

April 1, 2018 AM
Pastor Ken Hepner

“The Resurrection of Jesus -- Through the Eyes of Mary Magdalene”
John 20:10--18

Introduction:

This morning is our celebration of Resurrection Day 2018. The Church of Jesus celebrates this event all over the world today. For the past 11 hours, your brothers and sisters in Asia, Africa, India, and Europe have been singing the praises of the Risen Lord Jesus Christ the Son of God, once crucified, now risen Lord to the glory of God the Father. Resurrection morning is a celebration of everything the Church of Jesus holds dear, as central to our faith!

The world system also has a celebration this weekend which they call Easter, celebrated with fancy clothes worn to Church somewhere, fancy lunches and dinners, Easter Bunnies, Chocolate Eggs, and buying gifts for their family members, none of which have anything to do with the Resurrection of Jesus our Lord! May I strongly encourage you to remember the real message of Resurrection Day and to tell each other the story of who Jesus is to you at the lunch table today?

In our worship today, we are focusing on the living Word of God, written by people who were moved by the Holy Spirit to record events for us to be able to read today! We are looking at that first resurrection morning through the eyes of one of Jesus’ most devoted followers: Mary of Magdala.

The reason why the Spirit of Jesus asked me to share about Mary’s journey with Jesus is pretty simple. What took place in the heart and soul of this dear woman is symbolic of what Jesus Christ can and will do in the hearts of everyone who **Believes** His suffering and death was for me, making the Cross personal, and **Receives** His life in our life!

The general theme of this message centers on the powerful nature of the life of Jesus Christ our Lord. He was and is the life of God Almighty living on the earth walking among us - our study is the **Immanuel Principle**. According the Scripture, **there is a profound longing in the heart of God to know us personally:**

- 1.) We were created in His **Image** in the Garden of Eden. Our first parents were created specifically to walk in **Fellowship** with God. They would take long walks with the Lord in the cool of the day!
- 2.) We fell into the snare of **Sin** and willfully decided to take our own ways, to know and do the right in our own eyes. When we fell into sin we destroyed our personal **Walk** with God.
- 3.) When we separated ourselves from Him because we had sinned we desperately needed a **Savior** to come to our rescue, whom He sent us - His one and only Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

4.) When we respond to Him by **Faith** and He comes to us with His redemption, bearing our sins in His body and washing them in His own blood, He **Recreates** us; that is He literally takes the part of us that was dead in sins, our spirit person and makes us alive with the life of Jesus Christ our Lord. This is the **Miracle** of **New Birth!**

Listen to Jesus' own words as the Son of God describes the miracle of second birth to His disciples and ultimately to you and me on the eve of His death, recorded in John 14:18 – 23:

“You know Him, for He lives with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. Before long the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him. Then Judas (not Iscariot) said, ‘But Lord, why do you intend to show yourself to us and not to the world?’ Jesus replied, If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him and we will come to him and make our home with him.”

And the Apostle Paul adds these words in Ephesians 2:4 – 10: *“But because of his great mercy for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions – it is by grace you have been saved. And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. For it is by grace that you have been saved, through faith – and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God – not by works so that no one can boast. For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.”*

Everything that stands between God and people is **Destroyed** in the body of our Lord Jesus Christ, who was and is the holy and innocent “Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!” When Jesus was crucified on the cross, He died the sacrificial death the law requires, innocent blood shed to wash away, destroy the power of sin, death and all the powers of hell.

His **Resurrection Life** is the demonstration of the power of God Almighty our Father over sin, death and the powers of hell. When He raised Jesus from the dead, all that was placed in the body of Jesus Christ having died with Him, by faith we were also raised to life with Him in His resurrection power. His resurrection life lives in you and me!

This morning I want to encourage you to think through the implications for your life, the resurrection life of Jesus Christ our Lord as seen through the eyes of one of His most precious followers! Our study looks at the resurrection of Jesus through the eyes of Mary Magdalene.

I. Mary Magdalene Was Cleansed When She Met Jesus:

Luke 8:2 *“The twelve were with him, and also some women who had been cured of evil spirits and diseases: Mary (called Magdalene) from whom seven demons had come out;”*

Historians tell us Mary Magdalene was a woman who sold her body on the streets to whomever she could. She was a woman with a notorious reputation. Once a beautiful little girl, then a young woman with promise and potential, through years of prostitution and heartache, being used and abused by men, she had lost her beauty, charm and innocence long before.

Now as a middle-aged woman of the streets she had become the dwelling place of 7 evil spirits and created fear wherever she went in the town. She would often do weird behaviors, as one would expect from a person who had seven demons living in her life. The evil shrieks and the howls that came out of her mouth gave visible proof that she was of the darkness, the common riffraff of society, good for nothing but more abuse.

