

Peace (Shalom) to you, beloved. Welcome as we reflect on the Words of Life.

When we carefully meditate on the events that took place shortly after the resurrection of our Lord Jesus, we begin to uncover deep spiritual truths hidden within them. Let us focus particularly on **the early morning of the first day of the week Sunday** as described in **John 20**.

The Devotion of Mary Magdalene

Mary Magdalene rose **very early**, even before the others, and went to the tomb of Jesus. This alone testifies to the depth of her love and devotion for the Lord surpassing even that of the disciples at that moment.

Upon arriving, she discovered something unexpected: the stone had been rolled away, and **the tomb was empty**. Out of fear and confusion, she ran to inform Peter and the other disciple (believed to be John), who both hurried to the tomb.

John 20:6-9 (ESV)

“Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen cloths lying there, and the face cloth, which had been on Jesus’ head, not lying with the linen cloths but folded up in a place by itself. Then the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; for as yet they did not understand the Scripture, that he must rise from the dead.”

Although they had been told that Jesus would rise again, the disciples still **did not fully understand** the Scriptures. After seeing the empty tomb, they **returned home in sorrow**, unsure of what to make of it all.

But Mary Stayed...

Mary, on the other hand, **remained at the tomb**. Her heart was broken. She lingered, weeping, overwhelmed by grief and uncertainty. It was there while weeping beside the tomb that **heaven began to reveal itself to her**.

She looked again into the tomb and saw **two angels in white** sitting where Jesus’ body had been one at the head and the other at the feet.

John 20:12-13 (ESV)

“And she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had lain, one at the head and one at the feet. They said to her, ‘Woman, why are you weeping?’ She said to them, ‘They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him.’”

This is a powerful spiritual lesson:

Do not be quick to leave the presence of God, especially when things seem hopeless. Sometimes, what appears to be emptiness is actually the **place of divine encounter**. Where others leave in sorrow, God may be preparing to reveal Himself to you.

The Turning Point: A Personal Encounter

Even after seeing angels, Mary was still weeping. Then she heard a voice someone behind her. She turned and saw a man, whom she assumed was **the gardener**. He asked her:

John 20:15-16 (ESV)

“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.’ Jesus said to her, ‘Mary.’ She turned and said to him in Aramaic, ‘Rabboni!’ (which means Teacher).”

At that moment when Jesus called her by name **her eyes were opened**, and she recognized Him. She didn’t call Him “Jesus” or even “Lord”, but **“Rabboni”** a deeply personal and reverent title meaning **“My Teacher” or “Master”**.

But Then Jesus Said Something Surprising...

John 20:17 (ESV)

“Jesus said to her, ‘Do not cling to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to my brothers and say to them, “I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.”’

Why did Jesus say, **“Do not cling to me”**?

The Greek verb here translated “cling” (ἅπτομαι *haptomai*) can mean to hold onto, to grasp, or to cling with the intent of keeping someone physically near. But the deeper meaning is **spiritual**.

Jesus was saying:

“Do not try to relate to me only as your earthly Rabbi anymore. Something new is happening I am ascending to the Father. The relationship we had before has changed. Soon, through the Holy Spirit, you will know Me more deeply not just as your Teacher but as your Risen Lord, enthroned in heaven.”

Why Did Jesus Have to Ascend?

Jesus’ ascension was **necessary** for His followers to fully understand who He truly is and to experience intimate fellowship with Him through the **Holy Spirit**.

John 16:7 (ESV)

“Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you.”

John 16:13 (ESV)

“When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth...”

Without the Holy Spirit, even though the disciples had walked with Jesus for three years, they still could not **fully comprehend** His mission, His identity, or the Kingdom of God.

That is why after Pentecost when the Holy Spirit was poured out the disciples suddenly **understood**. They preached with power, clarity, and boldness. Jesus was no longer just “Rabbi” to them; He was **Lord, Messiah, and King**.

You Need the Holy Spirit to Know Jesus as He Truly Is

Even today, **you can love Jesus**, follow Him, and even see dreams or visions of Him but unless you have received the Holy Spirit, you will **never fully know** Him as **Rabboni**, your Teacher and Lord in truth.

The true evidence that the Holy Spirit lives in you is not just **speaking in tongues** or working miracles. These are **gifts** of the Spirit, and not

everyone has the same gifts.

Galatians 5:22-23 (ESV)

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self control; against such things there is no law.”

The ultimate proof of the Holy Spirit in your life is not gifts but **fruit**, especially a life of **holiness**.

What Should You Do?

The same invitation Peter gave on the day of Pentecost is extended to you today:

Acts 2:37-39 (ESV)

“Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, ‘Brothers, what shall we do?’ And Peter said to them, ‘Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself.’”

1. **Repent** Turn away from all sin. Make a decision to forsake things like drunkenness, sexual immorality, gossip, addiction, and impurity.
2. **Be baptized** Seek a proper, Biblical baptism: immersion in water **in the name of Jesus Christ** (Acts 2:38).
3. **Live a holy life** Holiness is the evidence that Christ, by His Spirit, lives in you.

If you take these steps sincerely, God will fill you with His Holy Spirit, and you will begin to know Jesus not only as **Savior**, but as **Rabboni** your personal Lord and Teacher. You will no longer just visit the “empty tomb” in search of hope, but you will **walk in the power of the resurrection** daily.

Beloved, don't stop at religion or emotional encounters. Cry out for the **Holy Spirit**, and ask the Lord to make Jesus your **Rabboni** in truth and Spirit. Let Him guide you into **all truth**, just as He promised.

“He who has ears to hear, let him hear.”

Matthew 11:15

May the Lord bless you and lead you into **fullness of life in Christ**.

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