

I Have Seen Him

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John 20:1-18

Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. ²So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, 'They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him.' ³Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went towards the tomb. ⁴The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. ⁵He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in. ⁶Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, ⁷and the cloth that had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself. ⁸Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; ⁹for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead. ¹⁰Then the disciples returned to their homes. **11** But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb; ¹²and 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. ¹³They 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.' ¹⁴When she had said this, she turned round and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. ¹⁵Jesus said to her, 'Woman, why are you weeping? For whom are you looking?' 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.' ¹⁶Jesus said to her, 'Mary!' She turned and said to him in Hebrew, 'Rabbouni!' (which means Teacher). ¹⁷Jesus 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." ' ¹⁸Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, 'I have seen the Lord'; and she told them that he had said these things to her.

1. The Impact of Easter

This morning our children have witnessed the resurrection of Jesus and our choir has sung about the risen Christ. Did you enjoy their presentation? I am sure you did. Very soon, our Easter service will be over, and we will be going back home. Before we go home, I would like to make sure of one thing. In today's scripture, Mary Magdalene says, "**I have seen the Lord.**" After we have

heard today's presentation, can we say that "**we have seen the Lord**"? Many of us would say that we believe in the resurrection of Jesus. But some of us still have a hard time believing in the risen Jesus because the resurrection doesn't seem possible. Whether we believe in the resurrection of Jesus or not, our belief or non-belief doesn't make any difference in the course of history at all. However, what we believe about the resurrection will make a big impact on our lives.

2. The Change of Mary Magdalene and the Disciples' Lives

When Mary Magdalene came to the tomb, she did not expect the resurrection of Jesus. But after Mary met Jesus, she went to the disciples and told them that she had seen the risen Jesus. Mary was full of joy and excitement. She was never any happier before. For the disciples, the resurrection of Jesus caused the greatest impact on their character. The disciples were timid and afraid of suffering and dying after they saw what had happened to Jesus. But when Jesus came back from the dead, they became emboldened, full of passion and proclaimed the good news of the resurrection wherever they went. All of them except John were martyred for their faith.

3. God's Invisible Hand

Some may recall a movie called *Quo Vadis* that explained how early Christians were persecuted. Yet, they didn't give up their faith in the risen Christ. Jesus' disciples and the early Christians were not afraid of dying because they saw God's invisible hand intervening in Jesus' life. God did not leave Jesus in the grave. God raised him up from the dead. As God took care of the Israelites, God was always with Jesus and gave him a final victory.

4. Conclusion and Application

Every day so many things happen in our lives. Sometimes we feel like our life is out of control. Many times we feel our life is unpredictable. Where do we turn for help? Where can we find hope? I am not talking about fake hope, but real hope. We can find hope in the resurrection of Jesus since we can see the invisible hand of God. The resurrection of Jesus helps us overcome the fear of death and gives us meaning and purpose of life. Do you know that Christians celebrate the resurrection of Jesus not only on Easter, but also every Sunday? Swift Memorial Church is a place where we celebrate that hope and give thanks to God every week. If you'd like to continue to celebrate and to live this new life with us, we invite you to come back next week. 1 Peter 3:15 says, "**Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have.**" I

pray that all of us can be a source of hope so that others can say that they have seen the Lord through us. Amen.