending to Jesus' tragic death, it was the essential capstone of Jesus' redemptive work.

#### The Empty Tomb (John 20:1-10)

- **Sunday Worship:** Mary went to the tomb on Sunday, the first day of the week. We are gathered here today to worship Jesus on a Sunday, the first day of the week. Coincidence? Of course not. Sunday gatherings were not started out of mere convenience because Sunday is a part of the weekend. No, Sundays became the day of worship for Christians because it is the day of the week that Jesus rose from the dead. Each Sunday is a mini-Easter as we celebrate Jesus' resurrection.
- **Mary's Assumption:** It appeared the stone, sealing the tomb, had been moved away and the tomb was opened. Now, knowing what we know, we might be inclined to believe that Mary started to have a glimmer of hope. Perhaps Jesus was alive after all. But, no, that didn't cross Mary's mind. When she saw the open tomb, she assumed the worst. Grave robbers had come.
- **The Linen Evidence:** After seeing the empty tomb Mary hurried to tell Peter and John who came to see it for themselves. What they found were the burial clothes of Jesus neatly lying in the tomb. Peter and John didn't see a crime scene, as Mary feared, but a tomb miraculously vacated. Why would robbers take the time to tidy up and make their theft riskier and more difficult with the removal of the burial clothes?
- **John Believed:** John saw the empty tomb and the linen evidence and believed. He may not have known the significance of what took place (vs. 9), but he certainly believed Jesus had miraculously risen from the tomb.

#### The Encounter (John 20:11-18)

- **The Gardener:** When Mary returned to the tomb she encountered a man she believed to be a gardener. It was in fact Jesus. We will see this on a few occasions, but the risen Jesus was able to hide His appearance from others so they didn't recognize Him (John 21:4; Luke 24:16).

- **A Flood of Emotions:** Jesus asked Mary why she was crying. She explained she was looking for Jesus' body, which had been moved. The Jesus said Mary's name and in a moment Mary knew exactly who she was talking to (cf. John 10:27). Mary went from devastated and mourning to overjoyed in the time it took to say her name.
- **Worship:** Mary fell to Jesus' feet, crying out "Rabboni," which means, "teacher of greatest honor." This was exclamation of praise. She then clung to the feet of Jesus, holding on for dear life. She would never lose Him again.
- **Redefined Relationships:** As Jesus instructed Mary to go tell the Disciples what she had seen and heard He indicates some changes that occurred through His cross-work. He called the Disciples, "brothers." He also referred to God as Mary's Father. Relationships were redefined through the finished work of Jesus. We have been adopted into the family of God!

#### The Evidence: Why Should We Trust John's Account?

- **Mary's Testimony:** Women were second-class citizens in this day and age, as seen in the fact that the testimony of a woman wouldn't be accepted in a court of law. What do you think the impact was on John's account to have Mary as the first witness to the empty tomb? It hurt. If John was making this up he could have done better, right? His commitment wasn't to selling a story, it was to telling the truth.
- **Unbelief:** When Mary went back to tell the Disciples what she had seen they dismissed it as nonsense (Lk 24:8-11). After Jesus' death the Disciples were in hiding out of fear and not entertaining the idea of Jesus being alive. Yet within a month's time they would be out boldly proclaiming the Gospel, risking their lives and eventually losing them. What could have spurred such a change other than a true encounter with the risen Lord?

#### Application: What Does This Mean for Me?

- **We Serve a Living Savior!** Our God lives! He sees us. He hears us. He speaks to us through His Word and the working of His Spirit. He is with us. We should live from a place of victory. There is nothing that can overpower or stop our God. Jesus' resurrection is proof of that, thus we can know that our Heavenly Father's good and wise will, will always be accomplished.
- **Promises Made, Promises Kept:** Jesus has made countless promises that inspire hope and instill joy. He lives to see them through! His Word is good, as He lives to follow through on it. Read through the Scriptures and rejoice in knowing that Jesus will deliver on all promised!

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