

# ONLY JESUS

Sunday, April 20, 2025  
9:30 AM

## Video: Day Three - 5

## Worship - 25

- Forever (We Sing Hallelujah)
- He Is Lord

Philippians 2:5-11

5 ..Christ Jesus:

6 Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; 7 rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!

9 Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, 10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

- Draw Me Close

## INTRODUCTORY SCRIPTURES - 30

Luke 8:1-2

8 ..Jesus traveled about from one town and village to another, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God. The Twelve were with him, 2 and also some women who had been cured of evil spirits and diseases: {one of whom was} Mary (called Magdalene) from whom seven demons had come out;

## Video: Mary

Mark 16:1-4

16 When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices so that they might go to anoint Jesus' body. 2 Very early on the first day of the week, just after sunrise, they were on their way to the tomb 3 and they asked each other, "Who will roll the stone away from the entrance of the tomb?"

4 But when they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had been rolled away.

Matthew 28:1-8

28 {That's because very early just before dawn}

2 There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. 3 His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. 4 The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men.

5 The angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. 6 He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. 7 Then go quickly and tell his disciples: 'He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him.' Now I have told you."

8 So the women hurried away from the tomb, afraid yet filled with joy, and ran to tell his disciples.

John 20:11-18

11 Now Mary {out of whom he had driven seven demons} stood outside the tomb crying. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb 12 and saw two angels in white, seated where Jesus' body had been, one at the head and the other at the foot.

13 They asked her, "Woman, why are you crying?"

"They have taken my Lord away," she said, "and I don't know where they have put him." 14 At this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not realize that it was Jesus.

15 He asked her, "Woman, why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?"

Thinking he was the gardener, she said, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him."

16 Jesus said to her, "Mary."

She turned toward him and cried out in Aramaic, "Rabboni!" (which means "Teacher").

17 Jesus said, "Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father. Go instead to my brothers and tell them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'"

18 Mary Magdalene went to the disciples with the news: "I have seen the Lord!" And she told them that he had said these things to her.

## WOMAN IN BIBLICAL GARB ADDRESSES THE AUDIENCE

Speechless. There have been times when Jesus left me dumbfounded and speechless.

It all started when somehow, somewhere seven demons entered my body. How, when? Does it matter?

Those seven demons haunted my days and my nights. They consumed my thoughts and actions.

Being speechless would have been such a relief. Silence would have been such solace. But instead, the demons filled my mouth with words. Words that slashed, words that crashed, words that mashed my day and night together until I didn't know what time it was, what day it was. Every day was the same, a day from Hades.

I had given up every hope and every dream. My future was a mass of cackling demons mocking every thought.

"You think you can do that! You're helpless, you're hopeless. Not even Jehovah could love you."

Not even Jehovah could love me.

Unloved, unworthy,

Being demon possessed was a hell on earth for me. I remember how time and again I would scream, "Won't you just leave me alone?" But they never would. "Just leave me in peace!" Instead, they would shriek and laugh—right out of my own mouth!

"We have you. We like it here." And I would pull my hair and gash my skin, trying to relieve my agony

The townspeople would stay away and whisper about Mad Mary. I remember one time three townspeople ventured within earshot.

"Stay away from that Mad Mary. She's got FIVE demons in her."

"No," the second one corrected him, "It's SIX."

“No, you’re both wrong, it’s SEVEN.” the third person said. The first two chorused, “Seven?” And despite my will, out of my mouth came the words “Would you all like to count us?” I’ve never seen anyone run as fast as those three.

For as long as I could remember, I had no future and my past was a faint, taunting memory. All I had was an ongoing hellish present. No love, no hope, no peace.

Until the day love, hope, and peace walked into my life, all wrapped in a Jewish rabbi.

I didn’t know who this rabbi was, but the demons inside me knew. They howled in protest at his presence. I later found out his name was Jesus.

He looked at me, not with disgust or fear, but with an amazing love. He tenderly touched me, “Be free, Mary of Magdala. Be at peace.” And in just that instant, I was no longer Mad Mary, I was myself again, Mary of Magdala. I was at peace. I had always thought it would take death, my death, to bring me peace.

As I looked into the beautiful, love-filled eyes of Jesus, I was dumbfounded. I was free!

Joyous at my freedom, I couldn’t say anything but collapsed in worship at his feet. My words finally came, “My Lord, my Savior.”

