

GROWTH + GROUPS

NAVIGATE LIFE TOGETHER

Maranatha Chapel Sermon Based Study Guide
SB 09.03.2023

THE CURSE IS REVERSED - John 19:41-20:1-18

Receiving the Message and Relating to the Study

What insights, principles or observations stood out to you from this week’s message? Discuss with your group.

Pastor Daniel tells us “After describing the horrors of Friday, John doesn’t tell us anything about what happened on Saturday. It was a day marked by intense sadness and grief no doubt, as the disciples tried to grapple with the prospect of having to face a future without Jesus. They had pinned all their hopes in Him, but now He was gone. Mary Magdalen came to Jesus’ tomb to pay her respects and grieve. Before meeting Jesus, she had suffered mightily. Luke’s gospel tells us she was possessed by seven demons. Her daily experience was a living hell, but all that changed the day she met Jesus. She was set free. From that moment on, Mary became one of Jesus’ most devoted followers.” Let’s get into our lesson...

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

1. What struck you most from Pastor Daniel’s sermon?
2. What are some of the implications meaningful to you right now because Jesus is risen?

Digging Deeper in God’s Word: Life Lessons

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ JOHN 19:41-20:10

The one hope that has held human beings across every continent and culture together for over two thousand years in the face of difficulty, hardship, suffering, and death itself is that Jesus was dead, but He is now alive.

1. Why does Mary Magdalene go to the tomb so early, and what do you think she expected to find?
2. Given what Mary told the disciples, what did she think happened at the tomb? Was resurrection even a possibility?
3. If you were in this situation, what’s the first thing that would go through your mind? What would you do?
4. How were Peter and John’s responses different once they get to the empty tomb? What does this show about each disciple’s personality?

The Bible tells us that John went into the tomb and believed (v. 8). For John, it was that simple—a light bulb moment. A switch was flipped. From that point forward, John firmly believed Jesus was the Son of God. But for Mary and Peter, it wasn’t so cut and dry.

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ JOHN 20:11-18

1. Using one word, how would you characterize Mary’s response in verses 11-15?
2. Why do both the angels and Jesus ask Mary why she was weeping?

“PROMISES” in 2023

3. Why do you think Mary didn't recognize Jesus? Have you ever been in a situation where it was difficult for you know that Jesus was with you?
4. Which of the 3 disciples' reactions would your reaction most closely have resembled if you were one of the witnesses of the resurrection, and why?

When your heart is broken, and your hopes and dreams for the future have been dashed, it can keep you from seeing the Lord, even when He's right in front of you. Jesus was much closer to Mary than she thought. All she had to do was turn around. But her grief had blinded her to His presence. The same thing can happen to us.

5. Is the fact that Jesus knows you intimately comfortable or uncomfortable for you? Why?
6. Because Jesus already knows your past, it means nothing you've done is beyond His ability and willingness to forgive. Do you ever have trouble believing that? Why or why not?
7. Is God's grace difficult for you to believe in fully? Is there something from your past that is making it hard for you to believe and trust in the grace of God?

The moment you attach strings to grace it ceases to be grace. Even though it's hard sometimes to fully believe that God loves us as we are, Easter is a chance to remember that Jesus has fully paid the debt we owe because of our sin. Because He is alive, we can also be fully alive.

Applying God's Word

What did you learn from this study and how does this personally speak to you? Discuss with your group.

When Jesus said Mary's name, she instantly knew it was Him. Perhaps there was something about the intonation of His voice, or the tenderness with which He spoke it that caused her to realize it was Him. My guess is, when she heard her name, it brought her back to that day when she first met Jesus and He delivered her from the darkness she had been trapped in. There is something powerful about hearing your name spoken. All of us share a desire to be known, especially by God. Years ago, there was a beautiful worship song we used to sing by Tommy Walker that said, 'He knows my name. He knows my every thought. He sees each tear that falls and hears me when I call.' That song is more than just poetry. It's true. Jesus knows your name.

1. What situation in your life seems the most hopeless? How do you think Jesus wants to bring hope into that situation?
2. How are you going to remind yourself in the middle of that situation that your hope isn't built on circumstances but on the living Jesus?
3. Is there anyone in your life right now who needs to hear a word of hope? What is the best way for you to offer that to them this week?

PRAYER: Thank God for Jesus. Thank Him that Jesus is the living hope of Easter. Pray that just as He brought life from death in His own body, He would bring life and hope to the specific situations your group mentioned.

“The sheep hear His voice; and He calls His own sheep by name and leads them out.” {John 10:3}