**“I Have Seen The Lord”**

Prepared by Nathan L Morrison for Sunday March 4th, 2018

Text: John 20:11-18

# Intro

1. Jesus, while on earth, set the cultural norms of His day on their heads!
   1. He associated with the lowly – *Mt. 9:10-11*
   2. He challenged the religious leaders openly – *Mt. 15:1-14*
   3. He allowed a woman of ill repute (sinner) to anoint His feet – *Lk. 7:36-50*
   4. He allowed women to travel with Him and contribute to His needs – *Lk. 8:2-3*
   5. He allowed women to sit at His feet and learn – *Lk. 10:38-42*
   6. He sent a woman to be the first bearer of the gospel (good news) – *Jn. 20:16-18*
2. Mary, called Magdalene, was the first to see the risen Christ *(Mark 16:9)* and the first to receive a commission from the Lord to bear the good news (gospel) to His disciples! (Jn. 20:16-18)
3. There are lessons of devotion we can learn from Mary Magdalene!
4. **Mary Who Was Called Magdalene**
   * 1. Introduced to Mary Magdalene in Luke 8:2 – What does “Magdalene” mean?
     2. Magdalene: From Magdala (Aramaic, Greek) or Migdol (Hebrew)
        1. Magdalene: Magdala (place) – ene (from): “From Magdala.” Another example, “Jesus the Nazarene” *(Acts 2:22: “From Nazareth”)* – Widely assumed that Mary was from a town in Israel with the name *Magdala (Aramaic & Greek equiv. G3093) or Migdol (Hebrew H4024).*
        2. Many places in Israel were (and are) called Migdol, Magdal, or Magdala, etc.
        3. There was a Migdol in Egypt *(Jer. 44:1)* and a Migdol on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee *(Joshua 19:38-39: Sea of Galilee as part of Naphtali’s inheritance),* and she is mentioned with women from Galilee – *Mk. 15:40-41; Lk. 23:49, 55; 24:6*
     3. Magdalene: “Tower” (“Watchtower,” or “Fortress”) Nickname
        1. The idea that “Magdalene” was a nickname fits with what it says in Luke 8:2: that Mary was called “Magdalene” or “Tower” from *Migdol (H4024 & H4026).*
        2. Luke uses an identical construction for “Judas who is called Iscariot” *(Luke 22:3: Iscariot [G2469] means “inhabitants of Kerioth;” later became synonymous with “false”)* and for “Simeon who is called Niger” *(Acts 13:1: Niger [G3526] is a Latin word meaning “dark” or “black”).*
        3. If she was called “Tower” it could refer to her stature (tall) or her faith (strong, unwavering)!
     4. Magdalene: “Hair-Dresser” (Profession) or “Reformed Prostitute” (Former Profession)
        1. An almost identical word to *magdala* can mean “hairdresser,” from *megadella (Aramaic)* which means “to weave, to twine, to plait, to dress hair” (Jastrow 213, 218) – *Called “Miriam the hairdresser” in the Talmud Babylonian Shabbat 104B, and Babylonian Sanhedrin 67A*

Not a really viable meaning. In 5th c. A.D. Catholics began editing the Talmud, saying it contained blasphemous information about Jesus and Mary. By 1200-1300’s it was hard to tell original text from edited. Restoration of Talmud began!

* + - 1. She has long been associated with a reformed prostitute going back to 591 AD from a series of sermons given in 591 AD by Pope Gregory, who said:

She is the repentant prostitute *(sinful woman)* of Luke’s story *(Lk. 7:36-50: No name)*

She is the sister of Martha and Lazarus of Bethany *(Never mentioned as such)*

She had seven devils cast out of her by Jesus *(True – Lk. 8:2; Mk. 16:9)*

She is the “woman of the alabaster jar” who washed His feet in tears and anointed Him with oils *(Mary of Bethany – Jn. 11:2; 12:3)*

She was the woman caught in adultery *(Jn. 8:3-4: No name given)*

* + - 1. So prevalent the idea she is a reformed prostitute that many dictionaries define “Magdalene” as a “reformed prostitute” or “reformatory for prostitutes” (usually in definitions 1 to 3).
    1. Whether her name represented where she was from or a nickname we can see she was special to Jesus! *(He doesn’t care where we are from but wants our love and devotion in the present!)*

**Mary Was Delivered**

1. Mark 16:9; Luke 8:2: Mary Magdalene, from whom He had cast out seven demons.
2. One can only imagine the torment she was put through having her body controlled by 7 demons!
   * + 1. *Mt. 8:28:* Describes 2 men who were demon-possessed – says they were “extremely violent”
       2. *Mt. 9:32-33; 12:22:* Demon-possession caused the person to be blind and mute!
       3. *Mk. 5:1-17:* The man possessed by many demons (“Legion”) was strong and wild and could not be contained or subdued and he went about mutilating himself!
       4. *Lk. 9:38-42:* A demon-possessed boy was put into seizures, foaming at the mouth, and continually mauled by the demon before it would leave him alone.
3. Deliverance found in Jesus! (Mk. 5:7: “Jesus, Son of the Most High God” *[Lk. 1:32]* – Demons knew Jesus)
4. When Jesus delivered her *(Mk. 16:9: Demons knew and obeyed Jesus),* she was instantly freed from that which had bound her! *(Ex. Mk. 5:18-20: The freed man told everyone what great things Jesus did for him!)*
5. To those lost in sin *(Eph. 2:1-3)* Jesus is the only way out – He makes all things new *(II Cor. 5:17, I Pet. 1:23).* Obedience to God’s word results in one being set free from the sins that bind (Rom. 6:6-7)!
6. In Christ we are redeemed *(Eph. 1:7)* from our past sins that bound us and are made a new creature *(Rom. 6:4)!*

