

Foothills Christian Assembly Sermon September 26, 2021

Luke 24: 1 – 8 “The Empty Tomb, Part 3 – The Women at the Empty Tomb”

50 Now behold, there was a man named Joseph, a council member, a good and just man. 51 He had not consented to their decision and deed. He was from Arimathea, a city of the Jews, who himself was also waiting for the kingdom of God. 52 This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. 53 Then he took it down, wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a tomb that was hewn out of the rock, where no one had ever lain before. 54 That day was the Preparation, and the Sabbath drew near. 55 And the women who had come with Him from Galilee followed after, and they observed the tomb and how His body was laid. 56 Then they returned and prepared spices and fragrant oils. And they rested on the Sabbath according to the commandment.

1 Now on the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they, and certain other women with them, came to the tomb bringing the spices which they had prepared. 2 But they found the stone rolled away from the tomb. 3 Then they went in and did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. 4 And it happened, as they were greatly perplexed about this, that behold, two men stood by them in shining garments. 5 Then, as they were afraid and bowed their faces to the earth, they said to them, "Why do you seek the living among the dead? 6 He is not here, but is risen! Remember how He spoke to you when He was still in Galilee, 7 saying, 'The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.' "
8 And they remembered His words. 9 Then they returned from the tomb and told all these things to the eleven and to all the rest. 10 It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them, who told these things to the apostles. 11 And their words seemed to them like idle tales, and they did not believe them. 12 But Peter arose and ran to the tomb; and stooping down, he saw the linen cloths lying by themselves; and he departed, marveling to himself at what had happened.

I. Introduction

- a. The Lord teaches us via examples that serve as contrasts. Which path will you follow? Luke 7:44-48 “Then He turned to the woman and said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave Me no water for My feet, but she has washed My feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head. 45 You gave Me no kiss, but this woman has not ceased to kiss My feet since the time I came in. 46 You did not anoint My head with oil, but this woman has anointed My feet with fragrant oil. 47 Therefore I say to you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, the same loves little." 48 Then He said to her, "Your sins are forgiven."”

1. Henry “It should be rendered, *therefore she loved much*; for it is plain, by the tenour of Christ’s discourse, that the loving much was not the *cause*, but the *effect*, of her pardon, and of her comfortable sense of it; for *we love God* because *he first loved us*; he did not forgive us because we first loved him. “But *to whom little is forgiven*, as is to thee, *the same loveth little*, as thou dost.” Hereby he intimates to the Pharisee that his love to Christ was so little that he had reason to question whether he loved him at all in sincerity; and, consequently, whether indeed his sin, though comparatively *little*, were forgiven him. Instead

of grudging greater sinners the mercy they find with Christ, upon their repentance, we should be stirred up by their example to examine ourselves whether we be indeed forgiven, and do love Christ.”¹

- b. Luke 24: 1 – 8 The Empty Tomb
 - 1. When – The First Day Sabbath, very early in the morning v1 – Prior
 - 1. When: Resurrected on the Day of Firstfruits – Last Week
 - 2. Who – Today – The Women at the Empty Tomb
 - 1. “They and certain other women with them” v1
 - 2. Questions to know, love and obey God
 - 3. Where – To the tomb v1
 - 4. Why – Bringing the prepared spices v1
 - 5. What they found – the stone rolled away, the empty tomb v2,3
 - 6. Initial Response – greatly perplexed v4
 - 7. The Two Angels announce the Resurrection – v4-7
 - 8. The faith response – they remember – v8
- II. “They and certain other women with them” v1
 - a. “They” = referring back to v55,56 right after Christ was taken down from the cross
 - b. 23:55,56 “And the women who had come with Him from Galilee followed after, and they observed the tomb and how His body was laid. 56 Then they returned and prepared spices and fragrant oils. And they rested on the Sabbath according to the commandment.”
 - c. They = the women who had come with Him from Galilee
 - d. “From Galilee”- This takes us back to Luke 7:36 – 8:3 “Then one of the Pharisees asked Him to eat with him. And He went to the Pharisee's house, and sat down to eat. 37 And behold, a woman in the city who was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at the table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of fragrant oil, 38 and stood at His feet behind Him weeping; and she began to wash His feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head; and she kissed His feet and anointed them with the fragrant oil. 39 Now when the Pharisee who had invited Him saw this, he spoke to himself, saying, "This man, if He were a prophet, would know who and what manner of woman this is who is touching Him, for she is a sinner." 40 And Jesus answered and said to him, "Simon, I have something to say to you." So he said, "Teacher, say it." 41 "There was a certain creditor who had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. 42 And when they had nothing with which to repay, he freely forgave them both. Tell Me, therefore, which of them will love him more?" 43 Simon answered and said, "I suppose the one whom he forgave more." And He said to him, "You have rightly judged." 44 Then He turned to the woman and said to Simon, "Do

¹ Henry, M. (1994). [*Matthew Henry's commentary on the whole Bible: complete and unabridged in one volume*](#) (p. 1848). Peabody: Hendrickson.

you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave Me no water for My feet, but she has washed My feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head. 45 You gave Me no kiss, but this woman has not ceased to kiss My feet since the time I came in. 46 You did not anoint My head with oil, but this woman has anointed My feet with fragrant oil. 47 Therefore I say to you, **her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, the same loves little.**" 48 Then He said to her, "Your sins are forgiven." 49 And those who sat at the table with Him began to say to themselves, "Who is this who even forgives sins?" 50 Then He said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you. Go in peace." 1 Now it came to pass, afterward, that He went through every city and village, preaching and bringing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God. And the twelve were with Him, 2 and certain women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities--Mary called Magdalene, out of whom had come seven demons, 3 and Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others who provided for Him from their substance."

