

Church Year Story 20

*Catechism and Memory Verse
from the Congregation at Prayer for the Week*

BIBLE STORY: JESUS' RESURRECTION AND APPEARANCE TO MARY MAGDALENE

John 20:1-18

Central Thoughts

- Jesus rose from the dead because His death made atonement for all sin.
- Jesus' forgiveness saves us from physical and spiritual death.
- Jesus' forgiveness is the source of every spiritual blessing in Christ Jesus.
- Jesus' bodily resurrection from the dead gives us the hope of our own resurrection.

Discussion Questions

What is the first day of the week?

Sunday

Who is Mary Magdalene?

A woman who had had many infirmities and out of whom Jesus had cast seven demons (Luke 8:2).

What did Mary find at the tomb?

The stone had been rolled away and Jesus was not there.

What did Mary do when she found the empty tomb?

She ran to Peter and John and told them, "They have taken away the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid Him."

Had other women gone with Mary?

Yes, she says, "We do not know where they have laid Him."

What did Peter and John do?

They ran to the tomb.

What did they find?

An empty tomb with the linen grave cloths lying there and the face cloth that had been on Jesus' head folded together in a place by itself.

What do all these details about what they saw tell us?

That they were paying attention and had witnessed these things, and that they saw that Jesus' body was not in the tomb.

What happened to John, "the other disciple," when he went into the tomb and witnessed these things?

He believed.

What did he believe?

That Jesus was risen from the dead.

What does it mean that "as yet they did not know the Scripture, that He must rise again from the dead"? *They may have believed that Jesus was risen from the dead, but they did not understand and know that His resurrection was according to the Old Testament Scriptures.*

After Peter and John left the tomb, what did Mary observe?

"Two angels in white sitting, one at the head and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain."

Why was Mary weeping?

She loved Jesus, and His body was not there.

With what words does Mary refer to Jesus' body?

"They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid Him."

What do her words "my Lord" and "Him" tell us about what Mary thought about Jesus and His body? *She did not separate the person of Jesus from His body. She had known Him only through His body. The body of a person is important to who he or she is.*

What happened after she answered the angels?

She turned around and saw Jesus but did not know that it was He.

What did Jesus ask her?

"Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?"

Who did Mary think Jesus was?

The gardener.

What did she ask Him?

If He had taken Jesus away, where had He laid, not simply His body, but Him.

What caused Mary to recognize Him?

Jesus spoke her name.

How did Mary address Him?

As "Rabboni" which means "teacher" and is a term of affection.

What did Mary do?

She hugged His body.

Why did she do this?

She loved Him and was overjoyed to see Him risen from the dead.

Can Mary continue to cling to Him in this way?

No.

Why not?

Because He must still ascend to the Father.

What does Jesus present to the Father in His ascension?

The perfect sacrifice for sin that He had offered upon the cross. Just as the high priest would take the blood of atonement into the Holy of Holies and offer it before the LORD, so Jesus ascends to His God and Father to continually intercede for us as our own faithful High Priest.

What does Jesus tell Mary to do?

"Go to My brethren and say to them, 'I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God.'"

Because of Jesus' death and resurrection, what do we have the right to call God?

My Father and My God.

Who does the pronoun "My" indicate?

Jesus and every Christian are joined together in calling God, their Father and their God.

What did Mary do?

She told the disciples everything that Jesus had told her.

Meditation on the Bible Story

The day of our Lord's resurrection began in darkness, like the first day of creation, and ended in the glorious light of Jesus' resurrection as the forgiveness of sins was proclaimed. The forgiveness of sins that Jesus earned for us in His suffering and death is the source of life and salvation. By the forgiveness of sins we are delivered from death and separation from God and reconciled to the Father. By the forgiveness of sins and God's declaration that we are justified and righteous for Jesus' sake, there springs forth in us and in all the creation newness of life. Jesus' resurrection carries with it the pledge and promise of our own resurrection from the dead. We believe in the resurrection of the body, precisely because we believe in the forgiveness of sins. As man's fall into sin resulted in death and the corruption of all of creation (including our bodies), so Jesus' forgiveness results in life from the dead and the resurrection of our bodies from the corruption of sin. Mary Magdalene, who had experienced this corruption in all manner of infirmities and out of whom Jesus had cast seven demons, understood the power of the forgiveness of sins perhaps better than any of the disciples. Jesus had forgiven her. Jesus had saved her. This is why she loved Him and continued to believe in Him, even in the face of His own death and burial. No one else had freed her from her bondage. It is the power of the forgiveness of sins that moved her to desire to see Him and to yearn for Him. It is the same for us—our hope as Christians is that we might see Jesus face-to-face and cling to His body by which He has loved us and rescued us from every corruption of sin and death.

Prayer on the Bible Story

O Lord Jesus, we give thanks to You that by dying You took away the cause of death and by Your forgiving Word You raise the dead. As Mary Magdalene held on to Your body in faith and love on Easter morning, so teach us to love You with all our heart, to listen to Your forgiving Word, and to live in confident hope of the resurrection and a happy reunion with those who in faith have gone on before us; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.



Jesus Appears to Mary Magdalene
John 20:1-18