But then one day she heard about Jesus and suddenly there was a part of her that had a brief glimmer of hope. She made her way to where she heard He was going to be teaching. A small part of her wanted to be near Him, while seven other parts of her wanted to stay far away from this Spirit-anointed Carpenter named Jesus.

There was an incredible war going on inside her that she didn't understand. The shrieks and the howls betrayed her inner heart's desire to be free of the sin and the shame that characterized her life. As she met Jesus Mary of Magdala was drawn to His love, the compassion of God radiated from Him. The demons screamed in terror of Him but she pressed toward Him battling to be touched by Him. If He had healed others He can heal me!

Jesus came to her and touched her. He ordered the spirits to silence, and He cast them out of her with a powerful word. She was, for the first time since she was a little girl, free from the inner prisons cells in her own heart. She wanted to laugh and cry all at once, for the joy she felt. She wanted to run and jump and scream her praises to God from the housetops.

From that day on Mary wanted to stay near Him, and absolutely, she wanted to lavish her love on Him. No man had ever treated her like this man Jesus. This was a man of God. His touch wasn't to abuse and to take. His touch was to give and release her from prison! I can hear her heart speak, "I must go find some way to let Jesus know I will do anything for Him, I will honor Him forever!"

Do you relate to Mary's feelings of deliverance from prisons of the heart? Often today our inner prison cells are based in a specific sinful behavior we can't beat, or emotional, that is based in wounds we feel from a loved one breaking our heart. Do you relate to her meeting with Jesus, that once she met Him, her inner prison cells were open, and she was free to know and love God? Do you relate to her desire to find a way to lavish love on Him for what He has done for you?

II. Mary Was Set Free Through Personal Forgiveness: Luke 7:36 – 51

The story here unfolds at Simon the Pharisee's house where Jesus is the guest of honor. Simon was feeling very proud of himself that he had the resources to host a banquet for the young prophet Jesus in front of all the leading families of the city. He was no doubt, looking forward to a pleasant evening to listen to the Carpenter and talk with Him about the things of God. But the

best planning of Simon the Pharisee was destroyed, when she came in and made her way straight to Jesus.

She wasn't shrieking or howling, she wasn't plying her trade. She had a different look about her this time, almost a serenity that nobody in the room except the guest of honor could understand. She untied her hair and let it fall. She broke open the alabaster jar of perfume and poured it on Jesus' dusty feet.

She looked at the Carpenter who smiled over His shoulder at her. The look of love in His eyes reduced her to weeping. The tears of love and joy poured out of her, down her cheeks onto his feet. She now had His feet thoroughly wetted with her tears and the perfume. Then, she began to dry them with her hair and kiss them in a demonstration of servanthood the likes of which hadn't been seen before by the guests.

Simon and his Pharisee friends who pride themselves on doing what looks right in the eyes of men expressed judgment of Mary's lack of worth to be there. They called into question whether Jesus really was a prophet because He allowed such a woman to touch Him. Simon and his friends in the room have completely missed her obvious signs of repentance and forgiveness because their minds were closed to her!

Jesus used the situation to teach Simon and his friends they had the wrong value system. They didn't understand **Mercy** or **Forgiveness**, so they couldn't understand Mary's actions. He told them how people who have been truly forgiven of much in the sight of God, love much. They care about showing their love and gratitude to the one who set them free. Then Jesus put the capstone on His argument, Luke 7:44ff:

“Do you see this woman? I came into your house. You did not give me any water for my feet, but she wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. You did not give me a kiss, but this woman, from the time I entered, has not stopped kissing my feet. You did not put oil on my head, but she has poured perfume on my feet. Therefore, I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven – for she loved much. But he who has been forgiven little loves little. Then Jesus said to her, ‘Your sins are forgiven.’ ...Jesus said to the woman, ‘Your faith has saved you; go in peace.’”

Can you hear Mary of Magdalene's response? “Lord Jesus you have set me free from demonic power. You have cleansed my heart and shown me what love really is. Yes I will leave my life of sin Jesus. But I will never go away.”

Do you relate to her desire to be with Jesus for the rest of your life, to be where He is and work with Him as He is at work in the world? Do you have a deep desire to honor Jesus in the ways you choose to live?

III. Mary Lavished Her Love On Him Without Embarrassment:

As you read through the text here in Luke 8:2, 3 you can easily miss what the author is trying to say if you don't really focus on it well. He is telling us that when Mary Magdalene was set free

by the Lamb of God, she became His most devoted of followers, serving Jesus in love and gratitude.

She could be seen near His feet while He taught and laughing when the children climbed all over Him. She could be seen washing His clothes and preparing His fish and bread cakes each evening. When He laid down to sleep for the evening she made sure there was fresh water at His side. There was no task that was too hard, no act of servanthood considered to be beneath her. She slept off to His side. She made sure He was comfortable before she went to sleep.

