

Mary, Why Do You Weep?

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- [0 : 00] You can most certainly see while that will be our song for all eternity, our king had defeated death and had overcome it for you and I. Human's worst enemy in death was conquered by Jesus.
- And just like Mary got to turn and see the beautiful face of Jesus, we just sung about that every one of us had that same opportunity to see the Jesus that died for us. And so that is why we're never going to get over it.
- And that's why we will continue to meet not just this Sunday, but every Sunday and to praise His name for what He has done. So we ended in verse number 11 with Mary who's there.
- John, Peter and John had come and they had seen the empty tomb and that they leave. And there's Mary there and she's staring into the tomb and looking in there.
- Her heart is still so very heavy. And so for the sake of remembering, as we look at the next few verses, we're going to divide it into three different stages. Now do this for me to remember. Maybe it'll help you. First, we're going to see her confusion about His presence.
- [1 : 08] She is just mostly a mess, but she doesn't recognize that Jesus is so very near to her. And then from that, we will see that His calling is very personal. Mary, she says His name.
- And then last, His commission is very precious. The way in which He told her to go and tell my brothers, my Father and your Father, my God and your God.
- Jesus does never waste any words. Every statement that He makes is so important for us today. So let me pick up in verse number 11. But Mary stood at the sepulcher weeping and she wept and she stooped down and she looked into the sepulcher.
- And seeth the two angels in white sitting, the one at the head and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. So she looks and she sees two angels.
- Another passage, it says it appears to be a young man and they're sitting where Jesus would have been, making it very clear that Jesus is not there. And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou?
- [2 : 13] She saith unto them, Because thou hast taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him. And when she had thus said, she turned herself back and she saw Jesus standing and knew not that it was Jesus.
- Mary weeps with a desire for the presence of the Lord that she is unable to find. As she looks into the tomb there, and we have a built tomb built into our stage back here, right?
- We did that for such a day as this, right? And so she's looking into the tomb and she stoops down and she's looking and she sees two angels and she just continues to weep. Because she had come, she wanted to be near the body of Jesus.
- She wanted to be near Him. She wanted to be in His presence. She had had so many meals with Him. He had brought the demons out. She had an incredible love for Jesus. And so when the angels look at her and they say, Why are you crying?
- And she just has to exclaim and says, I want to know where my Lord is. If you tell me where He is at, I want to go. She had come to help prepare the body. And the time that they had, they didn't have enough time.

- [3 : 15] And she had got oil, ointment, and spices. And she had come. She wanted to show honor unto this body that was of Jesus. And in her grief, she doesn't recognize what is there.
- So she has this great love for the Lord. She can't imagine life without Him. When she does recognize this Jesus, He's going to just cling to His feet.
- She's just going to throw Himself at it. Because she is trying to move on and she can't. She can't imagine her life without her Messiah, without Jesus that was leading.
- Some of you this year have lost somebody. And you just wondered how you were ever going to be, how you were ever going to make it. You've been to a funeral and you've seen people throw themselves on top of a casket.
- You've been to the graveyard and you've seen people that didn't want to leave. They just wanted the presence of that person. Today, because of the resurrection of Jesus, all resurrection is possible.
- [4 : 11] And so we rejoice. And so at first I think about my Savior Jesus. But I also think about the body of my grandmother and my grandfather and other people. That because of that resurrection, their bodily resurrection is available.
- And that we will get to live together forever worshipping Him. But Mary here, she is looking in the wrong place. She's looking in the tomb. And she's looking at what could have been.
- Man, I wish Jesus was here and walked with me. That could have been so much better. In the words of the great theologian, Johnny Lee, she was looking for love in all the wrong places. All right? And if you don't know that reference, here's another theologian.
- It says, our hearts are restless until they find their rest in Thee. If Jesus wouldn't have walked in, Mary would have lived all of her days restless. She would have tore the world upside down trying to find the body of Christ.
- She would have done whatever she could to be in that presence. Jesus says, I won't leave you as an orphan. I won't leave you without a comforter. She feels like there is no comforter. She feels completely all alone. She's just trying to get back into the presence of her Lord.
- [5 : 14] And she would have been restless. Her weeping, she didn't recognize the presence of the Lord. Verse 14. And when she had thus said, she turned herself back and saw Jesus standing and knew not that it was Jesus.
- Her grief blinded her to the presence of the Lord. When we read first, I told you to take note of the fact that it was still dark. And so a person, as she's inside of the tomb, and a person who had been standing in the entryway, because of the light, it would have been difficult for her to see.
- But there's something more that's going on than it's just difficult for her to recognize that it was Jesus. She did not expect to see a risen Savior. She did not expect to see Jesus standing that day.
- She was looking for Jesus that would have been dead, but He is now alive. Have you ever been with your kids at Walmart, and they ran into the teacher from their school, and they can't figure out what's going on, right?
- Like, you look like a person I know, but you aren't supposed to be at Walmart. You're supposed to be in my third-year class. And so they just can't kind of compute. They're kind of confused about what's going on. Mary doesn't recognize it's Jesus, because Jesus is standing there.
- [6 : 18] And she was looking for one that would have been wrapped in linen cloths, that she would have anointed and put those spices upon. And so we must respect that she was not ready to move on until she found Jesus.

