

***“Have You Seen The Risen Jesus”* Delivered by E A Terry 4/8/18**

Luke 24:1 – 35; Matthew 27:59 – 61; Colossians 3: 1 – 17; **John 20: 1 – 18 (Sermon)**

In the 19th chapter of John we read that after Jesus died on the cross Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus got permission from Pilate to bury Jesus’ body.

John clearly states that Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus wrapped Jesus body with about seventy five pounds of a mixture of myrrh and aloes in strips of linen in accordance with the Jewish custom. (John 19:40)

Matthew tells us that Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James watched Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea lay Jesus’ body in the tomb and roll a great stone in front of it. (Matthew 27: 59 -61)

Mary Magdalene came to that tomb early on that first Easter morning to complete the burial ritual of adding spices and perfumes.

But when Mary Magdalene got to the tomb and saw that the stone had been rolled away Mary assumed that Jesus’ body has been taken.

Mary did not remember Jesus’ promise that He would rise from the dead on the third day.

Mary immediately reacted to the empty tomb by running and telling Peter and John ***“they have taken The Lord out of the tomb and we do not know where they have put Him.”*** (John 20:1)

Peter and John immediately ran to the tomb. John got there first but John did not go in.

John stood at the entrance gazing into the tomb.

But Peter went into the place where Jesus’ body had been laid.

Verse 5 – 8 tells us Peter and John saw the strips of linen lying there in an orderly fashion as well as the folded cloth that had been around Jesus’ head.

The head cloth was separate from the linen strips.

Many Biblical scholars believe that the linen strips had not been unwrapped but that they had simply collapsed when Christ’s resurrected body passed through them.

Peter knew that the grave cloths lying by themselves was significant but ***“he went away wondering to himself what had happened.”*** (Luke 24: 12)

You see a grave robber would not have removed the grave clothes let alone taken time to lay them out in an orderly fashion.

Peter and John left the tomb and went back to where they were staying. (John 20:10) But Mary stood outside of the tomb crying (John 20:11)

When Jesus called Mary by her name Jesus turned Mary’s crying into joy

When Mary held on to Jesus, Jesus said ***“Do not hold on to me for I have not returned to The Father” “Go instead to my brothers and tell them I am returning to my Father and to your Father to my God and to your God”*** (John 20:17)

Mary probably assumed that Jesus had risen to resume life much like Lazarus had done when Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead.

But Jesus was helping Mary to understand that we will no longer relate to Jesus on a physical basis while we are here on this earth but from now on we all must relate to Jesus on a spiritual basis.

After Mary saw Jesus and talked to Jesus Mary went to the disciples and said ***“I have seen The Lord.”*** (John 20:18)

Remember the physical in The Bible always points us to a spiritual truth.

So the question for each of us this morning is; *“have you seen The Risen Lord”*.

You may not see Jesus physically the way Mary did.

But have you seen The Lord at work in your life?
Have you seen Jesus’ with the spiritual eye of faith?

If you have not experienced the risen Christ in your own life, then today is your opportunity to do that.

In Revelation 3:20 we read Jesus’ invitation; ***“Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me.”***

Jesus invites you to open your heart to Him and to receive Jesus’ love and Jesus’ forgiveness.

Jesus invites you to enjoy a personal relationship with Him.

Jesus wants to be a part of your daily life both now and throughout eternity.

But you have to make a decision for Jesus while you are physically alive on this earth.

If you have never asked Jesus to save you and to be a part of your life I beg you to do that before you leave here today.

Come up to me or Pastor Anita or Pastor Donna or one of your Elders after the benediction and say I want Jesus to save me from my sin.

Please do not put off making a decision for Jesus because tomorrow may be too late for you.

The message for each of us this morning is this:

If we want to see Jesus in our daily life we must seek The Lord with all of our heart.

Mary’s persistent devotion to Jesus permeates this story.

Mary did not give up.

Mary wanted to see Jesus so she kept searching for Jesus.

Our text challenges each of us to keep searching for Jesus until He reveals Himself to us.

Jesus said; ***“for everyone who asks receives, he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened”***. (Luke 11:10)

Peter and John missed out on seeing the Risen Jesus at the tomb on that first Easter morning because they gave up too soon.

If we want to see Jesus in our daily life we must look beyond our immediate problems and look to Jesus.

In our lesson from Luke 24 we saw that the two men on the road to Emmaus did not recognize Jesus because they were so wrapped up in their disappointment and grief.

Mary did not recognize Jesus because she was so wrapped up in what had happened that her tears and her grief prevented her from recognizing Jesus.

Mary was thinking the worst although God had a wonderful plan for Mary.

The absence of Jesus body in that tomb is the most wonderful thing that could have ever happen.

If Jesus' body had been in the tomb that would mean that all Mary's hopes as well as our hope would be gone.

