

Easter 2020
John 20:1-18
Mary's Hope

I. Mary Magdalen was the first to see Jesus resurrected. John's gospel alone gives this very personal glimpse.

- A. Mary Magdalene was a demonized girl who lived in a sizable village called Magdala on the shore of the Sea of Galilee, where Jesus no doubt had spoken and healed many people.
- B. Jesus turned her from a head case into an ardent and loyal friend, a genuine and vocal disciple. (Lk.8:2)

II. Four good questions about this passage and others on Resurrection Day.

A. Why not appear to Peter and John?

- 1. *To force them to think biblically. **Lk.24:25-26; 44***
 - a) *Faith is knowledge based on God's word and real evidence.*
 - b) *The evidence of the empty tomb*
 - c) *The evidence of the women's eye-witness testimony*
 - d) *The evidence of Scripture pointing to this*

B. Why not appear to his enemies? Matt.11:25-30

- 1. *Because the knowledge of God in Christ is for those who want it!*
 - a) *The friends of Jesus. **Jn.10:27; Matt.11:25-30; Jn.1:12-13***
- 2. *Because appearing to his enemies will happen at the end of time and they will be killed. (Rev.19; 2 Thess.1:5-10)*
- 3. *Because many of his enemies will come to faith through the witness of his friends—this is how mission works.*

C. Why does John add so much more detail in Mary's case? **Jn.1:12-13**

- 1. *To emphasize the new relationship of his disciples to God. 17*
 - a) *In Christ we now have His relationship with the father by spirit adoption. (Rom.8:15-17; Gal.4:4-7)*
 - b) *My Father and your Father; My God and your God*
- 2. *To introduce the idea of his ascension to the right hand of God.*
 - a) *The ascension to that position is the sharing of God's own throne and glory and command over the entire visible and invisible universe.*

D. Why appear to Mary Magdalen? Why the women in general being the first witnesses to the empty tomb, the angels? (Matt.28:1-10)

- 1. *Because he uses unlikely witnesses.*
 - a) *Jesus always worked first with the disenfranchised Matt.11:25-30.*
 - b) *Mary had been what we would call a "head-case" until Jesus delivered her and saved her.*
 - c) *Nobody in the 1st century would have made this up this way.*
- 2. *Because Magdalen is in many ways the perfect example of a genuine believer.*
 - a) She had long since given up her franchise in this age.
 - (1) *She was not "seeking to save her life in this age."*
 - b) She was hopeless without the Lord and she knew it.
 - (1) *Her complete personal trust for salvation and eternity was solely in Jesus as the Messiah.*
 - c) She understood that she was in His Grace.
 - (1) *knew for a fact that he had rescued her and she was intensely, personally loyal to him because of it.*
 - d) She was therefore willing to do anything to obey Him.
 - (1) *This is grace grounded, joy-filled discipleship*