

Behold, The New Has Come!

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[0 : 00] Our sermon text today is John 20, from verse 1 to verse 18. As I read this, remember this is God's inspired, inerrant, infallible, clear, and sufficient word.

It's God's very own word for you, His people. John 20, 1 through 18. Now on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb.

So 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.

So Peter went out with the other disciple, and they were going toward the tomb, both of them were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first.

And stooping to look in, he saw the linen cloths lying there, but he did not go in. Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb, and he saw the linen cloths lying there, and the face cloth, which had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen cloths, but folded up in a place by itself.

[1 : 22] Then the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed. For as yet they did not understand the scripture, that He must rise from the dead.

Then the disciples went back to their homes. Verse 11, But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb, and as she wept, she stooped to look into the tomb, and she saw two angels in white sitting there, where the body of Jesus had lain, one at the head and one at the feet.

They 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. Having said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing, but she did not know that it was Jesus.

Jesus said to her, Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking? Supposing Him to be the gardener, she said to Him, Sir, if you had carried Him away, tell me where you have laid Him, and I will take Him away.

Jesus said to her, Mary, Mary? She turned and said to Him in Aramaic, Rabboni, which means teacher. Jesus said to her, Do not cling to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father.

[2 : 48] But go to my brothers and say to them, I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God. Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, I have seen the Lord, and that He had said these things to her.

This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God. You may be seated. The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of the Lord remains forever.

Let's pray. Amen. O good shepherd, please call your sheep by name today, and may we not go home the same.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Maybe you're sitting here this morning with a deep desire in your soul that you can't quite describe.

If you're like me, this desire, it's stronger sometimes than others. C.S. Lewis had the same desire. He wrote, There is a desire in the human soul that this old creation can not satisfy.

[4 : 37] And if you have that, he wrote, The most probable explanation is that we were made for another world, a new creation. My prayer preparing for this special service has simply been that together we can behold Jesus.

We can turn our eyes upon Jesus today together. Paul wrote to the church in 2 Corinthians 5.17 that the old has already passed away.

Behold, the new has come. To behold means to fix your eye upon. To behold is to see with attention.

To behold is to observe with care. So let's behold together God the Son and His new creation. Behold, the new has come.

The first observation is because God the Son transformed a place of death into a place of life for you and for me.

[5 : 51] Would you look at verse 1 with me? We read that on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early while it was still dark and she saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb.

Well, where is this tomb? And who put the stone there? In John chapter 19 verse 41 you can look it's probably on the same page in your Bible. John 19.41 says there was a garden in the place where Jesus was crucified and a new tomb was in the garden.

Graves are a place of death but gardens are a place of life. Think of the first woman Eve she walked away from the Lord's garden in grief and now our Lord Jesus turns that place of grief into a place of life.

Mary Magdalene walks to the Lord's garden to grieve but she runs away from there rejoicing and declaring the good news. we're told here that the stone that covered the tomb in which Jesus was buried it had been set there by Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea.

It had been sealed and was being watched by two sets of Roman guards alternating their shifts. That stone John simply says was gone.

[7 : 30] We read that Mary went to the tomb when it was still dark. It was so early in the day and the stone was already gone. So think of it from their perspective as Mary and these women are walking in the dark to grieve at the tomb of the Lord.

The sun was rising. Andrew Peterson poet and musician has wonderful lyrics every time you hear me say his heart beats it's Andrew Peterson.

He reflected on this moment as the sun was rising and he wrote his heart beats his blood begins to flow waking up what was dead a moment ago and his heart beats now everything is changed because the blood that brought us peace with God is racing through his veins and his heart beats and that's because God the sun transformed this place of death into a place of life for you and for me.

Beloved congregation of Jesus Christ if you are in Jesus you are a new creation Paul wrote 2 Corinthians 5 17 the old has passed away behold the new has come amen the second reason why the new has already come is because God the sun broke the old curse and he did this on the first day of his new creation God the sun broke the old curse on the first day of his new creation still on verse 1 look at those first few words we read it was the first day of the week in the original literally this would be translated it is the first of sabbaths the first of sabbaths not just any sabbath this is the sabbath of the passover it's the day of great deliverance it's the day where the bondage to slavery is broken and think of that pattern of new creation our creator

God he finished his work on the sixth day and he rested on the seventh day the sabbath now our savior lord he finished his work on the sixth day we read in first corinthians 15 3 that christ died for our sins according to the scriptures and he was buried and as he's buried on that sabbath he rested on the seventh day the last day of the old creation now we read it was the first day of the week it was the first of new sabbaths it was the eighth day you could say and in biblical theology the eighth day it marks a clean new beginning let me give you just a couple examples though there are many more leviticus 12 2 it tells a ceremonial law that if a woman became pregnant and gave birth to a son not a daughter but a son carrying the curse of Adam they would be ceremonially unclean for seven days then on the eighth day after that son that seed of the woman is circumcised the mother as well would be clean so a promised seed on the eighth day bringing cleaning for the woman as well a second example is