Mary of Magdala had found the treasure hidden in a field and the pearl of great price when she met Jesus and there was no way she would ever leave Him. She had been in the world and it had torn her apart, used her and abused her. Now she had met the love of God in person and she would never go away.

No matter what He needed she would see to it. Luke 8:3b is just alive with meaning regarding Mary of Magdala. From the day of her deliverance she did not ask, she just became a part of the band of followers of Jesus: *“These women were helping to support them out of their own means.”* And Mark 15:41, *“Mary Magdalene ... In Galilee these women had followed him and cared for his needs.”*

Can you relate to this woman Mary Magdalene in her complete, unashamed love for the Lord Jesus Christ? Can you relate to playing to an audience of one? Does it matter what people might think or say about your radical love for Him?

IV. Mary Was With Him At the Cross:

John 19:25 *“Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother, his mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.”* Matthew and Mark also tell us she was with Him at the cross.

As she knelt there with His mother her heart was crushed and she wept and wept. Those hands that had been such a gift of love to her, the touch of the very mercy and compassion of God was in those hands. Those hands were now being torn apart by the nails on which His body weight hung. Those feet that had carried Him all over Palestine, the feet she had wept on and anointed with the alabaster jar of perfume and dried with her hair, now were being torn apart as he pushed on the nail that held them to the Cross, and weakly sought to get another breath of air.

As she knelt there her mind is flooded with thoughts of His teaching. She heard Him say with absolute finality, at least three different times, that He would come to Jerusalem and be handed over to crucifixion at the hands of the Romans by the Chief Priests and the Teachers of the Law. Yet in that same context He spoke of a miracle of cataclysmic proportions. He had actually said, on the third day He would rise from the dead. She reached over and held onto His mother Mary and the two of them just cried together, as death snarled and claimed Him from them.

The two men - Joseph of Arimethea and Nicodemus - were removing His body. They only had a few minutes before the Passover was to begin so they hurriedly placed His body in the Sepulcher

in Joseph's Garden. Mary was right there and saw it all. Mary would have two sleepless nights as she waited for Sunday morning so she could go and take care of her Master's body properly.

Can you relate to this precious woman in her kneeling at the cross of Jesus and watching Him suffer in love bearing away from your life what offends God the Father, for you? Have you been there to meet with Him at the cross by faith?

V. **Mary Encountered Him as Her Risen Lord:** John 20:10 – 18

She went to the tomb very early Sunday morning. She couldn't sleep anyway so she took her basket of spices and headed off to properly care for His body, oblivious to the words He had spoken about the third day. She got there and His body was gone. She went and told Peter and John who ran to the tomb ahead of her, and found He was in fact not in the tomb.

They went back home but Mary, true to her incredible love for Him, stayed near to where she had last seen Him. She stood outside weeping and bewildered. Verses 12 and 13 *"She bent over to look into the tomb and saw two angels in white, seated where Jesus' body had been, one at the head and the other at the foot. They asked her, 'Woman why are you crying?' They have taken my Lord away and I don't know where they have put him."*

This special woman turned around from the tomb still bewildered and met Jesus, whom she didn't recognize at first. Then after conversing with her, He entered into a spiritual dialogue with her that is absolutely wonderful to those of us who have eyes to see it. Because He is risen from the dead, salvation is now available to us all.

Mary is the first one to have Jesus call her **Name** as a **Child** of **God**: *"Mary' She turned toward him and cried out in Aramaic, 'Rabboni!' (which means Teacher). Remember what He told His followers? "My sheep know my voice.....the shepherd calls His own sheep by name and they follow Him. They will not listen to the voice of a stranger."*

Then He spoke words to her that people have been hearing in their spirit person for nearly two thousand years -- *"I am returning to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God."* Mary is the first person to hear Jesus say; you are God's child because of my sacrificial death, and your having met me personally in resurrection power and life!

She **Testified** immediately to His resurrection power and life and they didn't believe her. But please understand this, their unbelief didn't faze her. She **Knew** she had been with Jesus and nothing was going to change the fact that He was alive and she was alive, much more alive in her heart than she had ever been before in her life!

Mary Magdalene represents all of us. She had a personal encounter with the risen Lord Jesus Christ. Her life was changed from merely physical, mental and emotional, to a fourth dimension. She was now recreated spirit by the presence of His life in her life.

Do you relate to this special woman of God? Have you met the risen Lord Jesus Christ personally? Has His life taken up residence in your life? Do you live in the spirit dimension because His Spirit lives in you?

Conclusion:

"The Resurrection of Jesus – Through the Eyes of Mary Magdalene"

Luke 7:36 – 50 and John 20:10 – 18

Introduction:

This is Resurrection Sunday 2018, a day when the Church all over the world celebrates the resurrection life and power of our Lord Jesus!

