

## Lasting Lessons from a Doubter

### John 20:24-31 Sunday AM, March 31, 2024

**Prelude – The Victor Scripture: John 20:1–23** Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came early to the tomb, while it was still dark, and saw the stone already taken away from the tomb. 2 So she ran and came to Simon Peter and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and said to them, “They have taken away the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid Him.” 3 So Peter and the other disciple went forth, and they were going to the tomb. 4 The two were running together; and the other disciple ran ahead faster than Peter and came to the tomb first; 5 and stooping and looking in, he saw the linen wrappings lying there; but he did not go in. 6 And so Simon Peter also came, following him, and entered the tomb; and he saw the linen wrappings lying there, 7 and the face-cloth which had been on His head, not lying with the linen wrappings, but rolled up in a place by itself. 8 So the other disciple who had first come to the tomb then also entered, and he saw and believed. 9 For as yet they did not understand the Scripture, that He must rise again from the dead. 10 So the disciples went away again to their own homes. 11 But Mary was standing outside the tomb weeping; and so, as she wept, she stooped and looked into the tomb; 12 and she saw two angels in white sitting, one at the head and one at the feet, where the body of Jesus had been lying. 13 And they said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping?” She said to them, “Because they have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid Him.” 14 When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, and did not know that it was Jesus. 15 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 have carried Him away, tell me where you have laid Him, and I will take Him away.” 16 Jesus said to her, “Mary!” She turned and said to Him in Hebrew, “Rabboni!” (which means, Teacher). 17 Jesus said to her, “Stop clinging to Me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to My brethren and say to them, ‘I ascend to My Father and your Father, and My God and your God.’” 18 Mary Magdalene came, announcing to the disciples, “I have seen the Lord,” and that He had said these things to her. 19 So when it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and when the doors were shut where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, “Peace be with you.” 20 And when He had said this, He showed them both His hands and His side. The disciples then rejoiced when they saw the Lord. 21 So Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you; as the Father has sent Me, I also send you.” 22 And when He had said this, He breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. 23 “If you forgive the sins of any, their sins have been forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they have been retained.”

The choirs just sang the triumph of Easter—Jesus Christ, ONE with the Father—Son of God AND Son of Man is Lord over death. But how did we get there? We left Friday night with Jesus’ cry—Father, into Thy hands I commit my Spirit, and then Jesus died. No matter how powerful and dramatic the words and events of that day, all close to Jesus, all who trusted Him, followed Him—all were left with a gaping hole. He was just with us—Palm Sunday in triumph, Mary, Martha, Lazarus—He was just at our home, the disciples had just celebrated the Passover with Him the night before. Now, He is dead. Did they sleep these past two nights? Where were their thoughts—running, frozen? After probably a pretty rough Sabbath, early Sunday morning, even earlier than most of us this morning—while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb—respect, honor, love. Whatever she thought she’d find, NOT expecting the stone gone and Jesus’ body GONE! Can’t anything be normal during this twisted time—not even death and grieving? You heard the account—panic, running to tell Peter and John, them running to check—finding it to be as Mary had said, they went home. But Mary stood there in pain, weeping—hopeless. But then Someone came, and, after an agonizing start to the conversation, the mystery man says one more word—MARY, and she knows/realizes and responds w one word showing her position under this One—Rabboni (Teacher). And with great emotion, she clings to Him. Stop clinging and GO—tell the rest of the disciples—Jesus calls them “my brethren.” And she does! I have seen the Lord! What excitement! Church, sing the glorious happenings along with Mary!

**\*Hymn (Powerpoint): See What a Morning**

This account is REAL. It took place JUST LIKE the events we recounted on Thursday and Friday. ALL of it goes together. Friday night, we sang only the first two verses. Now sing the whole account. Worship the Power of God!

**\*Hymn (Powerpoint): The Power of the Cross**

**\*Pastoral Prayer: Pastor Jahn** **Choir: Were You There**

**Scripture: John 20:24–31** But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. 25 So the other disciples were saying to him, “We have seen the Lord!” But he said to them, “Unless I see in His hands the imprint of the nails, and put my finger into the place of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe.” 26 After eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors having been shut, and stood in their midst and said, “Peace be with you.” 27 Then He said to Thomas, “Reach here with your finger, and see My hands; and reach here your hand and put it into My side; and do not be unbelieving, but believing.” 28 Thomas answered and said to Him, “My Lord and my God!” 29 Jesus said to him, “Because you have seen Me, have you believed? Blessed are they who did not see, and yet believed.” 30 Therefore many other signs Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; 31 but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name.

**Offering: \*Doxology:**

Pain, brokenness, but then hope, life. It spreads from Mary to the other disciples. It’s true! But not for Thomas—he was not there. Think ALL of them making it up? It was just TOO MUCH! When do you feel it is too much—you watch the excitement, wish it were true, but can’t get there? Experiences are real—your experiences and theirs. But we have been given more than just experience. We have been given a final word which points not only to other experiences than where we focus, but to experiences that precede even the word by which our world was created. Our God is eternal and His plans for this world are beyond our comprehension. If this is true, then where should we focus? On every Word we’ve been given that proceeds from the mouth of God. Remember when the disciples dejectedly went home leaving a weeping Mary? While we can empathize with them, John inserts a key that contains hope for us. He said, “For as yet they did not understand the Scripture that He must rise again from the dead.” They WOULD understand more, but not until it was time. Their job was to continue listening to what God had given them and cry out to God for direction and life. Living this way trusting God’s Word included experiencing the darkness and seeming hopelessness of Thursday and Friday, worshipping on Saturday, and now the joy of Sunday! And with this, we can say with triumph, It IS finished! Christ has conquered death. Church, Lift your voices in praise to our risen King and Living Head!

**\*Hymn #225: Worship Christ the Risen King**

The certainty of this next song centers where each verse ends—Jesus is my hope and trust! This song is FILLED with what Scripture tells us is ours when Jesus is our hope and trust. Sing these words deep into your heart as Pastor Jahn prepares to give us lasting lessons from a doubter.

**\*Hymn #224: Jesus Lives, and So Shall I**

**Message: Lasting Lessons from a Doubter Jn. 20:24-31**

**\*Hymn #213: Because He Lives**

**\*Prayer**