

John's Record of Jesus' Resurrection Through the Eyes of Mary Magdalene

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[0:00] It's a joy to be with you all today. I think three years ago this was not formed like this. I think it was just half of it and then you were thinking about moving the wall out this way.

And so it's a great pleasure for Martha and me to be able to be here and also Martha's dear friend Marilyn to come as well. We're so glad to be able to be here with you all and to share from the word. And what a special day, Easter, and thank you for the songs that were selected and I appreciate those words. So I'd like to spend a few minutes with you and the way I would like to do this is I'd like you to turn to the Gospel of John in chapter 20.

And I'd like to look at the resurrection from the eyes of Mary Magdalene. So let's look at John chapter 20. And I would like to highlight this lady at our time together that our hearts can be challenged and hopefully encouraged.

And then if you do not know Christ as your Savior or you're not committed to Him, that this would be a time for you to consider the life of Mary Magdalene.

[1:10] So you follow along the text. I'm going to read my versions called the LSB, Legacy Standard Bible and very, very close to the ESV. Now on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene came early to the tomb while it was dark and saw the stone already taken away from the tomb.

So she ran and came to Simon Peter and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved and said to them, They have taken away the Lord out of the tomb and we do not know where they have laid Him. So Peter and the other disciple went forth and they were going to the tomb.

And the two were running together and the other disciple ran ahead faster than Peter and came to the tomb first. And stooping and peeking in, he saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in.

And so Simon Peter also came following him and entered the tomb and saw the linen wrappings lying there. And the face cloth, which had been on his head, not lying with the linen wrappings, but folded up in a place by itself.

So the other disciple who had first come to the tomb then also entered and saw and he believed. For as yet, they, Peter and John, did not understand the scripture that he must rise again from the dead.

[2:31] That's an incredible statement. Verse 10. So the disciples went away to where they were staying. But Mary, standing outside the tomb, crying, and so as she was crying, she stooped in to look into the tomb.

And she saw two angels in white sitting, one at the head, one at the feet, where the body of Jesus had been lying. They said to her, Woman, why are you crying? She said to them, Because they have taken away my Lord and I don't know where they laid Him.

When she said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there and did not know it was Jesus. So Jesus said to her, Woman, why are you crying?

Whom are you seeking? Thinking 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 Hebrew, Rabboni, which means teacher. Jesus said to her, Stop clinging to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father.

[3:37] But go to my brothers and say to them, I ascend to my Father and your Father and my God and your God. Mary Magdalene came announcing to

the disciples, I have seen the Lord and that He said these things to her. A few months ago, I really enjoy history. So I was reading about the life of a Greek philosopher who lived, actually died, four centuries before Jesus was born.

His name was Socrates. He died in 8399. But what's interesting, in reading about his life, there was a couple of quotations that stuck out to me in reading this life.

And somebody who is not a person of faith, at least did not profess to be a person of faith. But he made this statement that I would like to give to you this morning. That's this. Socrates said, An unexamined life is not worth living.

An unexamined life is not worth living. What he meant by that, as I read through his work, is that, and I wrote down, For somebody to have a life that's worth evaluating by others and modeling that, He or she must be open, transparent, visible to others, and clear about what his or her passion is in life.

[5:12] Or it could be said negatively. A duplicitous life will not have a positive effect on anyone. So, as I thought about those words from Socrates, An unexamined life not worth living, I thought that we would look just for a few moments And examine the life of Mary Magdalene.

And look at this life that so often is overlooked in the resurrection story. It's interesting that the Apostle John, in chapter 20, gives the first 18 verses pretty much to this incredible woman. An incredible life. She's found in the Gospels, in all four Gospels, 12 different times her name is mentioned. And it's always Mary Magdalene.

Mary Magdalene. It means that she's from a town. Magdala is the town. It's the largest fishing village around the Sea of Galilee.

40,000 people. It is said that in the first century, they had 230 fishing vessels alone. It was a very, very hot, moving city.

[6:24] And so, they have a synagogue that has been excavated that was probably built just before Jesus was born, but used and probably Jesus preached in, because somewhere, he meets up with Mary Magdalene.