The world system has created its own celebration observances for this holiday they call Easter.

This morning as we study the Word of the Lord, we are looking at the resurrection of Jesus Christ through the eyes of Mary Magdalene.

What took place in this dear woman's life is symbolic of what can and will happen in you and me when we make the Cross personal, **B**_____ and **R**_____ His life living in us!

We are studying the deep longing in the heart of God to know us personally, the **I**_____ **P**_____.

1. We were created is **I**_____ in the Garden, to walk in fellowship with God.
2. We fell into **S**_____ and destroyed our ability to **W**_____ with God.
3. When we separated ourselves from Him we needed a **S**_____ to come to our **R**_____.
4. When we respond to His work in our lives by faith, He acts in us to **R**_____ us, giving us the miracle of **N**_____ **B**_____!

The words of Jesus the Son of God as He describes His gift of new life living in us, John 14:18 – 23 and Paul adds Ephesians 2:4 –10

Everything that separates us from God is **D**_____ at the Cross.

His **R**_____ **L**_____ is the demonstration of the power of God over sin, death, and all the powers of Hell.

I. Mary Magdalene was Cleansed when She Met Jesus: Luke 8:2

Historians tell us life had not been kind to Mary of Magdala. She was a woman who sold herself on the street. She had become so sold to evil she was inhabited by seven demons.

One day she heard about Jesus and suddenly she had a glimmer of hope.

There was an **I**_____ **S**_____ going on in her that she did not understand.

Jesus touched her and released her from her inner prison cells!

II. Mary was Set Free through Personal Forgiveness: Luke 7:36 – 50_

Jesus is the guest of honor at a banquet at Simon the Pharisees house. It was all going according to Simon's plan when **SHE** walked in and went to Jesus!

She looked so different so serene. Nobody seemed to know why except the guest of honor.

Simon and his friends expressed judgment on her. Jesus used this occasion to teach them they did not know God's **M**_____ or **F**_____.

Jesus concludes his statement in Luke 7:44 ff

III. Mary Lavished her Love on Him without Embarrassment: Luke 8:2, 3

Once set free and forgiven, she became one of His most devoted followers, serving Jesus in loving gratitude.

She could be seen near Him meeting His needs when He taught. She considered no act of servanthood beneath her.

She had been in the world and it had used her, torn her apart, and abused her. Now she had met the love of God in person and she'd never go away!

From the day of her deliverance there she was. She simply became one of His followers, Luke 8:3b and Mark 15:41.

IV. Mary was with Jesus at the Cross: John 19:25

Mary's heart was crushed as she knelt at the foot of the Cross. His hands ... His feet ...

Her mind was flooded with His teaching about this very event, His death, on three separate occasions. He had also promised to rise from the dead!

The two men – Joseph and Nicodemus – were placing Him in the tomb.

V. Mary Encountered Jesus as her Risen Lord: John 20:10 – 18

She went to the tomb early Sunday morning and found He was gone! After Peter and John left two angels spoke with her, verses 12, 13.

She met with Jesus who entered into a spiritual dialogue with her. Mary is the first human being to hear Jesus call her **N**_____ as a **C**_____ of God!

She **T**_____ to His resurrection but they didn't believe her. Their unbelief did nothing to faze her faith. She **K**_____ she had encountered the risen Jesus and she would never be the same again!

Discussion Starter Questions for Home Groups

1. Do you think most people really analyze why the world system has created alternative imagery to the message of Easter?
2. What do you think the Holy Spirit inspired people to write about the repeated references in the Bible to “God dwelling in the midst of His people?”
3. Have you thought about the life of Mary Magdalene when we first meet her in the Scriptures? What is a person characterized by who is inhabited by seven demons?
4. Why do you think Simon and his friends completely missed the obvious changes in Mary Magdalene’s demeanor?
5. Do you think most Christians really understand the magnificent truth about our absolute forgiveness of sins and cleansing of sin’s power to enslave us?
6. When Mary met the Risen Lord Jesus she did not recognize Him until He called her name. Why do you think she didn’t know Him at first?
7. Do you think most Christians really understand our spiritual adoption as the sons and daughters of God, through what Jesus has done for us?
8. Read together aloud the story of Simon and his friends at the banquet with Jesus as guest of honor, Luke 7:36 - 50, and share insights you have from that Scripture.
9. Read together aloud Paul’s words about spiritual adoption Galatians 3:26 – 4:7 and discuss insights you have from this Scriptural truth.
10. How does the concept of Mary playing primarily to an audience of one speak to your heart about your witness to the saving and loving work Jesus has done in your heart and soul? Do you see yourself as His devoted follower regardless of human opinion? On what basis?