

Emoji's of the Faith



John 20:11-18

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Perhaps you thought I was joking, but yes, these next 4 weeks will be a sermon series on Emojis' of the Faith.

It is amazing how God works. Early in March the worship planning team had a mini-retreat and was doing some long term sermon planning for 2017. Somewhere in the creative, prayerful time we had we planned this following sermon series. It was only a few weeks ago that staff team member Jessica Petot shared with the Children's Ministry team the Emoji Easter story, Robin shared with me and well..that was what we did at Children's Moments last week.

Copies are available at the Welcome Center. Let's review.

THE EMOJI EASTER STORY



EASTER IS ABOUT JESUS COMING TO PAY FOR OUR SINS BECAUSE HE LOVES US SO MUCH! JOHN 3: 16



JESUS HAD TO DIE ON THE DAY WE NOW CALL GOOD FRIDAY TO PAY FOR ALL THE TIMES WE SIN AND DISOBEY GOD. MARK 15:37-38



AFTER JESUS DIED HE WAS IN THE TOMB FOR 3 DAYS BEFORE SOMETHING AMAZING HAPPENED. MARK 15:42-47



ABOUT THE TIME SUN WAS COMING UP ON THE THIRD DAY, SOME OF JESUS' FRIENDS WENT TO THE TOMB NOT KNOWING WHAT THEY WOULD FIND. LUKE 24: 1



WHEN JESUS' FRIENDS GOT TO THE TOMB THEY FOUND AN ANGEL WHO TOLD THEM JESUS WAS ALIVE! LUKE 24:2-7



ALL OF JESUS' FRIENDS WERE SURPRISED AND HAPPY WHEN THEY FOUND OUT HE WAS ALIVE AND SAW HIM FOR THE FIRST TIME! JOHN 20:14-17



SOON AFTER JESUS CAME BACK TO LIFE, HE WENT BACK TO HEAVEN AND HIS DISCIPLES WATCHED HIM GO. LUKE 24:50-53



BEFORE JESUS WENT BACK TO HEAVEN HE TOLD HIS DISCIPLES TO TELL EVERYONE THE GOOD NEWS THAT ANYONE WHO BELIEVES IN JESUS AS THEIR SAVIOR CAN LIVE WITH HIM FOREVER IN HEAVEN. MATTHEW 28:16-20

A "God-incidence" that the Emoji Easter Story was discovered a few weeks before this sermon series that was planned several months ago.

I was amazed, although I shouldn't have been that the children very quickly knew what an Emoji is. The word Emoji is from Japanese. **E=picture Moji=character**. Picture characters. Pictograph. Ideograms and smiley's used in electronic messages such as smart phones, Facebook, and web pages. It originated in Japanese mobile phones in the late 1990's.

The word Emoji looks like the “emotion,” but actually that is simply coincidental. It is a picture variation of the emoticon. **(Image)** :) or :(

When you think about the last 4000 years you wonder how much language has actually changed. **(image)**

So our first Emoji of the faith is the smiley face with the Halo.

How many have used that Emoji? It is used to signify being good or without fault.

Today we use this Emoji to talk about the Angel at the empty tomb.

Mary is standing weeping outside of the tomb.

There are several Mary's mentioned in scripture. This is not Mary the mother of Jesus, but rather Mary Magdalene---verse 18 identifies her as well as the other Gospels.

Mary Magdalene is called Magdalene because she was Mary from Magdala. Magdala is at the South West corner of the Sea of Galilee. We know from Luke's Gospel (8:2) that Jesus cast out 7 demons out of her and she and other women began to follow Jesus and provided for them. Yes, women disciples.

In the 4 Gospels Mary Magdalene is mentioned at least 12 times---mentioned more than most of the other disciples.

She was present at the crucifixion and all 4 Gospels---Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John---have her there on Easter morning at the empty tomb.

Some think that she was the woman caught in adultery---the story where Jesus draws in the dirt and say, “You without sin cast the first stone.” Some think she was a prostitute. However there is no Biblical evidence that she was the woman in either of these situations.

What we do know Biblically is that she had 7 demons cast out of her, she followed Jesus, she was at the crucifixion, she was at the resurrection, and she was the first person to see Jesus alive again!!!! Hold on to your seats---the first evangelist and preacher was a woman---and all the women said xxxx!!!

As she wept she stooped to look into the tomb and saw 2 angels in white sitting where the body of Jesus had been---one at the head and one at the feet.

Now let me share with you the angel stories from each of the Gospel stories. They each differ slightly.

Matthew only mentions 1 angel.

