

Jesus, The Greater Gardener (John 20:15)

1. Circumstances (John 19:23-20:18)

A. *At Christ's crucifixion:*

- Mary Magdalene (Matt. 27:56; Mark 15:40; John 19:25)
- Mary, the mother of James and Joseph (Matt. 27:56; Mark 15:40)
- Mary, the wife of Clopas (John 19:25)
- Mary, Jesus' mother (John 19:25)
- Salome (Mark 15:40)
- The mother of the sons of Zebedee (Matt. 27:56)

*The only disciple present was John (John 19:27); all others deserted Him.

B. *At Christ's burial:*

- Joseph of Arimathea, who was Jesus' disciple, gifted his own tomb to be the site for Jesus's burial (Matt. 27:57-61).
- Nicodemus, Jewish leader, brought 75 pounds of myrrh and aloes to enshrine Jesus in costly ointments (John 19:39).
- Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joseph saw where the tomb was (Mark 15:42-47).
- The "women" saw where Jesus' body was, and later returned with prepared spices and ointments (Luke 23:55).
- Mary Magdalene and the "other Mary" are also mentioned (Matt. 27:61).

*if "the other Mary" was not Mary, the mother of Joseph, there were three women at the tomb who participated in the preparation of Christ's body for burial.

C. *At Christ's Tomb early morning/Resurrection (Sunday morning after 6AM):*

- As the sun is rising, at least five women head toward the tomb where Jesus was buried; Mary Magdalene, "the other Mary" (Matt. 28:1), Salome (Mark 16:1), Mary, the mother of James and the "other women" (Luke 24:1, 10).
- Mary Magdalene saw from a distance that the tomb was open and broke away from the other women. She ran to the house where Peter and "the disciple whom Jesus loved" (John) were staying in Jerusalem. She assumed that "they" (the Romans) took the body and hid it (John 20:1-2).
- John and Peter leave their house immediately and run with great haste to investigate the tomb (20:3-10). By the time they arrive, look inside, and leave, Mary still hasn't caught up.

D. *At Christ's Empty Tomb:*

- For the third and final time, Mary Magdalene has been to the tomb; she participated in the preparation of Jesus' body Thursday evening, she was just with the women before departing to tell Peter and John about the missing body, and now she arrives alone at the tomb. She assumes Jesus is not there and begins to weep outside of the tomb (20:11).

2. Conjecture (20:11-15)

A. Conversation:

- With the two angels: As she is weeping, she glances inside the tomb and sees two angels. They inquire of Mary “why are you weeping?” She is upset because Jesus’ body is not there.
- With the supposed gardener: After she turned from speaking to the angels, she was talking with a person who she assumed to be a gardener (perhaps the servant of Joseph of Arimathea).

B. Comparing and Contrasting (Gen. 1-3; John 18-20)

- Creation: On the sixth day of Creation, God created Adam from the dust and placed him in a garden (Gen. 2:7-10 15).
- Occupation: He commanded Adam, as a gardener, to work it and keep it (Gen. 2:15). Mary assumed that Jesus was a gardener (John 20:15).
- Location: Temptation occurred in a garden (Gen. 3:1-3; John 18:1).
- Representation:
 - Adam was deceived and disobeyed the LORD’s commandment in a garden. As a result, he was put out of the garden (Gen. 3:2, 8, 23). In Adam, all have died (1 Cor. 15:22) because all have sinned and have fallen short of God’s glory (Rom. 3:23); we are sinners by nature and by choice.
 - Both Adam and Jesus were tempted in a garden; Adam disobeyed and consequently brought death into the world (Romans 5:12). Jesus obeyed perfectly and God raised Him from the dead (Acts 2:24). Adam’s sin brought physical and spiritual death; Christ’s obedience and resurrection brought, in faith, our present justification, and secured for us a future glorification (Romans 4:25; Philippians 3:20-21). Adam brought death. Christ, life.

3. Celebration (v.16-18)

- Mary assumes that she is speaking with gardener until He calls her by name; “Mary.”
- Immediately she knows who He is; it is her “Teacher.” She collapses on Him, or on his feet, and clings to Him (v.17).
- For the first time in the Gospel of John, Jesus calls His Father “your Father.” Previously, Jesus only used “my Father” and “the Father.” Now, Mary and Jesus have the same Father (John 5:17; 6:46, 65; 8:19, 27, 28, 29, 41; 10:15, 30, 38; 14:6, 7, 8, 10, 20; 15:1; 17:1, 21).
- Mary came to the grave in tremendous grief and now departs with joy. He has risen from the grave and commanded her to announced to the disciples “I have seen the Lord.”