Thank God that God did not give Mary what she was hoping for?

Thank God that God gave Mary and God gives us a resurrected living Jesus and not a dead body?

If we want to see Jesus in our daily life we must know and remember Jesus' promises.

God gave us The Bible so we could know Him and His promises to us.

But we have to study our Bibles to know God's promises.

Jesus said; ***“I will never leave you or forsake you.”*** (Hebrews 13:5)

And ***“God causes all things to work together for good for those who love the Lord”***. (Romans 8:28)

Do you really expect to see The Lord at work in your life, in the life of the church, and in the lives of the Christians around you?

Mary was not expecting to see a living Jesus.

Mary's was focused on a dead Jesus.

You see if you leave Jesus in the grave and only come to church every so often to pay your respects to a dead and buried Jesus Christ you will miss out on seeing and experiencing the risen living Lord.

Even if you remove Jesus from the grave and put Jesus in heaven you will not experience the risen Lord Jesus Christ in your life.

You have to know Jesus and you have to apply Jesus' teachings to your daily life.

Today Jesus appears to us and speaks to us in His Word, The Bible.

It is not enough just to read your Bibles you have to study and you have to mediate on God's word.

You have stick around and refuse to leave to leave until you have experienced a personal encounter with The Risen Lord Jesus Christ.

If we want to see Jesus in our daily life we must be faithful in attending church.

Jesus established the church and Jesus is the head of the church.

Jesus said "***where two or three are gathered in my name there I am***". (Matthew 18:20)

Jesus is in our church today because we begin each service with "*In the name of Jesus*" and we invite The Holy Spirit to be with us in the invocation.

Jesus The risen Christ is here right now in our worship.

Jesus is present when we celebrate The Sacrament of Communion and the Sacrament of Baptism.

Jesus is here as The Word proclaimed.

Remember Thomas was not with the other disciples on that first Easter evening and Thomas missed seeing The Risen Jesus that night. (John 20:24)

You see it is when we gather with the expectation of The Living Jesus being with us that Jesus appears to us.

Jesus is a risen Lord who is here to all those who are feeling less than God intended for them.

Jesus is here for the lonely, the bereaved, the parent who lost a child, and the older couple who is seeing life slowly slip away.

Jesus is here for those who are unemployed, those struggling financially, and Jesus is here for those who are in a bad relationship.

Jesus is here for all those who are searching for meaning to their life.

Jesus Christ is risen and Jesus here in our midst.

We just need our spiritual eyes to be opened to see Jesus at work in the mist of His people.

Jesus died and Jesus rose again so that we the church can carry out His work.

Jesus is calling each one of us to partner with Him in the work of ministry.

If we want to see Jesus in our daily life we must stay in fellowship with other Christians.

When the angels asked Mary why she was weeping, all Mary could say was that someone had taken Jesus' body away.

Mary forgot angels are God's messengers.

These angels could have provided Mary with the answer to her dilemma, but Mary turned away from the angels.

God sends people into our lives to let us know that He cares.

God may bring someone alongside of you at work.

God may prompt someone to call you. God tries to get our attention through people who are part of our lives.

Some of you have seen angels like that and others of you have been angels like that.

In John 12:26 Jesus said, "***My Father will honor the one who serves me.***"

Mary received an honor above and beyond her wildest dreams.

Mary was the first one to the grave on that first Easter morning.

And Mary was the first person to see the resurrected Jesus Christ. And Mary is the first person to be commissioned to spread the good news of Jesus' resurrection.

Jesus said; "***Go instead to my brothers and tell them, 'I am returning to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'***" (John 20:17)

And so Mary Magdalene went to the disciples with the news: "***I have seen the Lord!***" (John 20:18)

Mary had a message for the disciples and then the disciples had a message for the world.

The message was that Jesus had paid the penalty for our sins on the cross; the message was that death has been defeated and we have a hope beyond the grave.

The message of Jesus' resurrection is for all believers.

The message is that one day all believers will all be united with our Lord in heaven and that we will be reunited with all of our loved ones that asked Jesus to be their savior. (1st Thessalonians 4:13 – 18)

Today we Christians have that same message.

The cross is the message and Jesus' resurrection gives us power to deliver that message.

The question for each of us this morning is this; “*am I going to deliver the message to the unsaved people God has put in my life*”.

Remember the two men on the road to Emmaus did not recognize Jesus until they shared their faith with a stranger.

Today we have all of evidence of the resurrection recorded in the scriptures as well as in secular history.

We also have the benefit of the testimony of thousands of lives that have been changed over the past 2000 years.

The question is this; “*are we going to take the next step and make Jesus’ resurrection personal.*”

“*Are we going to be like Mary and keep on searching and not give up until we have had a personal encounter with The Living Lord Jesus Christ?*”

Can you say what Mary said to the disciples; “***I have seen The Lord?***”

AMEN