She is going to ask everybody she meets, do you know where the body of Jesus is? And John and Peter, they have already left, knowing that He is not there, but not Mary.

She can't move on. She recognizes that she is hopeless. She recognizes that unless she gets into the presence of the Lord, she will not be the same. I pray that today will be the tomb moment for some of you, that you know that the tomb is empty.

You just don't know why, and you'll know the implications upon. You may not know why, or it has implications upon your life. And I want to encourage you to not leave until you find out.

It's the most important thing in the world. And if you don't understand why I'm saying it's the most important thing in the world, and why so much energy is put into this day, and why every Sunday we gather, and why we cry when we talk about it, Malcolm told me David the boy cried like a baby all through his life group today, all right?

[7 : 22] And he made sure, he wanted me to bring that up, all right? He said, why would somebody do that? And why would men wear flowers on their shirt on a day like this, on ties, right? Why do we do things on Sunday, on Easter, and why is it such a big day for us?

It's because it has incredible personal implications to my life. That enemy of death would have separated me from my Jesus and everybody I loved, if he would have not overcome it.

So I pray that today, regardless of whatever you thought could have been, no matter what kind of grief and sorrow in your life, because of the resurrection, what is true is always better than what could have been.

Mary looked into that tomb and said, if he was just alive, but if he was still alive and he hadn't died for her sins, then they would be separated. But now, because he had risen from the grave, they would never have to be separated.

The Holy Spirit would come into this world. We would have his presence into our lives until that day, like the song says, we would get to see his beautiful face and get to be with him. So it is very relevant to you in here.

[8 : 23] And maybe because of your grief and your sorrow and what you thought should have happened in life, you're not able to recognize the presence of Jesus. But I want you to see that he is here, the Holy Spirit is here, he is among us, and that we can take the word of God.

So at the end of the service, when we all stand and sing and we rejoice, I would encourage you to go to that back dorm. Somebody would take you into a counseling room. They would take the word of God and they would show you that Jesus is alive and that it's theologically true, it's historically true, but more important to you, it's of a personal value that he rose again from the dead.

And hope is what you get when you realize a different worldview is possible. And some of you in here need hope. And I would like to be your hope dealer, okay? As lame as it is, I would like to be dealing some hope for you in here today.

Because of your circumstances, you don't believe that anything can be better, that everything's as bad as it can be. No matter what circumstances brought you in here, because of the resurrection, there is hope for you.

And don't stand there in your grief and your sorrow like Mary and not recognize the Jesus that is standing here and calling for you. You can know him today and it will change everything. Mary was weeping because she did not know that God's greater purpose meant life after death.

[9 : 39] She was at that place that we've all been for, which is, how can anything good come from this? He has died. How can anything good come from this? God is not the author of sin.

It was the sinful actions of men that took him to the cross. Not just the sinful action of Roman soldiers, not just the sinful actions of religious leaders, but my sinful actions took Jesus to the cross.

But because of his great love and wonderful plan, he is able to take the worst moment in human history and provide my salvation. And Mary is going to learn that.

Mary had stood outside of the grave with Jesus before, and they had cried, and it was appropriate. When Lazarus had died, Jesus cried. But something different is happening here.

Jesus is not dead. He is risen. It's not appropriate to cry when he's living. When somebody dies, it's a very natural thing that you would cry, and you would miss their presence, but not hear with Jesus.

