

ViralStJames Bible Study #2: John 20:11-31

The Background: Jesus meets Mary Magdalene, the Disciples and Thomas after his resurrection

Last week we looked at the last resurrection appearance of Jesus recorded by John. This week we look at the earlier resurrection appearances recorded by John in the previous chapter to see where Jesus meets people, and look at why John wrote his Gospel.

The Passage

John 20:11 But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb; ¹² and she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet. ¹³ They said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping?” She said to them, “They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him.” ¹⁴ When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. ¹⁵ Jesus said to her, **“Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?”** Supposing him to be the gardener, she 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 in Hebrew, “Rabbouni!” (which means Teacher). ¹⁷ Jesus said to her, **“Do not hold on to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’”** ¹⁸ Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, “I have seen the Lord”; and she told them that he had said these things to her.

John 20:19 When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, **“Peace be with you.”** ²⁰ After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. ²¹ Jesus said to them again, **“Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.”** ²² When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, **“Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³ If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.”**

John 20:24 But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. ²⁵ So the other disciples told him, “We have seen the Lord.” But he said to them, “Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe.”

John 20:26 A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, **“Peace be with you.”** ²⁷ Then he said to Thomas, **“Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe.”** ²⁸ Thomas answered him, “My Lord and my God!” ²⁹ Jesus said to him, **“Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.”**

John 20:30 Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. ³¹ But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

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The Questions

- 1) In this chapter, John gives us an insight into the feelings of Mary of Magdalene; the disciples and finally Thomas before and after they meet the resurrected Jesus. How do their responses change?

Mary – (v11) then (v16/17)

The disciples – (v19) then (v20)

Thomas – (v25) then (v28)

- 2) Note how Jesus meets each individual where they are with their very human and understandable feelings. Some people today think they are 'not good enough' or 'not worthy'. But Jesus meets us where we are, not where we might like to be or think we ought to be. Do you find this encouraging?
- 3) What does Jesus ask of Mary; the Disciples; Thomas?
- 4) In what form did Jesus appear to Mary, the disciples and Thomas?
- 5) Mary thinks Jesus is 'the gardener'. Can you see any parallels between this passage and Genesis chapters 1 and 2?
- 6) Why is the resurrection key to our faith?
- 7) What does John (v30-31) say is the twin purpose of his writing the Gospel?

V 29b 'Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed' has been called 'The Greatest Beatitude' (beatitude means blessing). Would you agree? What does it mean to 'have life in his name'?

The Space for notes or doodles
