

Title: "Mary!"
Text: John 20:1-18
Date: March 31, 2024

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Big Idea

Jesus' resurrection unleashes God's new creation! Do you feel tired of the same old, same old? Christ has come to make all things new!

1. Same Old, Same Old?

While all four Gospels make mention of her there in the final week of Jesus' life as a witness of his crucifixion and resurrection, she shows up in only one other place prior to that: Luke 8:2.

Fact #1: We Know Mary Was Broken

Fact #2: We Know Mary Was Healed

Fact #3: We Know Mary Was Devoted

Fact #4: We Know Mary Was Grieving

Fact #5: We Know (in many ways) Mary Was Just Like Us

Easter is about the resurrected Jesus stepping into our brokenness, engaging our doubts and despair, interrupting our unbelief, loving us back to life, and making all things new . . .

2. All Things New!

Hint #1: When She Goes

"It is remarkable that all four Gospels (cf. Matt. 28:1; Mark 16:2; Luke 24:1) introduce their respective resurrection accounts by specifying the first day of the week, rather than 'the third day' after the crucifixion (cf. 1 Cor. 15:3, 4), despite Jesus' passion predictions (Mark 8:31 par.). The reason is disputed, but it may have to do with the desire to present the resurrection of Jesus as the beginning of something new" (D.A. Carson).

Hint #2: Who She Sees

Right at the start of this first creation, there was already need for a new creation, for a second Adam, a second gardener—for one who would stand where the first Adam fell, for one who could restore what's been broken. And that one arrives in Jesus (cf. Rom. 5; 1 Cor. 15).

Hint #3: What She Hears

He doesn't actually say: "Let there be light" over Mary here, does he? No of course not. Instead, what does he do? He says her name. That's what makes the lights come on for her. And I think that's really important. Because it shows us how personal this whole exchange really is. And it shows us what exactly our eyes are opened to when it happens. We see his glory, absolutely. But we see, above all else, as Paul would say in Eph. 1:6, "the glory of his grace." Because he calls me by name—he loves me personally, intimately.

Irvin Yalom, a secular therapist here in the Bay Area, says that his counselees often don't want to look behind the "curtain" and see his weakness, his frailty, his humanity for fear that it then would mean he wasn't the one who could lead them to "a place no place like home." But, you understand, the gospel surprises everyone, including Mary, when it moves in the very opposite direction. It's *because* Jesus took on our weakness, our shame, our frailty; it's *because*, though he is God, he still took on flesh and humbled himself to the point of death, even death on a cross, in love for us; it's *because* of these things that he is able to lead us home! Because he suffered and died in our place. And he rose to offer us forgiveness, salvation, and new life in him—now and forever!

You go behind the curtain and you find that he's a man, but you also find that he is God; you find that he is weak, but you also find that he is strong; you find that he is low, but you also find that he is high and lifted up; you find that he has died, but you also find that he is risen!



Reflection Questions

- How have you been struggling with the same old, same old lately? In what ways do you relate to Mary in our story? Where do you most feel the brokenness of the first creation? What would it look like to let Jesus come in and make all things new?

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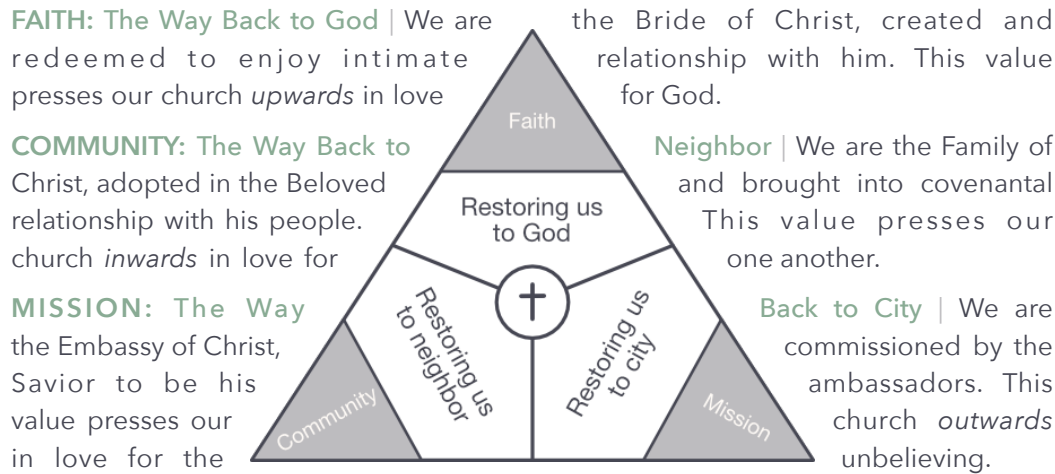


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Mercy Hill Church exists to help restore us to God, neighbor, and city through the good news of Jesus Christ.



Your Next Steps

When approaching the Christian faith and life, it can be confusing to know where to even begin. Come find us at the Next Steps Table after the service—it would be our joy to help you along in the journey! And if you're a visitor, we have a special gift bag for you. Don't miss it!



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We are so glad you've joined us today!

Announcement Spotlight

Ever Wondered? Special Service - Next Week!

Every now and then we try to specifically take up a question it seems those curious or even skeptical about Christianity might be asking and devote a whole Sunday sermon to addressing it. These sermons are a part of what we've titled our ongoing Ever Wondered? sermon series.

Next Sunday, April 7th we'll be tackling another one: ***Wouldn't the World Be Better Off without Christianity?*** Have you ever wondered about this? Do you know anyone else who has? Please plan to join us and invite someone else to come along!

If you have any questions, feel free to reach out to us at info@mercyhillchurch.org.

All Church Hangout - Next Week!

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