So, when I consider her life, what's interesting to me is, here is a woman who gets front and center in the end of John's Gospel. And he's writing 50 years after the resurrection of Jesus.

So, he's been able to contemplate what happened. So, this is AD 85. Jesus, you know, around 30, 33. Here's AD 85. And he looks back at the resurrection, and what really stands out to him is a person who held no Jewish office.

Who held no apostolic office. In fact, when you look at Mary Magdalene, there's only one time in the Gospels that it even says something about her past.

And you read that, and possibly if Mark 16, 9 can be used as well, it would be two times. And it says this in Mark chapter 8, verse 1, 2, and 3.

[7:37] It says right in the middle of that, this Mary Magdalene had seven demons. Mark 16, 9 says, 9, 10, 11, says this, And Jesus cast out those demons.

So, what's interesting to me, brothers and sisters, what's interesting to me that I want to bring to our attention is here is a woman who had a ruined past. Here is a woman that was infested by hell itself. Here is a woman that we don't know anything about, but except to say this, when Satan inhabits individuals, no telling what the ruin will be.

But we don't have to cause our minds to go down that road because the Scriptures refuse to go down that road. They want us to know, the Scriptures want us to know, she had a past, and the past was ruinous.

So, when I consider this woman, I am overwhelmed how John ends up the story of Jesus, Resurrection Sunday, Easter Sunday, with a woman that we don't know very much about, except to say, what a story.

[8:57] What an amazing story. To see this gal, who in chapter 19, if you want to just turn back a page or two, there in verse 25, there were soldiers who did these terrible things, crucified Jesus, verse 23, took his garments, verse 24, verse 25 of chapter 19, therefore the soldiers did these things, but standing by the cross of Jesus were, one, his mother, two, his mother's sister, three, Mary, the wife of Cloapas, and

four, there you got it.

So, when you consider, the place, that all four gospels put Mary, at the cross, you say, what happened the last three years?

Well, we only know one thing, and that's her past. And very little beyond that. But there she is, at the cross, standing, I mean, look, the words could not be more plain, in chapter 19, verse 25.

She was standing, by, the cross, of Jesus. And then, her name comes up again, here in chapter 20, on the first day of the week, Mary Madeline comes early, in the tomb, to the tomb.

It was dark, and she saw the stone was taken, away from the tomb. So, a couple of things come to my mind, when I look at verse 1 and 2, about Mary. One, Mary is, according to John, the first witness, to an empty tomb.

[10:30] The first one. Now, if you were going to choose, and you're God, and you can choose, who in the world is going to be, the first one, to see an empty tomb, and to be able to tell others about it, who would you choose?

That's what I love about the scriptures, and I love about the grace of God. God does things, that are so much higher than ours, Isaiah 55 says. So much higher, so much greater. The chasm between the earth and heaven, that's the way God's thoughts are, and that's the way our thoughts are.

There's just, there's just no connection. But what I love about this, is that it's encouraging to me. I mean, over the years, people say, you know, I don't have a seminary degree. You just don't know how bad my past was.

And on and on they go, you know, can God really use me? Immediately comes to mind. Mary Magdalene. Immediately. And what's really sweet, is after 50 years of thinking on the resurrection of Jesus, the Holy Spirit moves John's mind, to give to us chapter 20 verses 1 to 18, and highlight this woman, Mary Magdalene, from this town of Magdalene.

So, in verse number 1 and 2, you see very clearly, she comes early to the tomb. It's dark. The stone is taken from the tomb. She runs and tells Simon Peter and the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, the Apostle John, and said to them, they have taken away the Lord from the tomb, and we don't know where they have laid him.

[11:53] There are two implications that come out of this for me. Number one, it doesn't actually say she saw in the tomb. But the implication of verse number 2 is that she did see in the tomb, because it says, they have taken the Lord, where?

Out of what? Out of the tomb. So, the implication is there. So, when you compare the parallels, and we're going to turn back and forth, I only have 30 minutes with you, so I don't want to go back and forth, but what I want to do with you is say, when you compare Luke 24 verse 3, it's very clear that she entered the tomb.

He states it that way, entered the tomb. The second thing that I notice by implication is notice what she says at the end of verse 2. They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we, that's not first person singular.

