

Mary's Love, Jesus' Love

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[0:00] Good morning. My name is Matthew Capone and I'm one of the pastors here at Cheyenne Mountain Presbyterian Church and it's my joy to bring God's word to you this morning for Easter Sunday we're stepping out of our series in the book of Romans and we are picking up where we left off on our good Friday service if you were here on Friday you know we read through the entirety of John chapter 19 and so now we turn to John chapter 20 with the story of the resurrection. Now there are multiple stories actually going on here in this one story. There is the story of Simon Peter. There's the story of John but the biggest story outside of Jesus' resurrection of course is the story of Mary Magdalene. I'm not going to spoil it for you. I'm not going to tell you up front. I just want you to ask. We're going to ask what is so special about Mary and why does Mary in these 18 verses get more screen time than anyone else? Why does Mary steal the show? We're going to look at two things. We're going to look at Mary's love and Jesus' love and you don't need to remember it because it is the sermon title. It's on page 7 of your worship guide. In fact I invite you to turn with me there to John chapter 20. You'll find it on pages 6 and 7.

of your worship guide. And as we turn there remember Psalm 19 tells us that God's word is more precious than gold even the finest gold and it's sweeter than honey even honey that comes straight from the honeycomb. So that's why we read now John chapter 20 starting at verse 1.

Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early while it was still dark and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb.

So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple the one whom Jesus loved and said to them they have taken the Lord out of the tomb and we do not know where they have laid him.

So Peter went out with the other disciple and they were going toward the tomb. Both of them were running together but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first.

[2:25] And stooping to look in he saw the linen cloths lying there but he did not go in. Then Simon Peter came following him and went into the tomb.

He saw the linen cloths lying there and the face cloth which had been on Jesus' head. Not lying with the linen cloths but folded up in a place by itself.

Then the other disciple who had reached the tomb first also went in and he saw and believed. For as yet they did not understand the scripture that he must rise from the dead.

Then the disciples went back to their homes. Verse 11 But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb and as she wept she stooped to look into the tomb.

And she saw two angels in white sitting where the body of Jesus had lain. One at the head and one at the feet. They said to her, Woman, why are you weeping?

[3:27] She said to them, They have taken away my Lord and I do not know where they have laid him. Having said this she turned around and saw Jesus standing but she did not know that it was Jesus.

Jesus said to her, Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking? Supposing him to be the gardener she said to him, Sir, if you have carried him away tell me where you have laid him and I will take him away.

Jesus said to her, Mary. She turned and said to him in Aramaic, Rabboni, which means teacher. Jesus said to her, Do not cling to me for I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God. Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, I have seen the Lord and that he had said these things to her.

I invite you to pray with me as we come to this portion of God's word. Our Father in heaven, we do thank you and praise you again most of all for the great mercy and grace that you've shown us in our salvation in Jesus Christ.

[4:49] We thank you for calling and bringing us together again this morning. We ask that you would be at work here and now in a special way by your Holy Spirit, stirring up and softening our hearts that you'd remind us of the great truth of the gospel.

that you'd show us our need for it and that that would lead us to set our eyes on Jesus Christ. That he'd be more beautiful and glorious to us than anything else. We ask all of these things in his name. Amen.

Every year around this time, around Easter, there are plenty of memes and jokes and videos around one of the funniest parts of the Bible, which is right here in this passage.

Okay. It starts in verse 2. Mary tells Peter and John that the tomb is empty. And then, oh, by the way, it's John because it says, verse 2, the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved.

John's the author of the gospel of John. That's why it's called John. So he's not going to use his own name. Okay. So he's referring to himself indirectly. So Mary tells Peter and John, and then we find out verse 4, both of them go running together.

[6:04] But the other disciple, that is John, outran Peter and reached the tomb first. And that's the joke. Okay. John, in his own gospel, which he writes, lets everyone know that he is actually faster than Peter.

And in case we missed it, he repeats it again in verse 8. Then the other disciple, which one? The one who reached the tomb first.

Okay. So we have this serious passage, which is the climax of all of Scripture, the 66 books that God has given to his people in the New Testament and the Old Testament. Jesus has risen from the dead.