[10 : 35] If all you see is an empty tomb and dark days, your life is just filled with confusion, and you feel hopeless, I pray that you'll stick around. This story is not over. This is when Jesus enters the story.

This is always when Jesus enters the story. Verse 15, And Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? Whom seekest thou? Same question that she has been asked before.

She supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have been born him, hence, tell me where thou hast laid him. If you have carried him, tell me where you laid him, and I will take him away.

Jesus saith unto her, Mary, she turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabbonim, which is to say, Master, my teacher.

And that moment, her view changes. She recognizes the one she had been looking for is alive, and he is well. And so Jesus asks him questions, as he does all throughout the Bible and New Testament, as the Father does through the prophets and Old Testament, always to clarify.

[11 : 40] Jesus was not asking questions for his sake. He was asking many questions, these questions for Mary's sake, these life-altering questions. Why are you weeping, and whom are you seeking?

Do you know that the Holy Spirit, and the life of believers and unbelievers, continues to do the same thing? Asking questions. And here today, there may be questions that are laid upon your heart, and they're not just coming from memories of your childhood, of going to Easter.

They don't just come from that. They come from the Holy Spirit, taking the Word of God that you've been exposed to, and asking questions. Asking you to make decisions about Jesus. Asking you to recognize the grief that you're in.

Doesn't have to be your final story of your life. Questions are asked. Then Mary mistakes Jesus as a gardener. She's supposing him to be a gardener. She looks to him.

And so even though she is wrong, it is appropriate. Jesus gets mistaken for many things. Some people see Jesus, and they think he's a good teacher. Some think he's a social rights leader.

[12 : 41] Some of them just see him as a person that lives a good example, and that we follow his moral example for our salvation. Others just see him only as the son of Mary, and they would only see him as that.

Many people don't recognize him for who he is. But there's such beauty and harmony in the Scriptures, and I firmly believe that this is something that should bring this joyful laughter when she mistakes our Jesus for a gardener.

Because of the irony. Let me remind you, 4,000 years before, in the very first garden, where man and woman were put on here to take care of it, God would walk with them in the cool of the day.

But then sin came into the story, and man and woman, they were cast out of the garden, and they were prevented to not come in, because what was alive had become now dead, and their relationship had been broken, and now we need to be reconciled to God.

But God promised the child would be born from Eve, from the descendants of Eve, and that that child would crush Satan, that would overcome and reverse the curse that was there upon them, the one that attempted woman and man.

[13 : 49] And this child was Jesus. And Jesus had come, and he had destroyed the works of Satan. He had overcome sin, death, and the grave. He became our substitute. On the cross, and in him rising again, we can rise again.

He has reversed the curse. He has made it possible for us to re-enter into a garden-type relationship with our Father. And so, in some sense, he was the gardener that day, where the first garden went from life to death.

Now this garden cemetery was going from a place of death unto life. And he is the good shepherd. He is the perfect gardener. He is the one that has changed everything. He is the one that reconciles us to the Father so that we can go back into his presence, and we can find rest and peace.

And then Jesus called her by name. Jesus saith unto her, Mary. This is all she needed to calm her restless heart. This must be Jesus.

He knows me. She very likely thinks, nobody says my name like Jesus does. Can you imagine when Jesus says your name? Nobody says your name like Jesus does. Jesus knew more than just her name.

[14 : 58] He knew everything about her. He knew everything about her leading up to the cross, and he took her place. The Bible tells us in Romans 5, 8, but God commended his love towards us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

In this passage, we see us, we, and us, and that includes us, all together, the entire world, everybody. Today, as our missionaries around the world would preach this in a different language, and they will quote Romans 5, 8, that us and we applies to all the people that they're speaking to, and that's wonderful.

You know that Jesus died for the whole world, but I need you to know today that he died for you, and that he knows your name, and he knows your story, and knows your grief and sorrow when you came in today.

And so he could say, Trent, why do you weep, and what are you looking for? And he could say your name because he died for the world, but he knows you personally and specifically.

And then we find what the resurrection secures for us. I want you to follow along. A little homework here for you. I'm not going to give you the answer. I'm going to read for you three verses. John here, the Holy Spirit, more importantly, wants you to recognize something that's been secured for us in the resurrection.

[16 : 09] John 20, verse 19, Then the same day at evening, before the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for the fear of the Jews, came Jesus, and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.