That's first person plural. Meaning, there's more than one. We. We. Okay. I. We. Got it? So, when you look back at Luke 24, and you'll see that, with the rest of them, you'll see there were women with Mary Magdalene, but in John's mind, through the work of the Spirit of God, he's highlighting a very specific name for us.

And this name needs to be held in high esteem for us at what God can do with a life that is committed to him. She runs to Simon and Peter, and runs to John.

[13:22] They. Taking the Lord out of the tomb. We don't know where they've laid him. So, verse number 3, what's interesting to me, there's no conversation in the text.

It just says, Peter and the other disciple, they take off running. And they're running to the tomb. And, verse 4 says, and the two are running together, and the other disciple ran ahead.

He was faster than Peter. He's probably younger, you know. He's faster than Peter. He's been working out, been eating healthy, you know, right? And so, he beats Peter to the tomb, but notice, verse 5, he stoops in and peeks, and saw the lint wrap inside, but he did not go in.

Really interesting. John beats him, stoops down at the doorway, because the tomb, you would have to duck to go underneath. So, he just kneels down, and he's surveying what he sees in the tomb.

So, the morning light now is breaking. The dawn is breaking. So, he could actually see in the tomb. It's no longer dark, as it said, on the first day of the week, verse 1, still dark, and she saw this big stone that was moved.

[14:41] The other thing that's kind of interesting, verse 6, and Simon Peter also came following him, and this is Peter. He just goes right in.

John's kneeling here. Forget you, John. He's in. He's all in. I love this. And so, he goes in, and when he goes in, it's very clear that what John wants you to see about this resurrection incident.

He comes in, the tomb. He enters the tomb, and what does he see? He sees the linen wrappings lying there, the face cloth, which had been on his head, not lying with the linen wrappings, but shredded.

Is that what it says? No. Not shredded. But it's folded up in a place by itself. One commentator said this. Isn't that something that, two things about this.

Number one, in your mind, you just go back to what happened to Lazarus when he was in the tomb in John chapter 11. Jesus says, open up, the tomb.

[15:48] The tomb is open. Jesus says, Lazarus, come forth. And how did Lazarus come out of the tomb in John 11? Bound, hand, and foot. They even had to take the face cloth off.

So, some people have thought, well, the face cloth, they just lay it on top. No, no, no, no. Actually, it held the jaw together so the mouth stayed closed. So, they got the face cloth and bound, hand, and foot.

By the way, there's about 100 pounds of spices and stuff on them as well, right? So, when he looks in, what John wants you to see is this. We don't know how, but this is not a grave robbery.

This is not taking the body of Jesus away because it's as if Jesus dissolves, the body of Jesus dissolves, and the linen just lay just like it was when it was around him.

Oh, yeah. And as one commentator said, Jesus takes time to fold up the napkin and put it to the side. We don't know that for certain. But what we do know for certain is what the text says.

[16:47] What does the text say? It's all folded up. It's all there. That which held his mouth together, that which covered his face, it's not ripped off because Lazarus couldn't do that. But here we have an amazing statement from John.

There's only one thing that it could possibly be. And it's not grave robbers. It's not Jesus swooning. In other words, he appeared dead and then later on because he was in this damp, cool kind of tomb, he kind of revived to life and he just came out.

Really? Really? So what John is doing here is giving to us these incredible facts so that the reader has one thing left to do and that is to say something miraculous took place.

Something beyond the natural took place. Something unusual took place. It hasn't said yet, Jesus rose! But he's leading the reader.

He's leading you and me. And he's moving very carefully through the text under the direction of the Spirit of God. That's what inspiration means. The very breath of God. The very breath of God is leading John as he is writing this.

[18:06] And then we come to something just absolutely stunning in verse 8 and 9. So the other disciple, which is John, who came first to the tomb then also entered, he saw, and what's the last word?

What did he do? He believed. This is really interesting to me. John now focuses on his own heart. He doesn't focus on Peter. He focuses on himself.

So what could this possibly mean? That he saw and he believed? Because verse number, the next verse, verse number 9 begins with a little conjunction, *gar*.

For. It doesn't say *but*. It says *for*. This conjunction is giving information about the last words of the previous verse, he saw and he believed.

