

Series: John
Title: Mary's Cure
Text: John 20: 1-18
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Our Lord Jesus is the Resurrection and the Life.

John 11: 25: [The Lord] Jesus said unto [Martha], I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:

As we saw Thursday night, it is beholding our Lord Jesus Christ through faith that is Life and Strength to the sinner. We have many needs. But all is provided for by Christ. Christ is the Resurrection and the Life.

When sin weighs heavy upon us, Christ Jesus, crucified, buried, risen again is the witness to our new hearts that Christ has put away the sin of his people. Beholding Christ risen to God's right hand, I am persuaded he put away my sin. Beholding Christ risen, I am persuaded he alone is my righteousness with God. It is Christ the Life within our downcast heart that makes us behold him. And beholding Christ, he sanctifies and purifies the heart from the sinful, unbelieving flesh so that we are persuaded Christ is our Life at God's right hand. He could not be there if he were not victorious in justifying his people.

Romans 4:25: Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.

If the prospect of death and the grave weigh us down, or if a fellow believer has departed and we are sorrowful, Christ is the Life that resurrects our sorrowing hearts. He turns us to behold Christ risen and our hearts are comforted.

1 Thessalonians 4: 13-14: [Believers] sorrow not as others which have no hope, for if we believe that Jesus died, and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him.

Whatever infirmities or difficulties we face in our journey through this life, Christ is the Life within that makes us behold him and beholding Christ is the cure. Our burdens are often heavy but they shall not sink us when Christ is the Life in our new man. As we behold our Head risen from the dead, seated at the right hand of God, and behold that we are seated there in him our spirit lives. Christ and him crucified, risen victorious is the great Physician that heals. He is the Life that strengthens our inner man. He is the Resurrection that lifts our inward man out of the dust.

We see this in our risen Lord revealing himself to those who came to his sepulcher the day he arose. We will go verse by verse through John 20.

Our Substitute had suffered the cross. He cried it is finished and yielded up his spirit to the Father. His lifeless body was taken down from the cross and buried in the tomb by Joseph and Nicodemus.

John 20: 1: The first *day* of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre.

The first day of the week, Mary Magdalene came early to the sepulcher while it was dark. Mark says Mary, the mother of James, came as well. Perhaps she came a little later. But John tells us Mary Magdalene came early when it was yet dark.

Mary Magdalene had been possessed by seven devils. The Lord Jesus cast them out and gave her faith in him. She was a great sinner and the Lord forgave her all her sins. From then on she was always with the Lord, sitting at his feet, hanging on every word. She is probably the same woman who anointed the Lord in the house of Simon the leper. The Lord asked Simon, *"Who will love most?"* The Lord said, *"Her sins, which ARE many, ARE forgiven; for [for that] she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little."* (Lu 7:47)

She knew she was a great sinner who was forgiven much by her Savior. Therefore, she loved much. That is one reason she is first to the tomb, early, while it was yet dark. It is knowing the greatness of our sin, that we behold the superabounding greatness of our Savior. His free forgiveness makes us love him much. Free forgiveness through the sacrifice of our Redeemer in our place makes us love our brethren much. Those who know much of forgiveness, forgive much and love much.

John 20: 1....and [she saw] the stone taken away from the sepulchre.

God sent an angel and took the stone away. Satisfied justice removed that stone. The Lord Jesus could have removed the stone himself but God the Father sent an angel to do it for him to declare he is satisfied in his Son. Christ's blood shed in place of his people honored and magnified God and his law. The Lord Jesus Christ removed the stone from off his people and God declared his satisfaction by removing the stone from the grave.

John 20: 2: Then she runneth, and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved,...

John never mentions his name. He was humbled by God's grace to him. So John never mentions his name. He refers to himself only as the disciple whom Jesus loved.

John 20: 2: Then she runneth, and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved,... and saith unto them, They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him. 3: Peter therefore went forth, and that other disciple, and came to the sepulchre. 4: So they ran both together: and the other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulchre. 5: And he stooping down, and looking in, saw the linen clothes lying; yet went he not in. 6: Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulchre,...

John and Peter were together. John was likely home comforting Peter with the good news of the gospel after Peter's fall and denial of the Lord. JC Ryle said, "When Judas fell, he had no friend to raise and cheer him. When Peter fell, there was 'a brother born for adversity' who did not despise him!"

So hearing Mary's report, John and Peter set out running to the tomb. John outran Peter to the sepulcher. He was younger. Peter was probably weary from weeping over his fall. But John came first to the sepulcher and stopped and looked in. But Peter ran right inside. John was more reserved. Peter was impetuous and impulsive. Mary came along behind them and stood outside weeping.

God's saints are all saved by the election of God our Father by the same sovereign grace. Each are made righteous by our same Savior. Each are born-again by the same Holy Spirit. All God's saints are given one faith, one Lord, and have one Father. We are of the same family. Each of us are loved by the same heavenly Father and Savior.

