

**John 20: v. 1-31 – Reactions to the Resurrection of Jesus.**

<sup>1</sup> Now on 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.

<sup>2</sup> 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."

<sup>3</sup> Peter therefore went out, and the other disciple, and were going to the tomb. <sup>4</sup> So they both ran together, and the other disciple outran Peter and came to the tomb first. <sup>5</sup> And he, stooping down and looking in, saw the linen cloths lying *there*; yet he did not go in.

<sup>6</sup> Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb; and he saw the linen cloths lying *there*, <sup>7</sup> and the handkerchief that had been around His head, not lying with the linen cloths, but folded together in a place by itself.

<sup>8</sup> Then the other disciple, who came to the tomb first, went in also; and he saw and believed. <sup>9</sup> For as yet they did not know the Scripture, that He must rise again from the dead. <sup>10</sup> Then the disciples went away again to their own homes.

<sup>11</sup> But Mary stood outside by the tomb weeping, and as she wept she stooped down *and looked* into the tomb. <sup>12</sup> 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.

<sup>13</sup> 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." <sup>14</sup> Now when she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing *there*, and did not know that it was Jesus.

<sup>15</sup> 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."

<sup>16</sup> Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned and said to Him, "Rabboni!" (which is to say, Teacher).

<sup>17</sup> 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.'"

<sup>18</sup> Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and *that* He had spoken these things to her.

<sup>19</sup> Then, the same day at evening, being the first *day* of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them, "Peace *be* with you."

<sup>20</sup> When He had said this, He showed them *His* hands and His side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. <sup>21</sup> So Jesus said to them again, "Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you."

<sup>22</sup> And when He had said this, He breathed on *them*, and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit.

<sup>23</sup> If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the *sins* of any, they are retained."

<sup>24</sup> Now Thomas, called the Twin, one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came.

<sup>25</sup> The other disciples therefore said to him, "We have seen the Lord." So he said to them, "Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe."

<sup>26</sup> And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, "Peace to you!"

<sup>27</sup> Then He said to Thomas, "Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand *here*, and put *it* into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing." <sup>28</sup> And Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!"

<sup>29</sup> Jesus said to him, "Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed *are* those who have not seen and *yet* have believed."

<sup>30</sup> And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; <sup>31</sup> but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.

## **Introduction**

**Before we come to our text we need to have some background into the story that is presented to us from John chapter 20.**

**2000 years ago there was a man called Jesus Christ who walked on this earth. He was born into humbled circumstances. His Father was a carpenter who claimed he was not the Father, and His Mother claimed she had a baby in a miraculous way. At the age of 12 he display knowledge that astounded the religious leaders of the day. By the time he was 30, He started to make claims about Himself.**

**He was introduced to us by a man called John the Baptist. He said that this Jesus was the Lamb of God who came to take away the sins of the world. His early disciples recognized that Jesus had the attributes of God. He was All Knowing, He seemed to be All Powerful and seemed to know where you were and what you were doing at any given time.**

**He healed the sick, opened the eyes of the blind, He healed crippled people who couldn't walk, he cast out demons, provided 5,000 people with food from a little boys packed lunch, He walked on water, controlled the wind and the waves, and even cursed a fig tree and it died. In fact He did many things that proved that He was God in human form.**

**He claimed to be the "Light of the World", the "Bread from Heaven", "The Way", "The Truth" and the "The Life". He also claimed that if His body was destroyed then He would raise it up in 3 days.**

**He challenged sin, but loved the sinner. Even though people tried very hard they could not find any fault in His character. He was completely without sin. He never did anything wrong.**

**However the religious people of the day didn't like Jesus. They didn't believe His claims and were determined to have him charged with the crime of "Blasphemy". That was claiming to be God.**

**They had an illegal trial and although the person in charge found no fault in Jesus, He gave in to the crowd and allowed Jesus to die on a cross as punishment for His crime of Blasphemy.**