For, what does it say in verse 9? As yet, what is the pronoun? He? They. Good pick up. They together. See, John is focusing on himself.

[19:20] But, John and Peter are buds. You can see them throughout the gospel of John at least four times. They're really kind of neat. But, as they're talking together, John, thinking about this 50 years later, it says that they did not understand the scripture that he must do what?

There you go. John is taking us, and this is the beauty and the apostle that Jesus loved. He is letting you know, this thing took a little bit.

I just didn't see the empty tomb and then say, boom. But, I can remember the words of Jesus. And, what I'd like you to do is I want you to put your finger here and go all the way back to the beginning of John and go to chapter 2.

I want to show you something really interesting. The gospel of John is tied together very tightly. So, what I want you to do is look at chapter 2 and at the end of chapter 2, near the end, look at verse 18, if we will.

This is the very beginning of the first sign that Jesus did at the wedding of Canaan. And, the Passover is near. And, verse 18, the Jews said to Jesus, what sign do you show us that you have authority to do these things?

[20:38] I mean, the sign he just did was turning these pots, these water pots, into what? Into wine. Do you need something else? Okay, what sign do you want to give to us?

Jesus answered and said, destroy this sanctuary and in three days I will do what? I'll raise it up. The Jews said, it took 46 years to build this sanctuary and you say raise it up in three days?

But, he was speaking about the sanctuary of his body. Next verse, very important. So, when he was raised from the dead, okay, chapter 20, when he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he said this and they believed the word which Jesus had spoken.

The connection cannot be missed. The connection cannot be missed. So, go back to chapter 20, if you will, and that connection is between what's happening in the heart of John and Peter as they are viewing an empty tomb, and it's not grave robbers.

They're viewing an empty tomb, there can only be one thing, it has to be a supernatural element to this. And they're trying to figure it out, but as yet, go back to verse number nine, as yet they did not understand what?

[21:56] Okay, brothers and sisters, I'm going to take just a break here just for one second. Can we pretend like we're in a theology class? Okay, as we sit here in a theology class, we're going to talk about faith.

Now, it's very important that two things come out about faith in this text that we're reading. We're not going all over the place, we'll stay right here in the text. The two things that stick out is this, proper faith, listen very carefully, proper faith is never, never, never, you got it?

Never. It is never measured by what you see. You get this? This is very important.

That's why in chapter two, Jesus could do this amazing sign, turning these water pots into wine, and Jesus says, just take it, show the governor of the feast, and that's all that happened.

Really? And you need something else, show us another sign, and show us another sign, and show that faith is not measured, proper faith, is not measured by sight.

[23:13] There's a second thing that's very important here in the text about faith, and that's this, faith is always anchored in scripture.

This is really important, brothers and sisters, and this is going to cut across even in our conservative evangelical world, of which I'm a part, that faith is always anchored in the scripture.

Now, what's really interesting is how John concludes this, and now I'm going to jump ahead with you to the end of chapter 20. Go to the end of chapter 20, there's a guy named Thomas, who wasn't there when Jesus first appeared, and so he goes through all these things with Thomas, verse 27, bring your finger here, see my hands, bring your hand here, put it into my side, and do not be unbelieving.

But what? Believing. Thomas answers him, my Lord, my God. Watch verse 29. Jesus said to him, because you have seen me, you believe. That's a question.

Blessed are those who did not see, and yet what? believe. Now, look at the theme of John, verse 30 and 31. The key is very important.

[24:30] Verse 30. Many other signs Jesus did in the presence of the disciples that are not written in this book. But these, written in this book, are so that you might what?

Now, remember, John is 50 years. Many people have heard about Jesus, they've heard about the crucifixion, they've heard about the resurrection, but they were not there. How many people in here are under 50 years of age?

Raise your hand. Wow. Wow. Great. I love it. Okay. I won't ask you if you're as old as I am. Okay. That's fantastic. But see, how is it, how is it, that having never been there, and have never seen, never got to the tomb, and looked in and saw this amazing sight, you see, faith is not anchored in my sight.

Faith is anchored in my heart. It's the opening of the scripture, that's why he uses the word here, understanding, in verse 9. They did not understand the scripture.

