

Witnesses of the Resurrection-Mary Magdalene Outline

(By Perry Parks – 10/12/2014)

I. Introduction

- A. Witnesses of the Resurrection saw the proof God provided that Jesus is Lord.
- B. Acts 4:13 - The witnesses were ordinary men used in God's extraordinary plan.
 - i. Their impact can make us feel like they were not ordinary
 - ii. Their faithfulness in their circumstances allowed the Spirit to make the impact
- C. Goal: To help you be faithful in responding to God's plan in your life.
 - i. Prior classes on Mary (Jesus' mom), James, John the Baptist, Nicodemus
 - ii. Review Mary Magdalene.
- D. Topics
 - i. Confusion about Mary
 - ii. Mary's Life: Clues from Scripture & History
 - iii. The Resurrection through Mary's Eyes
 - iv. Criticism because of Mary's Role

II. The Confusion about Mary

- A. The Three Marys Prominent in the Gospels
 - i. Mary Mother of Jesus...covered in previous class
- B. Mary of Bethany
 - i. Sister of Lazarus (whom raised from the dead)
 - ii. Anointed Jesus w/ \$17,000 bottle of perfume (admonished by Judas)
 - iv. Sat at Jesus' feet to listen (Admonished by her sister, Martha)
 - v. Jesus admonished all who admonished her...she chose the best things
- C. Mary Magdalene
 - i. Deep devotion and 1st to see Risen Jesus.
 - ii. Associated with Woman caught in Adultery (John 8) & Sinful Woman (Luke 7)
 - iii. Proximity of Sinful woman (end of Luke 7) and Mary's intro (beg of Luke 8)
 - iv. Devotion of Sinful woman and Mary seem similar
 - v. Two women were unnamed and not biblically tied to Mary Magdalene.
 - vi. Perception made official with homily of Pope Gregory in 6th Century AD
 - vii. View of Mary as a former prostitute/ promiscuous woman is not biblical

III. Mary's Life: Clues from Scripture & History

- A. Luke 8:1-3 Introduction into Clues about Mary
 - i. Called Magdalene
 - ii. Possessed by Seven Demons
 - iii. Supported the ministry out her own means
- B. Called Magdalene
 - i. Magdalene means she was from a town called "Magdala".
 - ii. Magdala is Aramaic...Hebrew name is 'Migdal', meaning "Tower"
 - iii. Fortified city given to the Tribe of Naphtali after conquering Canaan (Josh 19:8)
 - iv. Rich, populace (30K ppl), Orderly & Stable Economy; richest city in the area
 - v. Called "Taricheae" in Greek, meaning Place of Fish Pickling, Galilee famous for it
 - vi. Strategic location during Jewish revolution against Rome; completely destroyed
 - vii. Title Magdalene associated with wealth & affluence.
 - viii. Mary was from a wealthy city and was wealthy herself.
- C. Possessed by Seven Demon
 - i. No direct account of the details of Mary's possession
 - ii. Luke 8:27 gives an account to help understand what Mary may have suffered
 - iii. "In the tomb with no clothes" - possession made him feral...wild
 - iv. Was put under guard and broke the chains...very powerful...struck fear in people
 - v. People feared Jesus because he had the power to subdue the man
 - vi. The man was grateful...begged to follow Jesus, Jesus sent him to share what God had done.
 - vii. Mary felt grateful...and was allowed to follow. Devotion from gratitude for freedom
- D. Supported the ministry by her own means
 - i. Many women traveling with Jesus, three noted: Mary, Joanna, Susanna.
 - ii. Women were not tied to home but also not admonished for following Jesus by Jesus
 - iii. Financial breadwinners of the ministry
 - iv. Mary's still having resources after possession...she was likely responsible.
 - v. Women were the good soil, bearing fruit to support the ministry
- E. A new perspective of Mary: a responsible wealthy woman from a wealthy town devoted to Jesus

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IV. The Resurrection through Mary's Eyes

- A. Luke 23:44-56
 - i. Devotion coming to nothing?
 - ii. Helplessness and Anguish
 - iii. Watching the murder & humiliation of the person most precious to you.
 - iv. Imagine her suffering...put yourself in her place.
- B. The Sabbath Rush
 - i. The Sabbath begins @ Sundown on Friday (
 - ii. Jesus crucified @ 9am-3pm, followed by earthquake and temple curtain ripping in two
 - iii. After death (3p) Joseph of Arimethia negotiates with Pilate to collect Jesus' body
 - iv. While the body is taken from the cross to the tomb, the Mary is watching/following
 - v. The women prepare the spices for burial and must wait until after the Sabbath.
 - vi. imagine the pain of waiting with nightmarish memories of the crucifixion before your eyes.
- C. John 20:1-11a - The Panic & The Despair
 - i. Mary panics and runs to find Peter & John...someone took the body!
 - ii. Mary breaks down in despair...her grief overwhelms her
 - iii. Her heartbreak is what makes us fear letting anyone get so close to us.
- D. John 20:11b-18
 - i. Mary is drowning in grief...all senses are dulled
 - ii. She doesn't register the angels of Jesus
 - iii. Jesus breaks through the haze by saying her name
 - iv. The miracle happens for her! She runs to tell her brothers

V. Criticism because of Mary's Role

- A. Women were 2nd Class citizens, unable to testify in court. Not seen as credible witnesses
 - i. Strabo (greek geographer): "Women can't be reasoned with...must be scared into holiness."
 - ii. Celsus (2nd century intellectual): The witness was a "hysterical female"...not worth believing.
- B. 1 Corinthians 1:27-29 - God chooses the despised among us, so no one can boast.
 - i. Mary was chosen by Jesus, and it will not be taken from her
 - ii. No matter what people say about you, your relationship with God is unassailable.

V. Conclusion

- A. Encouragement from Mary (PS 34:18-19)
 - i. God is close to the broken hearted
 - ii. Our devotion will be satisfied
 - iii. It is always darkest before the dawn
- B. What happened to Mary
 - i. Not mentioned directly again in scripture
 - ii. With the disciples at Pentacost
 - iii. Rumored to have gone to Ephesus with John & Mary mother of Jesus...but not certain
 - iv. Traditions/ Legends abound (moved to West Europe, lived in a cave)...none likely.
- C. Parting Thoughts
 - i. Mary was an ordinary person, responding in faith to God's extraordinary plan
 - ii. Mary's devotion sprang from her gratitude...we also can use gratitude to fuel our devotion
 - iii. If we respond faithfully to our circumstances, we too can be included in God's extraordinary plan.