**When Jesus was on the cross, there was 3 hours of darkness over all the land, during the day. The soldiers guarding the crucifixion were convinced that Jesus was the Son of God.**

**After Jesus died, a rich man called Joseph was allowed to bury Jesus in a tomb that was cut out of rock. Roman guards were sent to stand by the tomb where Jesus was laid.**

**The disciples who followed Jesus didn't fully understand why Jesus, who had the power of God at his control, allowed Himself to be crucified for a crime that He did not commit.**

**However many years later a man who firstly persecuted Christians, then became a Christian said this:**

<sup>21</sup> For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ. (2 Cor. 5:21)

**The disciples didn't understand this at the time. They were disappointed and felt that their hearts were destroyed. In fact one of His followers, Peter, denied ever knowing Jesus.**

**With this background we now come to the story in John chapter 20.**

**It is a wonderful story. It is a story that changed a woman's TEARS to JOY. It changed the SAD hearts of the disciples to GLAD hearts and it changed the DOUBTING disciple to a BELIEVING disciple.**

**Let us now look at the story.**

**Jesus was crucified on the Friday and it was now very early on Sunday morning.**

**Mary Magdalene arrived at the tomb and saw that the stone had been rolled away from the entrance.**

**(Power point of a tomb with the stone rolled away)**

**Mary ran to the other disciples and reported the facts. They came to check it out. Peter went into the tomb and saw the grave clothes lying there. However there is something significant in v. 7 that you will miss unless you are Jewish or have an understanding of Jewish culture and customs.**

**In v. 7 it says that the handkerchief that had been around the head of Jesus was folded in a place by itself. What is so significant about this?**

**Well in Jewish culture, if you didn't like a place where you were having a meal, you folded your napkin in a certain way to communicate that you didn't like it here and soon you must go. Perhaps Jesus folded this handkerchief in the Jewish way to show His disapproval of the tomb. This action would have put a smile on the face of Peter. Jesus disapproved of the tomb and He had moved on to greater things.**

**In v. 9 it says "they saw and believed" we don't know what they actually believed at that time, but we know they must have been encouraged by the sign Jesus left.**

**In v. 10 we are told that the disciples left the tomb and returned home.**

**Mary was left outside the tomb crying.**

**She looked into the tomb and saw two Angels. The Angels asked Mary why she was crying.**

**Mary said "Because they have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid Him."**

**Then Mary turned around and saw somebody standing next to her. She thought he was the gardener. As soon as that person said "Mary" She recognized that it was Jesus.**

**Mary's tears turned to JOY when she recognized that Jesus was ALIVE.**

**Jesus appeared to Mary first, He spoke a personal word to her heart. He didn't need to say much, His presence was enough.**

**Immediately Mary went and informed the disciples of this event.**

**The next resurrection appearance of Jesus came on the same day in the evening.**

**The disciples were afraid of the Jewish authorities so they locked themselves in a room.**

Jesus walked through the lock door and said to His disciples “Peace be with you” or “Shalom” in Hebrew. Jesus showed them His hands and His side. Why did Jesus do that?

Well Jesus wanted the disciples to know that it was the same Jesus that died on the cross for their sins. Jesus didn’t want the disciples to have any doubts about His resurrection.

Jesus repeated the words of “Peace be with you” and then said to the disciples that as the Father has sent Him, so he sends the disciples. The disciples were commissioned to do a work for Jesus. God had sent Jesus from Heaven to this world to die on a cross for the sins of the world, now the disciples were being sent to tell the world about this event, including the resurrection of Jesus.

Jesus breathed on the disciples and said “Receive the Holy Spirit”.

This was not some sort of “Private Pentecost” for the disciples, it was symbolic of what was to come. (The evidence of this is that it didn’t change the disciples at this point) John had a way of recording the things that Jesus said that pointed to some future event. He records in John 13: v. 8 “Peter said to Him, You shall never wash my feet!