And then came another time when I was dumbfounded, speechless in disbelief. Jesus had been arrested? Betrayed by Judas? Oh, I had always mistrusted that Judas. But my thoughts flew away from thoughts of Judas to thoughts of my Lord. He was at Pilate’s. I got close enough to hear Pilate ask the crowd if they wanted him to release the thief, Barabbas, or Jesus. I stopped my mad dash as I heard the crowd roar “Barabbas!” and “Crucify him!.”

I was speechless and bewildered. My mind couldn’t comprehend how this could have happened.

But that was only the beginning of the nightmare.

We women all watched from a distance, wailing together as they crucified our Lord. I was so wracked with grief, sobbing so loudly, my family feared that the demons had returned. But I knew they never would, Rabboni had taken care of that.

HOW could the crowd cry for Barabbas to be released and for my Rabboni to be killed? HOW could his own disciples, except for John, desert him?

And the most heartbreaking of all,

HOW could the Romans crucify Jesus?

Grief stripped the words from my mouth and heart until I had no words left but one.

WHY?????

Three days. Three days of unanswerable questions. There were no words, just a wordless wail of grief. I was dumbfounded. HOW could this have happened?

Some of us went to anoint his body. REPEATS PHRASE SLOWLY. Anoint ... his... BODY. I didn't understand. I thought he was the Messiah but how could I believe in a dead Messiah?

I wept outside of the tomb. Pain was too deep for anything but tears. I peered into the tomb and was again dumbfounded.

There were two men dressed in white where Jesus' body was supposed to be. One at the head, one at the end, but he was GONE.

The tomb was EMPTY! What cruelty was this? It wasn't enough for them to steal his life, our hope, our heart. They had to steal his BODY so that we could not anoint him?

What were they asking me? WHY was I crying? What kind of cruel question is that? Why did they THINK I was crying? But I told them, "They have taken my Lord away and I don't know where they have put him." (John 20:13 NIV) And then I saw another man, who was he, the gardener? And he too asked me why I was crying, but he also asked who I was looking for.

I took a deep breath and told him, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him." (John 20:15 NIV).

No matter where they took him, I would get him. But then he said the most beautiful word in the world, at least when said by a voice I thought I would never hear again.

"Mary," Jesus says tenderly.

Once again, I am dumbfounded, but this time I am not speechless.

"Rabboni!" I cry and fall at his feet and cling to him.

I wasn't wrong. I wasn't fooled. Jesus IS the Messiah, and he has conquered death.

Time and again, Jesus has confounded me and left me speechless.

Why should that surprise me?

He is greater than my demons.

Greater than my past.

Greater than my dreams, even the broken ones, (PAUSE) ESPECIALLY the broken ones

My Lord.

When my soul is confounded

And I don't know what to say

I pour all my hurts and hopes in ***the only word that matters***

## Jesus

Mary said that the ONLY word that matters is Jesus. I would say that Jesus is the ONLY PERSON WHO MATTERS (*There is no one like Him.. there never has been and there never will be*), because there are some things that ONLY HE can do... Like setting a woman free from seven demons and changing her life in such a way that she became a devoted follower to whom He first appeared and whom He used to spread the news of His resurrection to the other disciples.

## ONLY JESUS - 70

For just a few minutes this Easter morning, I want US to consider the thought ONLY JESUS.

My message is motivated by two powerful scriptures and the story of Mary Magdalene

Acts 4:12

12 Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved."

John 14:6

6 Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

The Bible is full of examples, like MARY, of what ONLY Jesus can do.

Here's what some of them might say

Only Jesus could set me free

- Mary,
- The demoniac of Gadara
- The demon possessed boy who father brought him to Jesus disciples

Not to make light of Mary's Demons, for I still think demonic oppression and possession are still a real thing today and we probably are too politically and culturally sensitive about being correct and polite that we don't identify some things as being demonic that really are and need deliverance.

But I also believe there are many things that allow the enemy to have an open door into our lives giving him authority to control and manipulate our lives. Things that we need set free from, delivered from

- Anger, fear, worry and anxiety
- Mental disorders like self-loathing, anorexia, bulimia, cutting, depression
- Substance abuse like drugs and alcohol
- Other addictions like pornography, gambling (you name it)

### **Only Jesus could Love me**

The many outcasts and sinners like...