But each of us are different. We are different in temperament. Not all react the same. We do not do things exactly the same. But there is no competition between believers. We are one in Christ. Those born of God have the same need to be saved beginning to end by our Savior. Never set one against the other. At Corinth they were saying, "I'm of Appolos, I am of Cephas, I am of Paul." Paul said that is carnal. We are one in Christ.

Philippians 2:1: If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, 2: Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. 3: Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. 4: Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. 5: Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

John 20: 6...[Peter ran in] and seeth the linen clothes lie, 7: And the napkin, that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself.

Our Lord did not run out of the tomb nor was his body stolen out of the tomb. Joseph and Nicodemus had wrapped his body in the linen. Lazarus had to be unwrapped because he could not take off the grave clothes himself. But the Lord arose out of the grave clothes. He took the handkerchief off his head, wrapped it up and laid it in another place. Think about that 100 pounds of myrrh and aloes that Nicodemus and Joseph wrapped him in. That ointment was within the linen. The grave must have been very fragrant with a good smell.

The Lord Jesus conquered sin and death and the grave. These were signs of his victory and power over death. Death came by sin but Christ put away sin by his death. Therefore, death could not hold him. The grave could not hold him. He has made the grave fragrant for us, believer, by his having passed through it as our forerunner!

1 Corinthians 15: 55: O death, where *is* thy sting? O grave, where *is* thy victory? 56: The sting of death *is* sin; and the strength of sin *is* the law. 57: But thanks *be* to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ

John 20: 8: Then went in also that other disciple, which came first to the sepulchre, and he saw, and believed. 9: For as yet they knew not the scripture, that he must rise again from the dead. 10: Then the disciples went away again unto their own home.

So many times our Lord had told them he must be crucified and die and be buried but he would rise again the third day. But they believed Mary's word that someone had taken his body because they saw it not--"*For as yet they knew not the scripture, that he must rise again from the dead.*" This is another thing we must remember that each of God's saints have in common, we are slow to learn and to believe the word of our Lord. They were taught of the Master in person for three years. He had repeated this good news many times to them. Yet they knew not the scripture that he must rise again from the dead. With one word to the contrary, they believed what was false.

It is not merely hearing the gospel with natural ears, it is not mere facts nor evidences that make us believe on Christ. There is plenty of evidence God created the heaven and earth yet men do not believe on him. It takes the Spirit of God revealing Christ himself in the heart to give us faith to believe. We need Christ formed in the heart. Then Christ the Word must speak the word into our hearts to make us believe on him. One thing is needful, not merely a belief in the fact of the resurrection or the fact of election. Christ said to Martha,

John 11: 26: And whosoever liveth and believeth IN ME shall never die. Believest thou this? 27: She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world.

Acts 8:37: And Philip said [to the ethiopian], If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

1 John 4:15: Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God.

1 John 5:10: He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself

Those born of God have the anointing of the Spirit and cannot cease believing on Christ but continue abiding in Christ, believing him to the end come what may. It is Christ that saves.

1 John 2: 24 Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father. 25 And this is the promise that he hath promised us, *even* eternal life. 26 These *things* have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you. 27 But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him. 28:29 If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him.

The original is "everyone that doeth THE RIGHTEOUSNESS is born of him." What is it to do THE RIGHTEOUSNESS? It is to do what we do only by being born-again of the Spirit, that is, believe and confess the Lord Jesus Christ is the Son of God and continue trusting him alone unto the end. Those born of God and brought to believe on Christ are righteous by God imputed the righteousness of Christ unto us.

John 20: 11: But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping: and as she wept, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre, 12: And seeth two angels in white sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. 13: And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him. 14: And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus. 15: Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away. 16: Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master. 17: Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God. 18: Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that he had spoken these things unto her.

How often have we wept from the trial or burden? Then Christ speaks to us personally! This is the anointing that teacheth. He rolls away the stone of unbelief and doubt and sorrow. Only Christ himself can fill our dark hearts with the light of His own gracious countenance. This is the only way we do the righteousness and believe on Christ. It is by Christ the Resurrection being the Life within us that are born-again, that we believe and that we continue in faith. Mary had come to the sepulchre expecting to find a great stone between her and the object of her affections. The stone was her heart unbelief. But the Lord Jesus removed it. He revealed to her that he is risen. She had come to anoint a dead body but she was anointed and blessed and made happy by her risen Savior speaking effectually into her new heart.

Christ himself is the Resurrection and the Life. Sins, sorrows, and burdens all vanish when we find ourselves in the presence of our living Redeemer! Peter and John left puzzled, because "*as yet, they knew not the scripture that he must rise again from the dead.*" Nothing but Christ Jesus himself, the Resurrection and the Life could put life in their new spirit and strength them to believe and rejoice.

But Mary waited at the tomb. Blessed are those who wait on the Lord. Her heart was breaking but beholding Christ settled everything. Hearing Christ speak, her troubles vanished and joy entered in. He is the great Physician who healed Mary's broken heart and dried her tears. The Lord Jesus is the Resurrection and the Life. Mary's cure is our only cure. The cure for our every need is to have Christ speak into the heart so that we behold him through faith.

Amen!