John 20, 21, Then said Jesus to them, Peace be unto you, as my Father hath sent me, even send I you. Verse 26, And after eight days, after his disciples were with him, and Thomas with them, then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you.

In one word, what does the resurrection secure for us? It secures peace. Good, you were listening, all right? Three times there, it says, Peace, the thing that everybody in the world is looking for.

They're looking for peace. If you haven't found peace, I can introduce you to the Prince of Peace. I can introduce you to King Jesus today, who has died for you. Peace was a common greeting.

And number six, they would say, May the peace of God be with you, a prayer of benediction upon people. So peace be upon you. But so much more is happening, just a common greeting of saying peace.

[17 : 20] Would you listen very carefully? John, more importantly, the Holy Spirit, wants us to understand that now that Jesus has risen from the dead, he is the perfect final high priest.

His death has dealt with sin forever. And like the symbolic sacrifice of the Lamb in the Old Testament, to make atonement for the sin of the people on the altar of the temple, because Jesus has died, our alienation, our enmity against God has been removed.

We are reconciled to him. He has made peace. And so he can give us peace. The resurrection gives us peace with the Father. It makes it possible for us to be reconciled unto him.

And Jesus is all the proof that was needed to know that life is worth living. Very likely she will cling to the feet of Jesus. And Jesus will say in verse number 17, Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not, for I have not yet ascended to my Father, but go to my brethren and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father and to my God and your God.

This is not telling her that he cannot be touched alone, because in a little bit he will invite Thomas to touch his hands and to see his scars. What he is telling, and what we're seeing here, is that John 20 is not an invitation unto a blind leap into the dark.

[18 : 38] It's not an invitation to make believe. John is saying that this is an account of what we really saw and touched and heard. This eyewitness testimony that rings with the crystal clear notes of a historical fact.

Jesus is not dead. He lives and he lives. He says, Don't stay here. Don't touch me. Don't cling to me because you have something to do and I have something to do.

I must ascend unto the Father, but you must go and share this news with everybody. There is many evidences of an empty tomb today. The meaning of the resurrection is theological, it's historical, but it has an implication upon your life.

He has died and now he's ascending to the Father. I love that in that video that we showed earlier, just that moment after the offering devotion today, right? There's so many things and empty and empty is always a problem, but when she ran into that room and she says, John, Peter, the tomb is empty and because the tomb is empty, there's no reason that we ought to live our lives that are now empty and Mary gets the opportunity to go and share this.

Mary, in a time where women were not respected, where their witness would not have been treated in a way that would have been honorable to them, God allowed her the joy of being the one that bust through that door and saying that the tomb is empty.

[20 : 00] Verse number 17, Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not for I have not ascended to my Father, but go to my brethren. Mary goes from confused to being commissioned.

She goes from being hopeless to now being hopeful. She goes from being the one that's asking the questions to the one that is now giving the answers and getting to tell people about Jesus.

And she says, I am, Jesus says to her, I am going to our Father. You need to go to my brother. That peace that Mary has is supposed to be taken to other people.

Peace be unto you as my Father sent me, even so send I you. What a special opportunity that she has. Can you imagine what it must have been like to bust through that door as we saw in that video and say, Jesus is risen and he wants you to know that he will ascend to our Father.

And he said that he wanted to give a message to my brothers. Those pronouns there are so very important for us here. Mary is the one that Jesus chose to share this good news to my brethren, that you're my father and your father.

[21 : 11] For the first time in the book of John, we hear this, we're called brothers. How did we go from being slaves to being friends, but now Jesus refers to them as brothers?

The cross has made us brothers. This is not just an expression of endearment, but this is a reality that we are now made brothers. Romans 8, 16. Romans 8, 16.

The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirits that we are the children of God. And how did this happen? Galatians 3, 26. For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

All men and women living today are not the children of God. We are created by Him, but by the death of Jesus Christ and through His resurrection, we are now called the children of God.

Those that recognize and put our belief and faith and trust in Him. So I'd ask you today, why are you weeping? And who are you looking for? Jesus is alive and He's calling you by name.

[22 : 14] And will you respond in faith to Him today? We should rejoice and run with the message out of here and share it with other people. Just like Mary, some of you, because of the situations of your life and just because things have not went the way that you thought they should, and maybe because of the grief and the sorrow, you don't recognize that Jesus is standing here and calling you by name.

