

Title: Easter Sunday – “When Jesus Calls Your Name”

Text: John 20:1-18

Date: April 4, 2021

While Jesus hung on the cross on Good Friday – the religious leaders publicly mocked and shamed him.

Matt 27:39, *Those who passed by were yelling insults at him, and shaking their heads.*

- *You said you’d destroy the Temple and build it back in three days...*
- *Now you’re a laughingstock.*
- *If you’re the Son of God, come down from the cross and maybe we’ll believe.*
- *You saved others...but you can’t even save yourself.*
- *Where’s God your Father now? Why aren’t the angels helping you?*

They put sour wine and gall on a sponge. They lifted it to Jesus’ face with a pole.

- But Jesus didn’t drink it.

They had a sign to mock him quickly made – they hung it over his head on the cross.

- *“The King of the Jews.”*

Roman soldiers who stripped Jesus from his clothes...rolled dice to see who could keep them.

Of the handful of words that Jesus spoke while hanging from the cross...perhaps this statement is most shocking → *“Father forgive them...they don’t know what they are doing.”*

As the darkness covered the earth...and Jesus Christ physically died...only a handful of His followers remained:

- His mother Mary was there.
- Lady named Salome was there (many think she was Jesus’ aunt).
- And Mary Magdalene was there
- Each woman was grieving...heartbroken...and bewildered.

Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus took responsibility for Jesus’ body.

- These two men took Jesus to a nearby tomb at the cemetery.
- They wrapped his body and his face with burial cloths...
- They laid him in the tomb.

The Gospels point out – that due to it being late in the day...and the following day was the Sabbath day...they couldn’t properly anoint Jesus with all the burial spices.

- All work stopped for Jews on the Sabbath.

So Jesus was laid in a borrowed tomb...and a stone was rolled in front of the entrance.

- Matt 27:65 → Pilate ordered extra guards to stand watch by the tomb.
- *“So no one can tamper with anything...make it as secure as you can.”*

All night Friday night...All day on Saturday:

- Jesus lay dead and buried.
- His ministry was over.
- His followers were bewildered.
- It looked like hell had won...and the world would go back to being 'normal.'

THE STORY. Things changed, forever, early on that Sunday morning. Literally, forever!

20:1, *First day of the week...early...while it was still dark.*

I love how John points out the timing of this story.

- First day of the week.
- First part of the day.
- The first eyewitnesses to the miracle.

First, First, First → It's a woman...and it happens early on a Sunday morning.

John is careful in his chronology of the telling of this story.

- It's not men informing the women of what just happened.
- It's women informing the men.
- This is totally countercultural and unexpected in their patriarchal society.
- If you wanted it politically correct...you'd never tell it with these details. Never.

20:2, What did the women say to Peter and John?

This was their message → *the tomb is empty...we don't know where Jesus is...*

The fact: the tomb was empty.

The mystery: where was Jesus' body?

- Their original assumption was that someone had taken Jesus' body away.
- They are confused.

Let's cut them some slack! Resurrections weren't and aren't common!

- If he wasn't resurrected, the story is over.
- If the body was simply stolen...we aren't talking about it 2,000 years later.

20:3-4, Peter and John go running...at first together...but then John pulls ahead and runs faster.

John gets to the tomb first.

- John peaks inside the tomb...but he doesn't walk in.
- Peter arrives a moment later and enters directly inside.

20:7, The facecloth that was placed over Jesus' face – was folded/placed neatly to the side.

- NOT something that a robber would take time to do.

20:8 → Then John went in, saw, and believed.

- They believed...but they didn't understand all the details yet.
- They weren't totally sure what to make of it.

Jesus Christ isn't in the tomb → oh how that statement changed everything!

Now the text turns the attention back to Mary Magdalene (**John 20:11**).

20:11, Mary is standing outside of the tomb. She is weeping.

- But as she is crying...she steps up to take a look inside for herself.
- Two angels ask, "*Woman, why are you crying?*"
- Mary, "*Because they've taken away my Lord....I don't know where they put him.*"

IRONY: Mary wept sorrowfully, because she didn't know where He was...today we weep joyously, because we know where He is!

20:14, Mary turns from this conversation...she sees a man standing close by. She doesn't recognize that it is Jesus.

- She assumed it was the gardener/groundskeeper.

20:15, Jesus asked, "*Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?*"

- Mary, "Sir, if you've removed Jesus' body...please tell me where he is...so that we can take care of him."