1. So, when we read in Luke 23:49 of the "women who followed Him from Galilee" standing at a distance and watching His crucifixion, instead of running away like the disciples, our minds should be curious what force kept them close to Christ during such a terrifying moment? And, when we read in Luke 23:55 that these same "women who had come with Him from Galilee" also followed His lifeless Body to His tomb and attended His burial, our curiosity should grow even more. What is different about these women, compared to the missing disciples? And, in today's text, when we see they return to Christ's Body at first light in order to anoint Him, the first ones back to His tomb, unafraid of being closely associated with Christ, this third key moment (crucifixion, burial, anointing) should have us filled with this question: "What is motivating these women?" Well, the answer is given to us by Luke in the above verses from chapter 7 and 8. The unnamed woman weeping on Jesus' feet, wiping His feet with her hair, anointing His feet with expensive fragrant oil, this sinner rejected by "proper" society, she reveals the motive for us to ponder. Jesus says it clearly: **"her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, the same loves little."** The phrase "women from Galilee" should always carry this critical truth to our hearts.
- e. These women had left their homes in Galilee and walked at Jesus' side throughout His ministry, from Galilee to Jerusalem. (8:1,2) One of them was Mary Magdalene.
 1. Bock "In addition to the Twelve, a group of women traveled with Jesus and supported his ministry. Many of these women had benefited from his ministry either through exorcism or healing, three of whom Luke

singles out for specific mention. An itinerant ministry like Jesus' was common, and support from women was common; but it was unusual for women to travel with a rabbi. The first woman, Mary Magdalene, was freed from the presence of seven demons. This healing is not presented in detail anywhere in the NT, but Mark 16:9 has a similar summary. After Jesus' act of compassion, Mary decided to serve the agent of God who had healed her. The name Μαγδαληνή (Magdalene) suggests that she was from the region of Magdala, a town on the Sea of Galilee's western shore about three miles north of Tiberias... As was argued in the exegesis of 7:37, she was not the sinful woman who anointed Jesus. Nor is it clear that she was immoral, for demon possession was not a sinful condition. Mary stayed faithful to Jesus, for it is recorded that she watched the crucifixion (Matt. 27:55–56 = Mark 15:40 = John 19:25), saw where Jesus was laid (Matt. 27:61 = Mark 15:47 = Luke 23:55), and participated in the anointing of his body"²

- f. These women had helped provide sustenance for Christ out of their own substance. (8:3)
 1. Bock "More significant is that those touched by Jesus' work minister to him and the Twelve through their possessions. Women are prominent in this regard. Whether recipients of exorcism or of his teaching, they contribute to the advance of God's kingdom through their resources. Such assistance was a practical means of helping the mission, thus enabling Jesus' entourage to tour the region."³
- g. They "followed after" Christ's Body. They had remained present at Christ's crucifixion. (23:49)
- h. They had remained present after Jesus died on the cross. They remained as His Body was taken down. Then, they followed after Christ's Body. Where Jesus went, they went. (23:55)
- i. They "observed the tomb". They knew how to get back to the tomb once the Sabbaths were past. They knew the way to Jesus. (23:55)
- j. They "observed...how His body was laid." They watched His Body all the way to the very spot in the tomb where it was laid, and they cared about how Joseph and Nicodemus laid Christ's body inside the tomb. (23:55)
 1. Henry "Who attended the funeral; not any of the disciples, but only *the women that came with him from Galilee* (v. 55), who, as they staid by him while he hung on the cross, so they *followed* him, all in tears no doubt, and *beheld the sepulchre* where it was, which was the way to it, and *how his body was laid in it*. They were led to this, not by their

² Bock, D. L. (1994). [Luke: 1:1–9:50](#) (Vol. 1, p. 713). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.

³ Bock, D. L. (1994). [Luke: 1:1–9:50](#) (Vol. 1, p. 714). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.

curiosity, but by their affection to the Lord Jesus, which was *strong as death* and which *many waters could not quench*. Here was a silent funeral, and not a solemn one, and yet *his rest was glorious*.”⁴