They're right there at the tomb. They're looking in. He's not here. No grave robbers. something had to happen. It's the scripture who gives them the anchor of their heart so that they are able now to exercise, faith is a surrender, to exercise a surrender to what is true.

[26:06] God you with me? The text then says in verse 10, because he believed, I love grammarians will call this what is called an ingressive aorist tense, a past tense.

What this means is they both walked into the door of faith about Christ, but they haven't got the full comprehension of it yet. That's coming, but they're in.

So then the text says this, they're contemplating this, most of the text in the gospel said they were marveling at what they see, and the disciples went away and went home.

Wow! I mean, surely he would get on the telephone, the email, surely he would do something, but what's the first two words of verse 11?

But, this is a conjunction of contrast. Very important, and John is making it clear. This is a conjunction of contrast.

[27:13] It's the same contrast, look back at chapter 19, remember where we were in verse 25, about the soldiers did all of these things, remember that, 1925? And then you see, but, in contrast to the soldiers, there are four women standing at the cross.

Okay? This is the second time John does this contrast. These ladies contrast these soldiers, but guess what? This lady contrasts two very important men, they're apostles, and according to Matthew 10, he gave them authority to cast out demons, he gave them authority to teach and to preach, he gave them authority to heal diseases, I mean, they're doing all ministry.

And they went home. Mary is standing outside the tomb, and she is crying, and so, as she was crying, she now stoops to look into the tomb.

We don't know how often she looked into the tomb, but we do know this, in verse number 11, this is what starts the narrative down through verse number 18. And she's crying, she stoops into the tomb, and now, for the first time, she sees two angels sitting, one at the head, and one at the feet, where the body of Jesus had been lying.

They, the angel, said to her, woman, why are you crying? She said to them, because they have taken away my Lord, I don't know where they have laid him. What in her mind is she thinking?

[28:38] She's looking for a corpse. I don't know where they laid him. And yet, there is this amazing, overwhelming conviction in this woman, that there's something going on here, and I'm not going home.

Something's going on. Then, what did the angel say to her? Well, did they ever respond to her? They said to her, woman, why are you crying?

She said, because they've taken my Lord, I don't know where they laid him. And that's where it ends. The angels are done. When Jesus had said this, she turns around, and saw Jesus standing there, and didn't know it was Jesus.

She said, to her, woman, why are you crying? Before you get too involved in theory, you can read, you can hear people talk about, well, remember on the road to Emmaus, Jesus comes along to guys who are walking, and the reason they didn't see who he was, was because the text says, he kept them from seeing.

so, maybe, maybe she's crying, she wasn't seeing clearly, she sees this form, and in her mind she's saying, well, who else would be here early in the garden except the gardener himself to see what's going on?

[30:00] I don't know. The text doesn't say, but please don't jump off into theories, okay? Follow the text. Where does it take us? So, as we follow the text, it says this, evidently, this woman, Mary Magdalene, was a woman of great wealth.

And you see that in Luke chapter 8, because she is traveling with Jesus and the whole entourage of disciples in Luke 8, 1-3, and she's giving of her possessions so that the apostles of Jesus might live.

So, in all probability, at least the way I interpret this, I will take a moment. She's not saying, I'll go lift him up and I'll do it, you know. No, but she had the means to go to the place and hire some people and get him back where he needs to be and be in a safe tomb and they can roll the stone back again.

Okay? So, Jesus said to her, one word, what is that word? That is her name. It's the one time you don't have magnolene after it.

You have Mary. How did he say that? He said it with tenderness, but he said it in such a way as Mary, Mary. The moment Jesus says her name, remember John chapter 10, remember that?

[31:32] He knows all his sheep by name. Mary. She turns and says to him in Hebrew, Rabboni, which means teacher.

Between verse 16 and verse number 17 is what the other apostles, or what Matthew writes and Mark speaks of and Luke speaks of and that's this, that she falls to the ground, grabs a hold of his feet and the word is used, she worshipped.

And she's holding on. And what does he say to her? I love this translation. Okay, Mary, stop clinging to me. Okay, you can let me go.

And why? Because I have not yet ascended to the Father. He's already told them he's going to the Father. In my Father's house are many mansions, if were so I would have told you, I'm going to go there, and I'm going to come again.

