

John: The Gospel of Light and Life

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Chapter 6 Discussion

Eternal Life (pgs. 147-159)

Opening Prayer

Holy God of light and life, thank you for the gift of Jesus Christ. Thank you for the Resurrection, for new life, and new possibilities. Thank you for your amazing and steadfast love. Open our hearts and minds as we study John's Gospel and explore the wonderful reality of the Resurrection. Grant us courage and direction as we share the good news of the Resurrection with others. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Before we start.....

Read John 20:1-18 (pg. 162-163) (Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible pg. 1854-1855)

-What is the setting of the reading?

Bible and Book Study and Discussion

The Resurrection Story

- As we begin this section of our study, sit comfortably and relaxed, free of all distractions.
- Clear your minds of everything from today's events.
- Give a few minutes of silence for reflection and mediation.

Reflect

- What did you hear?
- What did you see?
- What feelings did you experience?
- What surprised you?
- What other insights or reactions would you like to share about this passage?

Mary Magdalene

- Read the opening verses in the four Gospel accounts that describe the women finding the empty tomb.

- What is similar?
- What is different?
- *After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to look at the tomb. (Matthew 28:1)*
- *When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices so that they could go and anoint Jesus' dead body. Very early on the first day of the week, just after sunrise, they came to the tomb. (Mark 16:1-2)*
- *Very early in the morning on the first day of the week, the women went to the tomb, bringing fragrant spices they had prepared.... It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them who told these things to the apostles. (Luke 24:1, 10)*
- *Early in the morning on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. (John 20:1)*
 - It is important to note that Mary Magdalene is the only women that is mentioned by all four Gospel writers of these stories.
 - Mary Magdalene:
 - Her name indicates that she may have been from Magdala, a town located on the coast of the Sea of Galilee.
 - Luke 8:1-3 tells us that she was healed of seven demons, was one of the women who traveled with Jesus and his disciples, and helped provide for the needs of Jesus and his disciples out of her resources.
 - John 19:25 tells us she was at the Crucifixion and “Stood near the cross.”
- What do you imagine Mary Magdalene's life may have been like before she met Jesus?
- How do you think he life was different after she met Jesus?
- How did Mary respond to Jesus' gift of healing?

- What might she have been thinking and feeling as she went to the tomb after Jesus died?

Mary Magdalene's relationship with Jesus changed after the Resurrection. She recognized him not by sight, but by voice when he called her name. She responded by calling him a name she had called him during his earthly life: "Rabbouni," which in Aramaic means "Teacher." As she fully realized the good news of the Resurrection, both her name for him and her relationship with him changed. She proclaimed to the disciples, "I've seen the Lord." (John 20:18)

- How do you respond to the story of Mary encountering the risen Christ?
- In what ways has Mary's story been your story?

The Impact of the Resurrection

Hamilton makes a point in our book that the Resurrection has the power to transform our sorrow into joy and hope and our fear into peace and courage.

The Garden

Read Genesis 2:8-9 (Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible pg. 9)

Read John 18:1-2 (pg. 138) (Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible pg. 1847)

Read John 19:41 (pg. 143) (Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible pg. 1854)

Read John 20:15-16 (pg. 162) (Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible pg. 1855)

- In the beginning "God created a Garden."
- The arrest of Jesus, one of the key events leading to the Crucifixion, took place in a Garden.
- Jesus was buried in a Garden.
- What point is the Gospel writer making by recalling creation imagery in the story of Jesus' resurrection?

- How does the resurrection Jesus call us to the work of restoring creation to the way God intended it to be?

- What realities and forces in our world today work against the efforts of Christ's followers to restore creation?

- How have you been involved in the work of restoring creation through serving others in the name of Christ?

Heaven on Earth

The author points out that Jesus taught less about heaven and more about creating "heaven here on earth." Three examples of this are:

- *The Parable of the Good Samaritan*
 - *The Parable of the Sheet and Goats*
 - *The Sermon on the Mount*
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- *How have you experienced "heaven on earth?"*

 - *How do you experience new life in Christ in your daily living?*

Wrapping Up
John's Gospel Speaks to Us

Remember that one of the biggest themes in this study has been TRUST.

Journal Reflection (Optional)

- How have you grown in your relationship with Jesus Christ through this study?
- How have you grown to trust God more?
- What do you plan to do now in response to John's call to follow the resurrected Christ and share the good news of the Resurrection with others?
(This question may not be supported by all religions)

Celebrate the Resurrection
Hymn Study and Discussion

Redeemer
Nicole C. Mullen

Who taught the sun
Where to stand in the morning
And who told the ocean
You can only come this far
And who showed the moon
Where to hide till evening
Whose words alone can
Catch a falling star

Well I know my Redeemer lives
I know my Redeemer lives
All of creation testifies
This life within me cries
I know my Redeemer lives
Yeah

The very same God
That spins things in orbit
Runs to the weary
The worn and the weak
And the same gentle hands

*That hold me when I'm broken
They conquer death to bring me victory*

*Now I know my Redeemer lives
I know my Redeemer lives
Let all creation testify
Let this life within me cry
I know my Redeemer*

*He lives to take away my shame
And He lives forever I'll proclaim
That the payment for my sin
Was the precious life He gave
But now He's alive and there's an empty grave*

*And I know my Redeemer, He lives
I know my Redeemer lives
Let all creation testify
Let this life within me cry*

*I know my Redeemer
I know my Redeemer lives
I know my Redeemer lives
I know that, I know that, I know that, I know that, I know
I know my Redeemer lives
(Because He lives I can face tomorrow)
He lives, I know, I know, I know.
He lives
(I spoke with Him this morning.)*

*He lives.
(The tomb is empty)
He lives.
(I've got to tell everybody)*

- What does this piece talk about?
- How does it speak to you?

- How does this piece continue to support Christ living in our lives today?

Closing Prayer

Loving God of light and life, thank you for the Resurrection. Thank you for the sure and dependable hope of salvation and eternal life. Guide and strengthen us so that we may be your faithful witnesses whenever we go. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.