- k. When they left His body in the tomb, they were still thinking about Him and doing acts of love toward Him while not physically with Him. They were preparing the spices and the fragrant oils for when they would anoint His body after the Sabbaths had passed. (23:56)
 - 1. “*They returned, and prepared spices and ointments, which was more an evidence of their love than of their faith; for had they remembered and believed what he had so often told them, that he should rise again the third day, they would have spared their cost and pains herein, as knowing that in a short time there would be a greater honour put upon his body, by the glory of his resurrection, than they could put upon it with their most precious ointments*”⁵
- l. They rested on the Sabbaths. They did not work on these days of rest, but instead, they rested according to the commandment. (23:56)
 - 1. Bock “In making the transition to resurrection, only Luke speaks of the women resting (ἡσυχάζω, *hēsychazō*) on the Sabbath ...The women are pious and obey the Mosaic law. ... Luke, however, seems to suggest that the women did nothing on the Sabbath. They planned to care for the body first thing on Sunday morning, as soon as allowable according to Mosaic law.”⁶
- m. When it was time to go to Christ’s tomb and anoint His Body with the spices and fragrant oils, after the Sabbath, they brought other women along with them. (24:1)
 - 1. Henry “Notice is also taken of certain others with them, v. 1, and again, v. 10. These, who had not joined in preparing the spices, would yet go along with them to the sepulchre; as if the number of Christ’s friends increased when he was dead, Jn. 12:24, 32. The daughters of Jerusalem, when they saw how inquisitive the spouse was after her Beloved, were desirous to seek him with her (Song of Solomon 6:1), so were these *other women*. The zeal of some provokes others.”⁷

⁴ Henry, M. (1994). [*Matthew Henry’s commentary on the whole Bible: complete and unabridged in one volume*](#) (p. 1909). Peabody: Hendrickson.

⁵ Henry, M. (1994). [*Matthew Henry’s commentary on the whole Bible: complete and unabridged in one volume*](#) (p. 1909). Peabody: Hendrickson.

⁶ Bock, D. L. (1996). [*Luke: 9:51–24:53*](#) (Vol. 2, pp. 1877–1878). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.

⁷ Henry, M. (1994). [*Matthew Henry’s commentary on the whole Bible: complete and unabridged in one volume*](#) (p. 1910). Peabody: Hendrickson.

- n. They came to the tomb very early in the morning, even before the sun rose. (v24:1)
 - 1. Bock “The new week starts normally enough. Having fulfilled the law of the Sabbath (Exod. 20:8–11; Deut. 5:12–15), the women go to the tomb to anoint the body. ... Luke further specifies the time with the genitive phrase ὄρθρου βαθέως (*orthrou batheōs*, deep dawn; BDF §186.2; BDR §186.2.3). Apparently, it is early in the morning, perhaps the initial portion of dawn, since John 20:1 speaks of it still being dark (Matt. 28:1 says “after the Sabbath in the dawn”; Mark 16:2 says “early in the morning after the sun has risen”). The women went to the tomb probably as soon as they could see.”⁸
- o. They were the first to see the stone rolled away and the first to observe the tomb was empty. (24:2,3)
- p. They were the first to hear the angelic message proclaiming Christ is risen from the dead. (24:4-7)
- q. They were the first to believe Christ was raised from the dead. (24:8)
- r. They were the first human evangelists to proclaim Christ’s resurrection. (24:9)
- s. They were the first evangelists to be blessed by scorn and disbelief of their Gospel message. (24:11)
 - 1. Sproul “It is significant, I think, that the first witnesses of the resurrection were the women who had stood by him when the men fled out of fear. There is a sense in which their loyalty and devotion to Christ was uniquely honoured by their being the first to get the message of the resurrection. However, when they first passed on the news to the disciples, Luke writes, ‘But they did not believe the women, because their words seemed to them like nonsense’ (24:11). When we first discover Christ and have the scales removed from our eyes, we can’t understand why everybody around us doesn’t share our excitement. We can’t understand the attitude of scepticism and cynicism, but think of it, Jesus’ own disciples rejected the news of his resurrection as nonsense.”⁹
- t. They were the first to see and touch Christ’s resurrected Body, the first to hear His voice and receive His personal love, affection, comfort and guidance.
 - 1. Mt 28:8-10 “8 So they went out quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to bring His disciples word. 9 And as they went to tell His disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, "Rejoice!" So they came and held Him by the feet and worshiped Him. 10 Then Jesus said to

⁸ Bock, D. L. (1996). [Luke: 9:51–24:53](#) (Vol. 2, p. 1885). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.

⁹ Sproul, R. C. (1999). [A Walk with God: An Exposition of Luke](#) (p. 418). Great Britain: Christian Focus Publications.

them, "Do not be afraid. Go and tell My brethren to go to Galilee, and there they will see Me."

2. Mary Magdalene was the first of the first. Mk 16:8-11 "8 So they went out quickly and fled from the tomb, for they trembled and were amazed. And they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid. 9 Now when He rose early on the first day of the week, He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom He had cast seven demons. 10 She went and told those who had been with Him, as they mourned and wept. 11 And when they heard that He was alive and had been seen by her, they did not believe."
3. John's account of Mary Magdalene's first interaction with the Risen Lord: Jn 20: 11-18 "Mary stood outside by the tomb weeping, and as she wept she stooped down and looked into the tomb. 12 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. 13 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." 14 Now when she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, and did not know that it was Jesus. 15 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." 16 Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned and said to Him, "Rabboni!" (which is to say, Teacher). 17 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.' " 18 Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that He had spoken these things to her."

III. Questions to know, love and obey God