He's defeated death and sin. All the promises of God are yes and amen in Jesus Christ. And John's a faster runner than Peter. There are many theories to try to explain why it is so important to John that we all know that he's a great sprinter.

The one I find most convincing is this. John is saying that there is nothing that could hold him back. The alternative to beating Peter would have been to slow down.

[7:24] It would have been to hold back. And he could have done that. Right? But John's eyes were on the prize. Now, whatever theory you believe, I don't think John is bragging here.

And here's why. As focused as John was in this passage, as unwilling as he was to pull back and wait for Peter, someone else was more focused.

And that's Mary. Mary beats all the boys. John arrives to the tomb in verse 4.

Peter arrives to the tomb in verse 6. Mary was already there. In verse 1.

Now, on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, and in case we're wondering how early, while it was still dark.

[8:39] If John is looking to pat himself on the back for his speed, he has done a really poor job.

In fact, it's not just that Mary is there first. Mary is also there last. Verse 10.

Peter and John go home. Verse 11. Mary stays. And by the way, if Mary stays in verse 11, and she was there in verse 1, and she told Peter and John in verse 2, we know then that Mary must have made at least not one, but two trips to the tomb.

So she's not just there first. She has lapped them. John is not shining a spotlight on himself.

The running is not about John's ego. No. John, the author of the gospel, is highlighting Mary.

[9:58] That brings us back to our question. Why? Why does Mary show up earlier and stay later?

To answer that, we have to remember Mary's backstory. So there's several Marys in the gospels that are kind of hard to keep track of. That's why she's called Mary Magdalene to distinguish her from all the others.

And in Luke chapter 8, we find out that Jesus had healed Mary Magdalene of seven demons. Now seven demons are not a small number of demons.

Okay? It's not a small thing that Jesus had rescued Mary in this way. Jesus, in fact, had rescued her in a huge way. That's Luke 8 where we find that out.

At the end of Luke 7, just a few verses before, Jesus lays out this principle. And the principle is this. The one who has been forgiven much loves much.

[11:03] The one who has been forgiven little loves little. Why was Mary the one who showed up early and stayed late?

Mary had been forgiven much. And so Mary loved much.

Mary had been rescued from seven demons. And so Mary was all in with Jesus. It's on page seven of your worship guide. Jesus had cast seven devils from Mary.

She had sinned much. She had been forgiven much. And she loved much. John was not healed of seven demons. Nor was Peter.

And so John and Peter do not understand the extent of their need for rescue in the way that Mary does. Mary knows more than all the others how much Jesus has saved her from.

[12:10] Now you might say that's not fair. It's not Peter and John's fault that they didn't have seven demons in them. And that's true. It's not their fault they didn't have seven demons.

But Peter and John did not need rescue any less than Mary. Peter and John just didn't know their need as much as Mary.

Peter and John did not need rescue any less than Mary did. They just did not know their need as much as Mary did.

That's why Jesus says it's easier for a camel to enter the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter heaven. Not because the rich do not have need but because the rich don't know their need. It's hard to see. It's hard to know how desperately you need Jesus if your life is filled with comfort and ease. The point is this.

[13:19] The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead is a great joy to us to the extent that we understand how great our sin is.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead is a great joy to us to the extent that we understand how much we've been forgiven.

The more we realize how much we need the gospel the greater our celebration on Easter will be. There are people who think overall they are pretty great and maybe they just need Jesus to tweak a few things here and there and if that's you you will not have Mary's great love for Jesus because you're already too in love with yourself.

If that's you Easter will wash over you with little effect. The one who has been forgiven much loves much.

The one who has been forgiven little loves little. There were lots of people that day in Jerusalem who were much better off than Mary.

[14:59] There were people that morning who had a gourmet breakfast. There were people in Palestine with fat bank accounts.

There were people who were younger and stronger and more beautiful than Mary. None of them not one of them had as much joy as Mary had.