How does Jesus call you by name? The Holy Spirit works in this life to bring conviction and to draw you. And that conviction that in your life should be responded to, just like Mary, and you should respond.

Today is the day of salvation. We have no promise of tomorrow. Today Jesus brought you here. He brought you to an empty tomb and He wants to know you. He knows everything about your story.

You don't have anything to explain to Him. He knew everything about your story before He ever went to the cross and He ever died. And now He has risen and He offers you salvation. And that is the decision that some of you should make today.

You should make a decision that as we will stand and sing, that you'll slip off and you'll go out that single door and you'll find a counseling room and you'll come to know Jesus. And you will find hope that your worldview of looking into an emptiness, into an empty tomb or some other emptiness in your life can be filled because you know that Jesus is alive.

[23 : 34] And it's not just historically true and it's not just something the church down the road sings about, but it's the greatest significant thing that has ever happened to you in your life. And today, by faith, you can accept Jesus.

Mary will take this message to them and they will not believe. But later that evening in John 20, 20, and when He had said so, He showed unto them His hands and His side. Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord.

It's a personal decision. Maybe people have been telling you your whole life and you just haven't believed. But the day could be the day for you to receive the gladness of believing. Just as Jesus was calling to Mary was personal and it is to you today.

It doesn't matter what your family believes. It only matters if you know Him as Lord and Savior. And we must say with all believers around the world today, if Jesus is not risen, then nothing else matters.

Everything is empty. Everything is vain. There is no substance. There's no meaning to what we're doing. It's delusional. And if He has not risen, then none of this matters.

[24 : 40] But if Jesus is risen, then nothing else matters. Nothing else about your story matters. If He can overcome the enemy of death, sin, and the grave, He can overcome whatever's going on in your life.

And so you need to decide. If He is risen, then nothing else in your life matters. Nothing else you have planned for this day matters. Him being risen, and you need to make a decision about Jesus today.

He is risen, so there's no need for confusion today. Respond to His personal calling for you today and salvation. And believers, we know that He's risen, and because He is, nothing else matters.

Let's run as joyfully as Mary did, and let's share with this world, near and far, and around the world, that the tomb is empty, and that Jesus is alive, and because of that, we can be reconciled to the Father.

Mary took off running. She made it to a group of confused people, and it altered the course of their life. This message has been running for 2,000 years, and it has found its way to you today, and you should respond to it.

[25 : 42] If you say that you've already found the peace in this message, then you need to take it, and you need to run. I'm going to pray, and then afterwards, I'm going to invite you to stand and sing with us, Jesus paid it all.

And we're going to say, I hear the Savior say, thy strength, the need is small. Child of weakness, watch and pray. Find in me thine all and all. Jesus paid it all and all to him I owe.

Sin had left a crimson stain, but he washed it whitest though. Lord, now indeed I find that power in thine alone can change the leopard spot and melt the heart of stone.

So many times, I've talked to people and where they've been at and talked to family and friends, and they would say, well, you just know lepers never change their spots. They're never going to be any different.

Maybe you're one of those people that people have said about you that you're just never going to change. You're never going to change your spots. You know how a leopard changes spots? When it meets its creator.

[26 : 40] There's nothing in your life today that cannot be forgiven by Jesus. Jesus paid it all and all to him I owe. Sin had left the crimson stain. He washed it whitest snow.

And when before the throne I stand in him complete, Jesus died my soul to save. My lips shall still repeat. One day you could stand before him complete because of the salvation that you receive today by putting your faith in him.

And then we will sing, oh, praise the one who paid my debt and raised this life from dead. I pray that every one of you in here today are filled with hope. Hope that you're not in that empty tomb of your life, not understanding the implications of the resurrection in your life.

And as Kristen comes to the piano and I'm going to pray, I'm first going to pray for those of you in here that are looking for hope, that have been so blinded by your grief and your sorrow that you've never recognized it.

Maybe you grew up hearing this story, but it's never been personal to you. You never recognized that Jesus from his word was talking to you. And then my next prayer will be for you as believers.

[27 : 50] If he has risen, then nothing else matters. It ought to be the most significant decision in our life, recognizing that every decision that we make ought to be reflected upon that Jesus Christ is alive.

And we ought to look for every opportunity we can to tell people that the tomb is empty, but Jesus is alive. Hell yeah.