**Mary Showed Devotion**

1. After Mary Magdalene met the Savior she is inseparable from Him!
   * + 1. From ministering to Him, to the cross, trial & crucifixion, to the tomb & the resurrection!
2. Her Devotion Is Seen In Her Finances – Luke 8:2-3; Mt. 27:55-56; Mk. 15:40-41
3. She was among those women that helped support the ministry of Jesus financially!
4. Some have posited that this could be where her profession as a nickname “Hairdresser” comes into play as it would explain her means for support.
5. We don’t really know, only that what she had she gave to the use of Jesus and His apostles!
6. **Application:** Our giving today indicates our priorities in life! *Are you giving the Lord what belongs to Him (Mal. 3:8-10) as you have prospered (I Cor. 16:2) and purposed in your heart (II Cor. 9:7)?*
7. Her Devotion Is Seen In Her Following – Luke 8:1-3
   1. She followed Him as He ministered – Mt. 27:55-56; Mark 15:40-41
   2. She followed Him to Calvary and watched as He died on the cross – John 19:25
   3. She followed His body to the tomb and remained there, with another Mary – Mt. 27:55-61; Mark 15:40-47; Lk. 23:55-56
   4. In other words, she went as far as was humanly possible! She followed Him to the very end.
   5. **Application:** This is His desire for you and me! He wants us to make Him our first priority (Mt. 6:33; Lk. 9:23) and to live out the name of “Follower of Christ” (Christian) with our devotion and faithfulness till death if need be (Rev. 2:10) – *Would you follow Him to the end?*
8. Her Devotion Is Seen In Her Faithfulness – John 20:11, 17-18
   * + 1. She came to the tomb after the Sabbath *(Lk. 23:55-56)* to find it empty and the stone rolled away and heard from the angels, “Why seek the Living among the dead?” *(Lk. 24:1-10; Mt. 28:1-7; Mk. 16:1-8; Jn. 20:1-2)*
       2. When the women and the apostles came and found the tomb of Jesus empty, everyone went away except for Mary – John 20:1-11
       3. When all the others had gone away Mary Magdalene was still there (faithful to Him)!
       4. She stayed behind and her faith was rewarded by having the first encounter with the risen Jesus – John 20:11-18 (Mk. 16:9)! (She was holding on to Him – “Stop clinging to Me!”)
       5. She was given the first task of spreading the good news (gospel) that Jesus was alive! (20:17)
          1. In that day and age the testimony of a woman wasn’t even allowed in court, yet Jesus Who challenged social norms of the day, sent a woman with the good news to His apostles! – Early church writers called her, “Apostle to the Apostles”
          2. She came to them saying, “I have seen the Lord!” *(It seems as if she met up with other women and Jesus commissioned them too on their way to tell the disciples – Mt. 28:8-10)*
          3. Jesus appeared to Mary Magdalene first though *– Mark 16:9*
       6. **Application:** After all He has done for us, saving us from sin and preparing a home for us, we have reason to love Him (I Jn. 5:1-4), to serve Him and to follow Him (Jn. 12:26) with pure, selfless devotion! *Would you be devoted to Him though all seemed lost?*
9. We need to show our devotion to God with our means, by following & serving Him faithfully!

**Conclusion**

* + 1. Mary Magdalene was the first person to see Jesus raised from the dead and the first person sent to tell others of the resurrected Jesus.
    2. In this sense she is the first “apostle of the Gospel of the resurrection,” not as one having authority, but as the first witness to Jesus risen from the dead and the first person sent (which is what “apostle” means) to tell others of the good news of His resurrection!
    3. Where are your devotions directed?
    4. Let us devote to God that which belongs to Him alone:
       1. Our love *(Mk. 12:29-30),* service *(Jn. 12:26),* manner of life *(Eph. 2:10),* our seeking after *(Mt. 6:33),* and worship *(Rom. 12:1-2)!*
    5. Mt. 6:33: Jesus said, “Seek first His kingdom and His righteousness.”
       1. Col. 3:1-3: “Keep seeking the things above, where Christ is.”
       2. Heb. 11:6: God rewards those who seek Him! *(As Mary Magdalene was rewarded for her faith – John 20:16-18)*
    6. Let us, like Mary Magdalene, follow and serve Jesus faithfully with our whole devotion, and share the gospel (good news) of what Jesus has done for us! (“I have seen the Lord!”)
    7. Are you lost in sin? *If so, there is a Savior Who loves you and will save you if you will come to Him! Repent and baptized for the forgiveness of sins!*
    8. Are you saved, but not completely following Him like He desires? *He can help you take that final step of devotion! Repent and be renewed!*
    9. Are you following Him with all your heart? *If you are, don’t give up! Get before Him and thank Him for what He’s done for you and seek Him for His help for the rest of the journey!*
    10. Whatever your requests, let them be known by coming forward ***NOW*** while we stand and sing!

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