If you don't get jazzed up about Easter and the resurrection you're not going to be able to make yourself get excited. If the resurrection is boring to you it is because you do not know how desperate you are for God's mercy and grace and forgiveness.

until you know that the resurrection will wash over you. When you know it like Mary you will not want to leave Jesus side.

Peter and John leave in verse 10 Mary stays captivated by his beauty worthy tribute haste to bring let his peerless worth constrain you crown him now unrivaled king.

[16:46] told you we were going to talk about two things this morning Mary's love and Jesus love we've seen Mary's love in verses 1 through 10 verses 11 through 18 we get to see the type of love that Jesus has to make

a long story short Mary doesn't recognize Jesus she's zeroed in and finding his body that's verses 11 through 13 verses 14 through 15 Jesus does appear but Mary doesn't recognize him she thinks he's the gardener until what until Jesus says Mary's name one of the patterns that we see throughout the entire Bible is that God calls each of his people by name if you were with us when we were in the series on

Genesis the story of Abraham think all the way back to Genesis chapter 16 remember Abraham and Sarah would not call Hagar by name but God did and when God calls Hagar by name in Genesis chapter 16 as I told you then it is the only time in ancient near eastern literature that any God addresses any woman by name in the New Testament Luke chapter 19 this is just a few of many examples Jesus confronts Zacchaeus the tax collector who is a terrible man Zacchaeus has spent his life defrauding people and cheating people out of untold sums of money and Jesus sees him hiding up in the tree and what does he do he calls him by name we could go on now Mary called by name what does Jesus say in John chapter 10 my sheep hear my voice and I know them and they follow me Jesus love is a specific individual love I had a seminary professor who loved to come out to Colorado for vacation and at one point he told us a story he was out hiking in the Rocky Mountains and he just began to cry and he thought to himself the God who made these mountains also knows my name the resurrected Jesus Christ who is sitting right now at the right hand of God the father who will return in glory to judge the living and the dead knows your name he knows your wounds he knows your sins he knows your failures he knows your heartache he knows your grief he knows your strengths he knows your weaknesses

Jesus knows all of it and he is still calling you by name have you answered will you answer I want to show you one more thing this morning as we talk about Jesus love we don't just see Jesus love in his specific and individual care his care for Mary and for us we also see Jesus love in his mercy and his grace Mary is given a message to deliver in verse 17 Jesus tells her who that message is for he says go to my brothers and who are these brothers during

Jesus darkest hour Mary stuck around Mary was there at the crucifixion if you were here on Friday remember Mary is standing there with Jesus mother as Jesus is abandoned by everyone else Mary never left what about the disciples where were Peter and John all the disciples abandoned Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane and since then they have been nowhere to be found they are not the loyal ones and what does Jesus call the people who ran away from him in his darkest hour he calls them his brothers it's the good news of the gospel

[22:25] Jesus because of his death on the cross his death that paid the penalty for our sins offers for those who have betrayed him that is you and me to be adopted by God as sons and daughters Jesus says we can be his friends and if you think that friend is too chummy a word for God I will let you hear it not from me but from Jesus John chapter 15 he says this no longer do I call you servants for the servant does not know what his master is doing but I have called you friends for all that I have heard from my father I have made known to you you can be Jesus friend you can be his brother no matter how much you betrayed him you can be a sibling of

Jesus no matter what you've done because of his death and his resurrection if you don't know what that means and you want to dig deeper into that you can look at page 17 and 18 of your worship guide which spells out what it means to repent of your sins and to follow Jesus in faith that friendship that friendship with God is made possible by Jesus death and his resurrection defeating sin and death forever and earlier in the gospel also in John Jesus explains this John 15 greater love has no one than this that someone laid down his life for his friends do you know your need will you be a friend of

Jesus he knows your name and he's calling let's pray our father in heaven we do thank you and praise you for the great grace and mercy that you offer to us in Jesus Christ we ask that you would be at work in our hearts showing us how desperate our need is for you that that path of repentance would lead us to great joy joy greater than what we've ever known before because we are resting you in the mercy and grace in our friend and our savior Jesus Christ and we ask all of these things in his name amen I invite you to stand