This is John 14. I'm going to come again, I'm going to receive you to myself that you might be also. I mean, he's already told them about this. He says, I haven't yet ascended. But here's what I want you to do.

[32:34] I want you to go to my brothers. What an amazing term. Very few times in the Gospels, and there are times, but very few times in the Gospels did Jesus call his disciples.

In fact, just turn one chapter over if you want to look, and look at verse number 23. After Jesus speaks about what's going to happen to Peter, and Peter questions what's going to happen to on. You know, these two guys are always together. Verse 23, Therefore this saying went out among the brothers, that this disciple would not die. Though Jesus didn't say that.

Alright? So, it's a sweet term, the brothers. Adelphos is the Greek term. Adelphos means from the same womb. So, here you have people who are from the same faith, that God has transformed, done some amazing things.

tell the brothers, tell the brothers, go back to chapter 20, quickly. Time's fleeting. Go tell the brothers, say to them, I will ascend to Father, and your God, and my God, your God.

[33:40] I will do exactly as I told you previous. This is what I'm going to do. See, John 14 was on that last night before he went to trial. I'm going to do exactly as I told you. So, Mary Magnally, verse number 18 says, came and announced to the disciples, I have seen the Lord, and he said these things to her.

Now, how well did the disciples take it? John skips over, and he goes, look at verse 19, how John does it. So, while it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, the same day, that day, very day that he has the first conversation with a human being.

Oh, by the way, it was Mary Magnally. The one who first saw the empty tomb, the one who saw Jesus first, the one who had the first conversation with Jesus, and then she now has the first command of Jesus.

What is the command of Jesus? Go and tell. Go tell my brothers, that I have not yet ascended. So, how did that go over?

Verse 19, let's see. So, while it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, the doors are shut tight where the disciples were, because they want to see if Jesus could really enter the room.

[35:03] Is that what it says? Oh, sorry. For fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst, and what did he say to them? Don't forget this word, peace.

Be with you. Verse 20, when he had said this, he showed them both his hands, his side. The disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord, and Jesus said to them again, peace, be with you. And as the Father has sent me, I am going to send you. So, let me just back up. Time is done. I want to call us to focus just for a moment on Mary Magdalene.

Okay? Her past ruined. So, when I ask this question, I mean this in all sincerity with you, brothers and sisters, when I ask the question to you, did Jesus forgive all of the sins of Mary Magdalene? Yes or no? Yes. Yes. So, he forgave all of the sins. What a great blessing that is. All sins. Forgive. Great. Question number two. Did Jesus take this sinner who had a ruined past and did Jesus transform her life?

[36:22] And we know that because now she's taken all those possessions and she is distributing those possessions and she is helping Luke 8, 1-3. She's helping the disciples live.

She's helping Jesus. She's all kinds of in the background. She's doing this. Yes. Absolutely. Totally transformed. Alright. Forgiven. Transformed.

But, does Jesus actually bless her and use her in ministry? Where does the first command of Jesus to a human being, to whom does it go?

Not to the apostles. They're behind doors shut tight and Mary is out here and she's just going back and forth.

I love the way that John does that in verse 18b. She shares these are the things he said to her. That's all it says. These are the things she said. She is saying exactly what Jesus asked her to go and tell.

[37:24] So, that's what she's doing. So, here's the question. I want to bring all this now to this point. here's the question. Socrates said, an unexamined life is not worth living.

As you examine the life of Mary Magdalene, past, her present, and ministry, nothing to do with anything except the grace of God.

There is nothing in there. Well, I just can't. What?

Paul puts it this way, and I want to close this way. I gave Socrates because it's a true statement from him, but I want to go to Paul's terms as I close this message, and that's this. Paul writes to the Corinthian church in 2 Corinthians chapter 13.

He uses a double imperative with a conditional phrase. It's a most amazing, a most amazing section. He says this, test yourselves if you are in the faith.

[38:47] Examine yourselves. So you have two imperatives that are separated by this conditional clause. Now, when he does this, he is not at all implying that the believers in the church service are unsaved.

In fact, how did he write? 2 Corinthians 1.1 to the church of God in Corinth. Okay? So he's not implying by saying this, test, examine.