20:16, Notice the one-word Jesus said here. He calls her by name – "Mary."

- Mary can only respond to Jesus, "Rabbi!"

And then Jesus says to Mary:

- Don't cling to me.
- But go and tell all my brothers.
- I am ascending to My Father...Your Father...My God...Your God.

20:18, Mary Magdalene's announcement to all the disciples: "*I have seen the Lord!*"

When Jesus Christ Calls Your Name – what does it bring?

1. It brings clarity (v 16).

- a. When Mary heard her name on Jesus' lips...
- b. It brought familiarity...clarity...
- c. Her natural response was to recognize exactly who he was.
 - All she could say was, "*Rabbi*" – Teacher.

John 10:3-4, *The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and he leads them...and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice.*

ILLUS: When I call my children...because I'm their Father...this is what I don't want to hear: What? Yeah? Huh? What do you want? No no no!

- When I call their name – this is what I expect to hear, “Sir!” or “Yes sir!”

Today – many of you need clarity about who Jesus is. He's not just some ancient philosopher, or great moral teacher of the past...he's not just some nice guy.

- He's your Teacher...you are the Student.
- He's your Rabbi/Leader...He is worth following.

2. It brings connection (v 17).

- We learned last week that Jesus, through his blood, provided us with reconciliation!
- We were alienated because of sin, but Jesus brought reconciliation.

But Jesus called them, “brothers.”

Jesus said, “His Father/God” → will be our “Father/God.”

Jesus is our salvation. Jesus is our connection. Jesus is what makes us “family” with God.

ILLUS: We used to sing a song called, “*I'm so glad, I'm a part, of the family of God...*”

ILLUS: I'll never forget when Harold DeLoach, stepped back, and put my hand in Carrie's hand at our wedding ceremony...he linked us together...with his authority he was putting blessing on the relationship/connection.

3. It brings purpose (v 18).

- Mary goes and tells everyone, “I have seen the Lord!”

FACT. If we have personally seen/met Jesus...the mission of our life...becomes this: we are called to tell as many people as possible the good news about Jesus – He is alive and He saves.

Big Idea. When Jesus calls your name, you understand that He is the Lord, and everything begins to make sense.

First, oh the glory of just one day – the day He calls your name!

- Notice this story in John 20 occurred – early on a Sunday morning (first day of the week).

Sunday is a special day for the Church – it's the day each week when we remember the LORD and His resurrection.

- Habit of the early church – Sunday worship (Acts 20:7) (1 Cor 16:2).

Jesus' resurrection occurred on a certain Sunday 2,000 years ago. In one day, He was raised!

Prior to Jesus' resurrection, the people of God gathered on Saturday (The Jewish Sabbath).

- But after Jesus' resurrection, the pattern changed as Christians began to observe what's been called "Resurrection Day."

So on Sundays, Christians gather to reflect, remember, and worship:

He lived and died...to buy my pardon...an empty grave is there to prove, my Savior lives...because He lives, I can face tomorrow. Because He lives...all fear is gone. Because I know, He holds the future...and life is worth the living...just because He Lives.

FACT. There are many glorious days in your life: birthday, anniversary, graduation, wedding day, first child, 1st home, grandchildren, retirement, etc.

Question: do you realize only these days will matter for eternity:

- What day did you give your heart to Jesus and become born again?
- Are you ready for the date of your death...or the Lord's return?

Second, oh the beauty of His grace – being an unlikely witness to His power!

In Jewish culture, women were not supposed to learn from the rabbis. Women were lesser socially and religiously.

By including women in the resurrection appearances, Jesus is showing that all people are equal under God.

- Jesus was careful to include women in this narrative.
- Jesus lifted women up from degradation and a lesser status!

Q: Why Mary Magdalene?

A: According to Luke 8:2-3, she was previously possessed by seven demons. But now we see her boldly witnessing to Christ's resurrection.

FACT. Anyone, including the overlooked and vulnerable, can go from being totally possessed by evil, to becoming a frontline worker for the Kingdom of God!

Mary got to see special things (20:1). Mary got to tell others (20:2).

Mary got to experience the wonder of Jesus' intervention and presence (20:15-16).

- Jesus came to her!
- Jesus cleared the confusion for her.

CONCL. No one here today is too evil. No one here today is too far gone.

You may feel unseen, unheard, or unimportant.

- But you are super important to the Lord Jesus Christ!

Oh the big plans Jesus has for you! He's alive...and He's calling your name for salvation and service.