- Matthew the tax collector,
- the woman caught in the act of adultery,
- the Samaritan woman at the well,
- the 10 lepers who no one else would touch

### **Only Jesus could forgive my sins**

- A paralytic man
- A sinful woman who washed his feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair

**Luke 7:49**

49 The other guests began to say among themselves, "Who is this who even forgives sins?"

### **Only Jesus could give me new life**

- Peter - from fisherman to fisher of men,
- see other examples above

**2 Corinthians 5:17 (ESV)**

17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

<https://watch.thechosen.tv/video/184683620064>

### Only Jesus could open blind eyes

- Physically and spiritually
- Some people are born blind, some go blind due to circumstances they encounter
  - Man born blind
  - Bartimaeus
  - Road to Emmaus
  - Mary in the garden

Luke 7:22

22 So he replied to the messengers, "Go back and report to John what you have seen and heard: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor.

### Only Jesus could calm my storms

- The disciples in the boat that was about to be swamped
- Peter when he walked on the water and began sinking

Matthew 8:27

27 The men were amazed and asked, "What kind of man is this? Even the winds and the waves obey him!"

And there is so much more we could say...

Only Jesus rose from the dead

Only Jesus will come again

Only Jesus has prepared a place for me to live eternally

And we can add our own voices to the multitudes and say...

Only Jesus can love me when I am unlovable

Only Jesus can take what is unrepairable and put it back together

Only Jesus can bring hope to the hopeless

Only Jesus can keep me to the end

- Peter's denial and restoration

Only Jesus will never leave me nor forsake me

Matthew 28:20

20 ..And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.



## Only Jesus can conquer my demons and my past

Illustration of Mary wanting to cling to him

We want to cling to our old failures but we must learn to let go of our past failures and live each day in relationship with him

### ONE MORE MOVE

- Painting that hangs in the louvre (The Chess Players - renamed CHECKMATE)
- painted by Friedrich Moritz 1831
- Paul Morphy visited the home of R.R. Harrison in Richmond Virginia in 1961 where an engraving of the painting hung
- After some time examining it... Mr Morphy stated that he thought he could take over the young man's game and win it.
- They painstakingly recreated the positions of the chess pieces in the painting on a chess board where Mr Morphy assumed the position of the young man and playing against each of the men who were in the room, was able to turn the tables and win on behalf of the hopeless young man.
- Some have embellished the story by saying the chess master said that "The King has one more move"
- But what I get out of this story is the fact that like the chess master who took over the game, Jesus can take over our lives and bring victory where there was only hopeless and eternal loss. Only he can redeem the choices that we have made that put us under the threat of defeat by the devil. Only he can rewrite our story and give us the ability (as we allow him to play for us) to have a different outcome. One that has multiple moves, because the champion of sin, death, hell and the grave is making the moves for us. Yes, there is only one move and that is to let Jesus take over!

However, many times we must become desperate (like the young man in the picture) before we are ready to accept that ONLY JESUS can help, only Jesus can make a difference in our situation, only Jesus has what we need, only Jesus can make a way out.

### **SPECIAL: DESPERATE - 75**

Maybe you are in your own dark place today. Maybe you are in a tomb of despair with a huge stone in front of it and no way out

Psalm 18:20-24 (MSG)

20-24 God made my life complete

when I placed all the pieces before him.

When I got my act together,

he gave me a fresh start.

Now I'm alert to God's ways;

I don't take God for granted.

Every day I review the ways he works;

I try not to miss a trick.

I feel put back together,

and I'm watching my step.

God rewrote the text of my life

when I opened the book of my heart to his eyes.

## Invitation- 80

Invite Him into...

- Your heart
- Your life
- Your circumstances
- Your situation
- Your mess
- Your storm
- Your sickness
- Your hurt
- Your Pain
- Your hopelessness
- Your heartache
- Your depression
- Your grief

But it is even easier than that because you don't have to go looking for Him, He came looking for you. He has been standing at the door of your heart knocking just waiting for you to open the door and let him in...

Revelation 3:20 (ESV)

20 Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me.

So like Mary, all you have to do is fall into his arms by putting your faith in Him, believing that He loves you, that he has called you by name, that he died for you. That he rose from the dead for you, that only his blood can save you and set you free, that he wants a relationship with you. Fall into his arms by faith today and let him do the rest. In fact, ONLY HE CAN

## COMMUNION - 85

### VIDEO: The Lord's Supper

Matthew 26:26-28

26 While they were eating, Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, “Take and eat; this is my body.”

27 Then he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, “Drink from it, all of you.” 28 This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.

### SPECIAL: ANCIENT LOVE - 90

Here I am