[11 : 09] Leviticus 14 10 a leper a person who had something far worse than bed bugs their skin is falling off their nerves are degenerating their fingers and toes are falling off their body is rotting on their bones if a leper thought they were getting clean and they presented themselves to a priest they then had to count seven days of ceremonial cleansing and at the end of those days on the seventh day they had to wash their clothes and bathe themselves with fresh water they had to be baptized you could say because then on the eighth day the priest would declare you are clean you leper full of disease that's going to be contagious for this whole city you are a new man on the eighth day and so it was the first of sabbath it was the first day of the week the first day of the new creation that God the son broke the old curse and the new creation has begun his heart beats he

breathes in his living lungs expand the heavy air surrounding death turns to breath again he breathes out he is word and flesh once more the lamb of God slain for us is a lion ready to roar and his heart beats amen if you are in

Christ the living lion lamb of God you are a new creation the old has passed away behold the new has come you can behold the new in Christ because the only ministry that can transform weeping into joy is the ministry of the risen God the ministry of God the son alive he alone can transform your weeping into joy maybe you're weeping this morning there's a grief Jesus invites you bring it to him he alone can transform it in verses two and three Mary runs back and doesn't have good news yet she thinks it's bad news she tells John and Peter the stone is rolled away where's his body so then they go with her now look with me at verse four they both ran together the other disciple who is John outran Peter and got to the tomb first the last time we heard about Peter is when he had denied Jesus three times the sorrow and darkness that Peter had felt now must have been compounded even his body is gone we're told that John believed but Peter had not seen in the scriptures how this was fulfilling what Christ promised all along one commentator pointed out how hard it must have been for Peter to run weighed down by the guilt of his denial maybe you're feeling heavy and it's hard for you to run to Christ we read in verse nine that Peter and John did not understand that Jesus must die be buried and then rise from the dead as the scripture said so in verse 10 we're told simply that these disciples returned to the place where they were staying Peter and John did not get to meet Jesus that early morning so they go home the same the good news is that Peter and John do believe eventually they do see in the scriptures for themselves how Christ fulfilled all of the promises of God they all find their yes and amen in him so my invitation to you today don't go home the same make sure you meet Jesus this morning see for yourself in the scriptures how he fulfills all of God's promises for you we're told in verse 11 that Mary stood outside the tomb crying and as she wept she stooped in to look inside the tomb no wonder Mary wept without

Jesus there's no peace without Jesus there is no forgiveness without Jesus she could not know the love of God do you understand Mary's tears without Jesus there is no joy in verse 12 Mary saw two angels in white sitting where Jesus body had been lying one at the head the other at the feet in verses 13 and 14 she talks with these angels they talk back to her she responds back to them these messengers from heaven and Mary is in such shock that that's not even something she thinks is a big deal she continues to weep without Jesus Christ the glory of heaven the presence of angels from the throne of God mean nothing to

[16 : 54] Mary she does not want heaven without her Lord Jesus Christ heaven is a place of singing worship glory but that's only if Jesus Christ is on the throne heaven heaven itself is not good news for you and for me without Jesus Christ but the Lord Jesus does not leave Mary weeping longing for the new creation God always meets you and me in our place of need the presence and the company of Jesus Christ is better than anything that this world or the next can offer us and Mary knew once you have communed with God through Jesus you will never settle for anything less that's because the only ministry of

God the Son that's the only thing that can transform our weeping into joy and if you are in Christ you can know this joy the joy of the new creation because the old has passed away and behold the new has come the fourth reason we can behold the new creation in Christ is because God the Son he turns sinners like you and like me from the grave to the garden God the Son turns sinners from the grave to the garden that's what he does look at verse 14 Mary turned around and she saw Jesus standing there but she did not know it was Jesus in verse 15 Jesus said to her why are you crying and she supposed that he was the gardener she was right the verb in verse 14 is in the passive reflective a better translation would be that

Mary was turned to the back when we hear this turning we should pay attention do you remember how God turned the whole empire of Assyria and the capital Nineveh he turned them as the word of the Lord was preached it was the Lord who turned Mary from the grave to the garden Mary is passive she's reflecting she's simply responding to the voice of Christ he turns her from the place where he once laid to the place where he now stands we're left with the impression that Jesus was standing in this garden near the tomb all along just as Adam was standing in the garden silent but now Jesus Christ is standing in this garden as the gardener and he's calling her by name look at verse 16

