

UPPER ROOM ADULT BIBLE STUDY

"The Gospel of John"

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2019-2020

Lesson 69: John 19:38 – 20:30

³⁸ (BD) After these things Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly (BE) for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus, and Pilate gave him permission. So he came and took away his body.

³⁹ (BF) Nicodemus also, who earlier had come to Jesus (E) by night, came (BG) bringing a mixture of (BH) myrrh and aloes, about seventy-five pounds (F) in weight. ⁴⁰ So they took the body of Jesus and (BI) bound it in (BJ) linen cloths with the spices, as is the burial custom of the Jews. ⁴¹ Now in the place where he was crucified there was a (BK) garden, and (BL) in the garden a new tomb (BM) in which no one had yet been laid. ⁴² So because of the Jewish (BN) day of Preparation, (BO) since the tomb was close at hand, they laid Jesus there.

a. "Joseph of Arimathea"

a. Luke 23:50-53. Now there was a man named Joseph, a member of the Council, a good and upright man, ⁵¹ who had not consented to their decision and action. He came from the Judean town of Arimathea, and he himself was waiting for the kingdom of God. ⁵² Going to Pilate, he asked for Jesus' body. ⁵³ Then he took it down, wrapped it in linen cloth and placed it in a tomb cut in the rock, one in which no one had yet been laid.

b. "Nicodemus" – the same individual, who had come to Jesus at night, in his spiritual struggle with Jesus' presence. Both Joseph and Nicodemus were willing to risk being seen in the daylight, as public followers of Jesus.

a. **Question: What does it take to shift from being hidden believer to one willing to be identified in public?**

c. "burial custom of the Jews." – the traditional Palestinian burial practices were:

- a. Prompt preparation for burial, including washing the body in perfumes and ointments, wrapped linen and bound in strips of cloth. Face wrapped in cloth.
- b. Funeral procession with family and friends toward the family tomb.
- c. Personal effects often placed in the tomb alongside the body.
- d. Some tombs included a setting for people to gather for eulogizing and lamenting.
- e. Procession returned to family home, where grieving continued for 7 days.
- f. Death of a parent was grieved by children for a full year.
- g. After the body decomposed, the bones were placed in a box called an ossuary and located in niche underground or in a cave.

d. "in the garden a new tomb" – placing Jesus in the tomb was a temporary fix given the timing of His death (so close to Passover). Little did His followers know of just how temporary this would be! God planned everything!

Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the entrance. ² So she came running to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one Jesus loved, and said, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we don't know where they have put him!"

- a. "Early on the first day of the week" – nothing like a resurrection to start the week the off right!
- b. "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we don't where they have put Him!" – the disappearance of Jesus' body triggered panic in Mary's mind! In her panic, she assumed the worst: someone stole the body and had taken it to an unknown location.
 - a. Resurrection is the most un-normal event!
 - b. "John Smith is not here!"

³ So Peter and the other disciple started for the tomb. ⁴ Both were running, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. ⁵ He bent over and looked in at the strips of linen lying there but did not go in. ⁶ Then Simon Peter came along behind him and went straight into the tomb. He saw the strips of linen lying there, ⁷ as well as the cloth that had been wrapped around Jesus' head. The cloth was still lying in its place, separate from the linen. ⁸ Finally the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went inside. He saw and believed. ⁹ (They still did not understand from Scripture that Jesus had to rise from the dead.) ¹⁰ Then the disciples went back to where they were staying.

- a. "strips of linen lying there"
- b. "the cloth"
- c. "He saw and believed. (They still did not understand from Scripture...)" – John's response to seeing the burial cloths was to believe, even though the full picture of Jesus' death and resurrection, was not totally understood. (Compare John's response to Thomas' initial reaction to the news later that day!)

¹¹ Now Mary stood outside the tomb crying. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb ¹² and saw two angels in white, seated where Jesus' body had been, one at the head and the other at the foot. ¹³ They asked her, "Woman, why are you crying?" "They have taken my Lord away," she said, "and I don't know where they have put him." ¹⁴ At this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not realize that it was Jesus. ¹⁵ He asked her, "Woman, why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?" Thinking he was the gardener, she said, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him." ¹⁶ Jesus said to her, "Mary." She turned toward him and cried out in Aramaic, "Rabboni!" (which means "Teacher").

- a. "two angels" – whenever angels show up, the message of salvation has taken a significant step forward – and angels are there to tell people about it. Can you cite examples?
- b. "tell me where you have put him, and I will get Him" – Mary, still distraught, doesn't recognize Jesus and assumes He is the caretaker of the garden. Her

only thought, though well-intentioned and still in grief, is to put Jesus back where they left Him: in the grave!

- c. **"Mary."** – calling her by name, Jesus calms her fears and transforms her sadness into joy and relief.

¹⁷ Jesus said, "Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father. Go instead to my brothers and tell them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'" ⁸ Mary Magdalene went to the disciples with the news: "I have seen the Lord!" And she told them that he had said these things to her.

- a. **"Do not hold on to Me, for I have not yet ascended"** – Jesus cautions Mary not to "cling" to Him, as His purpose in being resurrected has changed. He is now preparing to ascend into Heaven. He is now preparing Mary and His disciples for that eventuality.
- b. **"Go instead to My brothers"** – Jesus compels her NOT to remain in the garden, but to GO and tell His disciples the good news!
- c. **"I have seen the Lord!"** – Mary becomes the first evangelist!

⁹ On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" ²⁰ After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord.

²¹ Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." ²² And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³ If you forgive anyone's sins, their sins are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven." ²⁴ Now Thomas (also known as Didymus^[a]), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. ²⁵ So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord!" But he said to them, "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe."

- a. **"with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders"** – the possibility of Jewish retribution was real, as the Sanhedrin was bent on eradicating Jesus' followership! The doors would have been locked and bolted.
 - a. **"for fear of"** – fear isolates each person into his own prison of anxious thoughts
- b. **"Jesus came and stood among them"** – Jesus' resurrected body, now, is not limited to time & space. He appears and disappears at will. This gives us a clue as to how eternity will be for us in heaven.
- c. **"Peace...As the Father has sent Me, I am sending you."** – being a follower of Jesus means being "sent." Question: In what ways are you being "sent?"
- d. **"If you forgive anyone's sins...if you do not forgive them"** – this the second time Jesus has referenced the "office of the keys," underlining the Christian Church's stewardship of forgiveness. The first time was in...
 - a. **Matthew 16:13-19.** *When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say the Son of Man is?"*