



The Dynamic Gospel Study Guide – Book of John

Chapter 20

1 The day after the Passover Sabbath, Mary Magdalene made her way to the tomb very early, while it was still dark. She was stunned to find it wide open. The huge sealing stone was missing.

2 In shock she ran as fast as she could to Simon Peter and the other disciple known as 'best friend.' She wailed, "They've taken Him! He's gone from the tomb! I have no idea where they've moved Him!!" Mary dropped in a heap.

3 Jolted out of their own grief, Peter and the other disciple ran as fast as their feet would carry them to the burial cave.

4 They raced together until the other one pulled ahead leaving Peter behind. He threw himself at the short entrance, gasping for breath.

5 Peering inside he could see all of the burial wrappings lying in a heap on the stone shelf. He couldn't bring himself to step inside the place of death.

6 Peter had no such quibbles and marched right in, pushing the other one aside. He saw the same thing.

7 Peter noticed the head shroud lying folded and off to the side, separate from the rest of the wrappings.

8 Finally the other disciple got up the courage to follow Peter inside, and agreed that the body of Jesus was nowhere to be found.

9 Neither of them realized yet that another prophecy had come true that says "Even Death will not hold Him down. He'll stand up again."

10 They had no words for each other. In deep sorrow they retreated to their lodgings.

11 All the while, Mary Magdalene had stood outside the tomb wailing a great lament. Overcome with emotion she eventually pressed into the vault to see for herself.

12 She was met with the glorious presence of two angels, brilliant and blazing white. One was seated at the foot of the shelf that had held the body of Jesus, the other at the head.

13 They greeted her with this message: "Woman, why are you wailing in grief?" Through her blinding tears she answered, "They've stolen my Master and I don't know where they've hidden Him!"

14 She turned around to leave and almost ran into Jesus standing in her way, not realizing Who it was.

15 He asked her the same thing. "Woman, why are you consumed with sorrow? Are you looking for someone?" Mary, supposing Him to be the groundskeeper, pled with Him "Sir, if you've moved Him, please, PLEASE tell where and I'll take Him myself."

16 Jesus looked at her softly and in a warm, familiar voice said "Mary!" She turned to Him looking up to His face. "Teacher?" she exclaimed, falling to her knees.

17 Jesus said "Don't touch me, not yet, for I haven't finished My journey home. I'm returning to

My Father above. But quickly go tell My brothers that I'm on the move. I'm heading home to My Father and yours; My God and your God. I'm on My way up!"

18 Now Mary was running, but not from desperation. She wasted no time sharing the good news. She had seen Him! Standing right in front of her! And everything He told her she told to them.

19 That very evening the disciples hunkered down with the doors locked tight. They feared the religious police and their unruly mobs. And then - there was Jesus. Standing right in the middle of them like He had always been there. "Hush, friends, relax," He said. "Nothing to fear."

20 It was almost too much for them. Jesus showed them all the wounds in His hands and even the gash in His side. They were overcome with joy and tears when they realized it was no ghost or hallucination. It was really Him!

21 Then Jesus said to them again. "Rest, now. My peace dwell richly in all of you. In the same authority the Father sent Me, I'm now sending you."

22 Saying this, Jesus drew a deep breath and breathed it out over His students; everyone present. "Breathe in the Holy Spirit – pull Him in deeply.

23 "And breathe His life back out to others. I tell you, anyone whose sins you forgive is truly forgiven. You forgive and I forgive. If you hold back, I hold back."

24 Now Thomas the twin, one of the twelve from the beginning was the only one not present for this amazing encounter.

25 The others told him all about it, saying "We've seen Him with our own eyes! He's alive!" Thomas didn't believe it. "You can't trust your eyes. Unless I feel the nail prints myself; Unless I place my hand in that hideous gash in His side there is **no way** I'm believing. It's only wishful thinking."

26 So eight days went by with the disciples still hiding from the authorities. This time Thomas was with them when suddenly Jesus appeared again right out of thin air. No door stood open, no windows swung free. Jesus was simply there. "Hello again, friends. Relax, it's really Me."

27 He looked straight at Thomas. "Come on!" He said. "I'm no mist. You want proof? Come put your finger in the hole in My hand. Feel the gash if you need to. Are you ready to turn away from believing only what **you** think is possible? It's time to believe the impossible!"

28 Thomas and his resistance crumpled together on the floor. "You win. I see there's no use denying it. You're my Lord and my God."

29 "Oh, Thomas," Jesus replied. "Now that you've seen Me for yourself, you finally 'get it.' Happy are those who get it without having to be proven wrong. There will never be enough evidence for some."

30 In the days ahead miraculous signs and wonders just kept pouring out from the hands of Jesus, and all in full sight of His students. So many, in fact, that it would be impossible to write them all down.

31 But what has been committed to paper is here to convince even the most ardent skeptic that Jesus is, in fact, the Anointed Son of the Living God and that by believing in Him you bear His Name – His eternal, life-giving Name. And with it, His very Life.

Explain the Context:

From your reading provide a short answer to the following:

What is the theme of this chapter?	What is the BIG Idea?
What is something that surprised you?	What is this chapter <i>not</i> saying?

Take a moment to consider these questions:

- 1) How does Mary Magdalene intend to honor Jesus when she goes to the tomb?
- 2) Why do you think Peter and John didn't see the angels? Why do you think Mary Magdalene did?
- 3) Mary was in such deep grief she didn't recognize Jesus when she saw him. It could be also that His body was still disfigured from the torture and crucifixion. What brought her to realize it was Jesus?
- 4) What is the significance of Jesus words to Mary – "My Father and **your** Father, My God and **your** God"?

- 5) Mary has the distinction of being chosen to reveal the resurrection to Jesus' followers. How significant is this considering the culture of the day? How significant is it in light of today's culture?

- 6) Even though Mary had told them everything she had seen and heard from Jesus, why do you believe the disciples were still hiding in fear?

- 7) How would Jesus' appearance and words of peace comfort you in such a time of great fear? How do they comfort you now?

- 8) Re-read verses 22 & 23. Take some time to breathe in and out. As you do, think about the presence of the Holy Spirit in the very air you breathe. Write your thoughts here.

- 9) Why is it important for us to acknowledge Thomas' honest questions? How does this help you to voice your questions to God?

- 10) How do Jesus's words to Thomas validate Thomas? How does it feel to know that Jesus does not "shame" us for our questions?

Apply the Scripture

Write the verse that stood out to you while reading [in this translation or your favorite].

How does this verse challenge you? Does it reveal an attribute of God's character?

For further study:

- Psalms 2:6-8
- Psalms 16:10
- Isaiah 53:10-12
- Hosea 6:2
- Jonah 1:17