Jesus answered Him, “If I do not wash you, you have no part with me.” Jesus was talking about a future spiritual washing here.

So Jesus prepares the disciples in v. 22-23 that very soon, they would receive the Holy Spirit and preach the gospel. When they preached the gospel, if people received it they were forgiven their sins, if they rejected the gospel their sins were retained. The disciples’ only involvement was to preach the gospel. They didn’t have the power to forgive sins, this was the work of Jesus.

There is one more resurrection appearance of Jesus that we need to look at. This is verses 24-29. Jesus appears to Thomas.

After 8 days, the disciples were again in a locked room. This time Thomas was with them. He didn’t believe that Jesus had risen from the dead. Thomas said “Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe”

Jesus then walked through a locked door and said to the gathering “Peace to you” or “Shalom” in Hebrew.

Jesus said to Thomas “Reach your finger here, and look at my hands, and reach your hand here and put it into my side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing.”

What a nice shock Thomas had. He cried out “My Lord and my God.”

Jesus said “Thomas, because you have seen me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believed”

What can we learn from these three resurrection appearances of Jesus Christ?

1. **Mary** – Jesus gave Mary a message to pass on to the disciples. (v. 17) the message was that Jesus is returning to His Father. The full significance of the message must be seen in the light of the whole of John’s gospel. Every time John records that Jesus either came from Heaven or was returning to Heaven, was in connection with the purpose of Jesus coming to this earth. That was to die on a cross for the forgiveness of sins.

(John 3: v. 13-16, 13:3, 16:28, 17:4-5)

The message of returning to the Father would have reminded the disciples that His death and resurrection was for the forgiveness of their sins. Jesus was going to return to Heaven and open the way for them to follow. Now Jesus would prepare a place for them. God had accepted the

sacrifice of Jesus on the cross as an atonement for man's sins. The work had been done on the cross. It was finished, Jesus could now return to Heaven.

By emphasizing the words YOUR Father and YOUR God, Jesus points to the new relationship that is now available, because He has taken the wrath of God for our sins. Now people can have the same access to God that Jesus has. Hallelujah for that.

The point is that GOD can be YOUR Father and your PERSONAL GOD. You can have the same access to God that Jesus has.

There is only one provision. You need to admit your sin and put your faith and trust in the work that Jesus did for you on the cross. He was your substitute. The innocent dying for US the guilty.

If you receive this message into your heart, it will turn your guilty tears into tears of JOY, knowing your sins forgiven.

2. **Disciples** - We have discovered already from the text that Jesus commissioned the disciples to preach the gospel of forgiveness of sins. Jesus promised to forgive people who believed and retain the sins of those who didn't believe.

The point is that we have got a job to do on this earth. Jesus doesn't promise us that everybody would believe. However He promises forgiveness to those who do believe.

We have a responsibility to take this message to our community. It is not about being successful or failing, it is about faithfulness in taking the gospel to those who will listen and leaving the results with Jesus and the work of the Holy Spirit.

Will you be faithful to do this? It is not easy, but God will bless the efforts that you make.

3. **Thomas** - Thomas wanted to see Jesus for himself, rather than believe the report from the disciples. Jesus was very gracious to grant Thomas's request.

However throughout John's Gospel the writer is trying to get us focused not on the miracles of Jesus but upon the words of Jesus.

Jesus says in v. 29 that real FAVOUR with God does not depend upon being able to see Him, but on trusting the words of the Apostles.

Jesus says "Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed"

If you want to be blessed today, then believe in the words of Jesus, believe the Bible as God's word to you, for all of your life, for all of your problems.

We don't need the signs and the miracles to believe in Jesus, we must trust in the words of the Bible and we will be truly blessed.

The resurrection of Jesus proves that God has the power to raise our frail bodies to life again at the last day. Believing in Jesus and His resurrection is the only answer for your future and for mine. Will you believe in Jesus today?