Matthew 28:1-8 New Living Translation (NLT)

28 Early on Sunday morning, as the new day was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went out to visit the tomb.² Suddenly there was a great earthquake! For an angel of the Lord came down from heaven, rolled aside the stone, and sat on it.³ His face shone like lightning, and his clothing was as white as snow.⁴ The guards shook with fear when they saw him, and they fell into a dead faint.⁵ Then the angel spoke to the women. “Don’t be afraid!” he said. “I know you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. ⁶ He isn’t here! He is risen from the dead, just as he said would happen. Come, see where his body was lying. ⁷ And now, go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead, and he is going ahead of you to Galilee. You will see him there. Remember what I have told you.”⁸ The women ran quickly from the tomb. They were very frightened but also filled with great joy, and they rushed to give the disciples the angel’s message.

Mark (16:5) says a young man dressed in a white robe. Luke (24:3) says 2 men who were angels dressed in dazzling apparel.

Now please note that it has been said that sometimes when there were more than one person, only the one that is speaking is noted and mentioned. So I certainly don’t see any conflict between the 4 accounts especially with the excitement and realization of what just happened.

The very word angel means “messenger.” Throughout scripture angels were used as messengers of God. We find them giving the profound message of the empty tomb. In John’s Gospel: ¹³ **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.”** I love the personalization that Mary makes here. They have taken away MY Lord.

¹⁴ **Having said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing, but she did not know that it was Jesus.**

Jesus is at her back. She had her back to Jesus and she turned around and saw Him, but didn’t really recognize Him. Allow me to use a common phrase here to hopefully help make a point. Jesus is behind her...He is at her back. There is a current phrase, “Got my back.” If you have someone’s back it means you are prepared and willing to support and defend, to look out for them if they need assistance. So the fact that Jesus was behind her I can therefore say: Jesus has her back. We can transfer that to today and say, “Jesus has got your back.”

Literally Jesus is behind Mary. Spiritually Jesus is behind us. The choir sang the Chris Tomlin song (“Whom Shall I Fear?”). “I know who goes before me. I know who stands behind...the God of angel armies is always by my side.”

Even in Mary’s time of grief, fear, and shock Jesus has her back. He ‘s behind her and is going to be by her side. Oh, for us to remember that.

Jesus says in verse 15, “Whom are you seeking?” Let me pause and ask of us today---“What are you seeking? Who are you seeking?” I have seen bumper stickers that say, “Jesus is the Answer.” I agree---but sometimes we have to wrestle and deal with the real life questions.

Mary thinks that Jesus is the gardener and then: ¹⁶ **Jesus said to her, “Mary.” She turned and said to him in Aramaic, “Rabboni!” (which means Teacher).**

She doesn’t recognize Him until He calls her by name. Do you recognize His voice in the chaos and clutter of this world? Jesus said this: **John 10:27 “My sheep recognize my voice. I know them, and they follow me.” (Message Bible)**

Are we seeking? Are we looking? Are we listening?

¹⁷ **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.’”**

Jesus tells her not to cling to her for He’s not ascended. It could mean that simply physically He had not yet ascended. However let me read into that if you will and say that perhaps He doesn’t want her to cling on to Him to prevent and delay her from going and doing what He needs her to do.

Go to the disciples...let them know. And again notice the personalization...MY Father and YOUR Father, MY God and YOUR God. And then she left to make the great announcement.

She shares the good news, “I have seen the Lord!” In other words, “He’s Alive! Woo-hoo! He’s is risen!”

He’s stayin’ alive---cue the music---just kidding, not going to do that again, my hip was sore all day on Monday.

Oh for us today to realize the joy of the message that Jesus is alive and He’s right behind us! He’s got your back!

Also just as an angel is a messenger---go get this if you need to (**Image/angel food cake**), but be an angel...that is be a messenger and share the good news.

Let’s go back to the Resurrection passage in Matthew. ⁸ **The women ran quickly from the tomb. They were very frightened but also filled with great joy, and they rushed to give the disciples the angel’s message.**

Oh they were filled with great joy and they rushed to tell the messengers message. The angel’s message. Their strength was their great joy.

OH Mary had tears falling and her hears was failing, but she was leaving as a messenger with great joy.

Friends, Christ needs you to be angles. Let me clarify. Yes, I guess we all need to be spiritual beings, but we are not going to sprout any wings. What I'm talking about is messengers---the root word behind angels.

We may be scared, we may be frightened, Jesus has your back. Tell the good news. The God of Angel Armies is always by your side.

You have joy to share. Let the joy of the Lord be your strength!