You in the faith, if you're in the faith. But what he is doing is something I think is very, very sweet, at least to me personally, and that's this. He's very concerned about the conduct of the Corinthian church, that it's not the fitting of people who call themselves people of grace.

It's so dangerous that he ends up, 1 Corinthians chapter, 16 chapters, 2 Corinthians 13 chapters, he ends up by saying to them, test yourself.

He's not saying, don't go to the preacher, don't go wife to your husband, husband, don't go to your wife, teens, don't go to your parents. I use this illustration an awful lot.

[40:11] I was eight years old, I'd walked in the aisle, my mom had fiery red hair, she was Irish. I'm in the top bunk, there were four boys, I'm in the top bunk, and I'm crying on a Sunday night, and my mom comes in, at that time, my name was Danny, he calls me Dan, those who know me call me Daniel now, you know.

I like Dan because that means judge. Daniel means God is my judge, right? But in all seriousness, I'm crying, and she comes to me and she says, Danny, why are you crying?

Lights are out, I'm in the top bunk, and I said, Mom, I don't know if I'm saved. And my mom does something that I'll never forget to this day.

She didn't say, she did not say, I was there when you walked the aisle. I was there when this happened, when that happened. She didn't do anything that. She just said this, Danny, are you?

Are you? So, brothers and sisters, we examine a life that the grace of Christ forgives, transforms, and uses for ministry.

[41:27] No theological education, no background, Jewish, or apostolic, a ruined past, but an amazing present and future.

So, I ask you, test yourselves. Are you in the faith? Examine yourselves. And I love the last part of this particular verse, where it says, or, don't you recognize that you yourself are in Jesus Christ? Unless you fail the test. Unless you fail the test. I can't say if you're saved or not. You can't say if I'm saved or not.

How am I going to know if someone's saved? Well, James makes it very clear. You show me your faith, how? By, yeah, by fruits, by works. There are some who say, I've got faith, no works.

This is James 2.18. But I'll show you my faith by my actions, by what I do. Not perfect, but I'll show you my faith by how God has taken me as a forgiven sinner, transforming my life, and has given me a place of ministry just to serve the king of kings and the Lord of us.

[42:54] All of it undeserved. Nothing deserved. So, here's Easter, Sunday, morning, 20, 26.

Are you in the faith? Do your actions show that you are in the faith? Because Mary Magdalene's actions in John, he'd never forget it and 50 years later, he gives to us in the scripted form.

Now, I'm going to read you this purpose. There are many other signs that Jesus did in the presence of his disciples that are not written in this book, the Gospel of John, but these that have been written in this Gospel are so that you might believe that Jesus is Messiah, the Son of God, and that in your believing you have life.

You have life. You have life. in his name. Let's pray together. With your heads bowed and eyes closed, and I will pray, as I said, but in your heart, are you absolutely sure, as you test your heart, that Jesus is in you, and you are in Jesus?

Test yourself. Examine yourself. that's what Paul said. Are you in Christ? Is Christ in you? So the next question is, do your actions reveal what you just, how you just answered?

[44:34] If I'm in Christ, then grace conduct takes place for my life. Not perfectly, but grace conduct. If you're not, Jesus says, I stand at your heart's door, and I knock, and if any person will open up their heart's door, I will come in.

I will come in. Open your heart up. See, I'm ready to move into the direction of the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

Father, we bow before you today, and we acknowledge that this is a moment of great joy for us as true believers.

The foundation of our faith is the sacrificial death of Jesus. He who knew no sin became sin for us. And the resurrection, which shows God's approval of all that Jesus did.

So as long as we have the living lamb, we have access to our great God. And we stand in this grace, Romans 5 2 tells us, we stand in this grace, and we give you praise.

[45:48] Would you use the life of Mary Magdalene in our lives so we would not doubt, but we would aspire to have a life to be examined by others, and may they see Jesus and him alone in our lives, in our words, in our actions, in our relationships, by what we see, by what we say, by what we do.

Thank you for this moment. Thank you for this church. Thank you for Greg and pray for Pastor Jeff too that you'll bless these brothers. It's in Jesus' name we pray.

Amen. Amen.