Jesus said to her Mary in John 10 Jesus had preached that the shepherd calls his sheep by name and then in verse 16 we have that passive reflective verse again being turned she said to him in Aramaic Rabboni which means teacher in John 10 Jesus said his sheep will know his voice and they will follow him you see Christ fulfilling the very word that he preached Jesus turned Mary to him because Jesus was right there all along that's where Jesus wants to be it's by the side of sinners she calls him Rabboni or teacher what a great teacher he is he's going to preach to her a simple and clear message of good news that only gets better

Jesus Christ is the first preacher on the first Lord's day of the new creation and he has never stopped preaching since then in verse 17 he says I am ascending to my father who is your father to my God who is your God his work as mediator is in effect he calls God the father creator of all your father God the holy triune God father son and holy spirit is yours he calls you by name because he is the great friend of sinners think of all rabboni taught Mary in that short exchange Jesus Christ taught Mary forgiveness Jesus Christ taught Mary what it means to be delivered

[22 : 28] Jesus Christ taught Mary what it means to be unconditionally loved Jesus Christ taught Mary his work is what makes her righteous and he taught Mary and he wants to teach you and me that there is even more good yet to come it only gets better as you follow Christ his work as mediator is ongoing and glorious and builds that's because he rises glorified in flesh clothed in immortality the firstborn from the dead and he is alive today and he is here to meet you in your darkness he is here to turn you he is here to turn your weeping into joy to take your eyes off the tomb off the grave and onto himself the risen lord your teacher your good shepherd if you are in christ you are a new creation the old has passed away behold the new has come the fifth way in which i invite you to behold the new creation of christ is this god the son makes old slaves to death into messengers of new life god the son makes old slaves to death into messengers of new life in verse 17 jesus says don't cling to me mary evidently mary when she recognized jesus and he spoke to her she is holding on to his ankles she loved him so much she couldn't bear the thought of losing him again but jesus says i have not yet ascended to the father there is more far greater still to come mary a pastor named brian voss pointed out jesus is teaching mary that her salvation does not depend on her hold on christ but on his hold of her yes cling to christ but be assured that from heaven he is clinging on to you he will get all the glory in your preservation and in your sanctification until you breathe your last breath your salvation depends on his hold on you and then jesus tells mary just like the angels had told the shepherds go declare this stand on the rooftops tell the good news go tell the brothers what i have revealed to you and in verse 18 mary went off and she announced to the disciples i have seen the lord and she told them what he said to her god the son makes old slaves to death into messengers of new life what was god's purpose in using mary mary of magdalene of all of his hundreds of followers and his twelve disciples it was mary why command her to go give this good news in the ancient world women could not be a legal witness in a court of law but yet john describes mary as a legal eyewitness she saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb what do we know about this mary she was from a

city called magdala it was a fishing town on the western shore of the sea of galilee in luke 8 we're told that she had been possessed by seven demons mary was a slave to darkness our lord freed mary from that demon possession and she followed him if you are in christ you are a new creation the old has passed away the new has come you see why mary is the one god chose our lord jesus is undoing the curse after eating the fruit in the garden what did mary do she gave it to her husband mary is undoing the sin of eve as part of the new creation eve became a messenger of death to adam our gracious lord makes mary a messenger of life to his disciples all is being undone behold the new has come he rises his work is already done and he's resting as he rises to reclaim the bride he won and his heart beats colossians 3 10 says if you are in christ you are being renewed in the knowledge of god according to the image of your creator so my heart beats with the rhythm of the saints as

I look for the seeds the king has sown to burst up from their graves we have hope in life and in death because jesus christ lives we have in front of us here a black cloth and we have the visible word of the work of christ and we have flowers representing a garden we can go to the grave of a loved one who is in christ and we can put flowers at their grave and that's because jesus christ has made the grave into a garden god put adam in a garden to be the first gardener and adam with his sin he turned that garden into dust thorns and weeds but jesus christ he put himself in the dust of the grave he turns adam's thorns into a crown and he turns the weeds into a garden adam made

the garden a grave but our lord jesus christ he makes that same grave into his garden he redeems us from the curse by becoming a curse for us galatians 3 13 our lord jesus christ he first hung from the tree of death and he did that to become the giver of life he rested in his grave and now he rises and he rules as king over all from the right hand of god the father and he will come to judge the living and the dead so don't go home the same today behold the new has come behold the new creation by the finished work of jesus christ and obey him follow the voice of your good shepherd if you are in christ you are a new creation behold the new has come let's pray giving thanks and responding to the gospel that you've heard today lord you declared in isaiah 65 17 i will create new heavens and a new earth this world will not be remembered and in revelation 21 you gave this same apostle john a vision of a new heaven and a new earth because the first heaven and the first earth had passed away lord we praise you that your kingdom has come we can have new life in you because jesus christ lives so we crown you the lord of life who triumphed over the grave you rose victorious in the strife for those you came to save your glories now we sing who died and rose on high you died eternal life to bring and you live that death may die help us to know the glorious truth of your rule today in our lives we ask amen you