

# “Mary!”

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## Introduction

### The Text

- A. Turn with me to [John 20](#). We’re going to focus in on [vv. 11-18](#) and Jesus’ encounter with Mary Magdalene, but we’ll read back up from [v. 1](#) for context:

<sup>1</sup> Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. <sup>2</sup> So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, “They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him.” <sup>3</sup> So Peter went out with the other disciple, and they were going toward the tomb. <sup>4</sup> Both of them were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. <sup>5</sup> And stooping to look in, he saw the linen cloths lying there, but he did not go in. <sup>6</sup> Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen cloths lying there, <sup>7</sup> and the face cloth, which had been on Jesus’ head, not lying with the linen cloths but folded up in a place by itself. <sup>8</sup> Then the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; <sup>9</sup> for as yet they did not understand the Scripture, that he must rise from the dead. <sup>10</sup> Then the disciples went back to their homes.

<sup>11</sup> But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb, and as she wept she stooped to look into the tomb. <sup>12</sup> And she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had lain, one at the head and one at the feet. <sup>13</sup> 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.” <sup>14</sup> Having said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing, but she did not know that it was Jesus. <sup>15</sup> Jesus said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?” Supposing 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.” <sup>16</sup> Jesus said to her, “Mary.” She turned and said to him in Aramaic, “Rabboni!” (which means Teacher). <sup>17</sup> 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.’” <sup>18</sup> Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, “I have seen the Lord”—and that he had said these things to her. (John 20:1–18)

### From the Angle of New Creation

- A. I wonder, do you ever find yourself wishing that things could be made new? Do you ever get tired of stuff getting old and breaking?
1. And I’m not talking about just material stuff. Although, of course, it’s frustrating when your car breaks down, when you have to replace that laptop, when the light in the kitchen goes out, or whatever.
  2. But sometimes your job, it can get old, right?
  3. Sometimes your relationships don’t age well—there’s conflict and hurt no matter how hard you try.
  4. Sometimes it’s your heart that takes a beating—emotionally, spiritually, you just feel like you’re going to crumble under the pressure, like you can’t do it anymore.

5. And certainly we all know our bodies are breaking down, don't we?
- B. It was actually my birthday on Thursday. I don't recall my birthday ever being this close to Easter. But I turned 41, which is old.
1. In fact, I can now proudly say I've reached that wonderful stage of life where, if I play it just right, I can actually injure myself while sleeping.
    - a. It's incredible. You put me in the most cush environment—pillows, blankets, new mattress with memory foam and pocketed coils and all this, and, somehow, I still manage to come out of it in pain. Have you heard of this? It's not easily done. It takes a lot of skill.
    - b. I go to bed feeling pretty okay. But when I wake up, oh man, it feels like a semi must've barreled through my bedroom in the night and run over top of me. Everything's all achy and stiff. It takes me like five minutes just to get the juices flowing again.
    - c. What am I supposed to do with this? Anybody else deal with it? What do we call this unfortunate condition?
      - i. It's called getting old.
      - ii. You go to the doctor, doc break the news to me, what do I have? "You have age. You have years. You're getting old."
- (1) It leaves you wishing things could be made new, doesn't it?
- C. Well, that's what I want to talk to you about. Because that's what Easter is all about. That's what the cross has been about. That's what Jesus is setting in motion on Resurrection Sunday.
1. As I said, we're going to focus in Jesus' encounter with Mary Magdalene here. And I'm going to organize all my thoughts under two basic headings: (1) Same Old, Same Old?; and (2) All Things New!

## (1) Same Old, Same Old?

### Entering Mary's Story

- A. For this first point, we need to do our best to enter Mary's story a bit, at least what we know of it. Honestly, we don't truly know all that much about her.
1. Although, I do imagine, if you're familiar at all with the matter, you know that many ideas—some more reasonable, some less—have been proposed through the centuries.
    - a. For example, some have linked her to the sinful woman in [Luke 7](#) who washes Jesus' feet with her tears and hair.
    - b. Others, far more fancifully, imagine her to be the wife of Jesus. And on it goes.
- B. But what do we actually know about her? Let me point out five quick facts . . .

### Fact #1: We Know Mary Was Broken (physically, emotionally, spiritually)

- A. It's interesting. 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](#).
- B. And it's there we learn that she had, at one point been possessed by some "seven demons."
  - 1. Now, why this was the case, how exactly this happened, we don't know.
  - 2. But I think it's safe to say that it indicates some serious physical, emotional, and spiritual brokenness.
    - a. Her life was in a tailspin. She was far from God. She was in a dark place. Left to herself. Vulnerable. Afraid. Unclean.
- C. And then she met Jesus . . .

### Fact #2: We Know Mary Was Healed

- A. So [Luke 8:2](#) tells us, not just that she had seven demons, but that "seven demons had gone out" from her.
  - 1. Jesus healed her. He made her right. He changed the tide of things for her.

### Fact #3: We Know Mary Was Devoted

- A. And, because of all that Jesus had done for her, we know she was devoted to him.
  - 1. Who wouldn't be after all of this, right? Who would want to leave the one who offered you such help when you felt utterly helpless—the one who loved you when you thought you were unlovable?
- B. So that text in [Luke 8](#) again tells us she was following right along with him, alongside the other disciples.
  - 1. And she was with him to the end . . .

### Fact #4: We Know Mary Was Grieving

- A. And, therefore, because of this, we know she is here now in our text grieving . . . grieving deeply. So in [John 20:11](#), we're told that she "stood weeping outside the tomb . . ."
  - 1. She's heartbroken. Not just about the fact that they seems to have lost Jesus' body, but also about the fact that she seems to have lost a friend, a leader, a safe place.
  - 2. And, even more than this, I imagine she's now sunk to that dark place where she's really just lost all hope.

- a. “I thought he was the one who could make all the wrong right.
- b. I thought he was the one who could make all the sad things untrue.
- c. I thought he was the one who could make all the old and broken things new.

- i. But he’s dead. And he’s gone. And my hope is gone with him.”

B. I’m reminded of something I’ve shared with you before, a long while back. There’s this pretty well-known secular therapist, Irvin Yalom—he actually practices here in the Bay Area, I believe. I had to read one of his books for a biblical counseling course I was taking at the time. And, in this book, he points out a really interesting dynamic that he’s often observed in the way his counselees relate to him.

1. Let me just read what he says to you real quick and I’ll bring it back to Mary and our text. “Very often...patients make it clear they are opposed to learning much more about the personal life of the therapist. Those who desire magic, mystery, and authority are loath to look beneath the trappings of the therapist. They are much comforted by the thought that there is a wise and omniscient figure to help them. More than one of my patients have invoked the metaphor of the Wizard of Oz to describe their preference for the happy belief that the therapist knows the way home—a clear, sure path out of pain. By no means do they want to look behind the curtain and see a lost and confused faux-wizard. One patient...described the Oz dilemma in [a] poem [where he writes of his desire to] ‘replace the drape, [and] refuse to see the man behind the voice, [and] forever follow that magic road, that leads me to a place no place like home’” (The Gift of Therapy, 99-100).

- a. Do you hear what he’s saying? He’s noticed that his counselees actually avoid getting to know him personally, because they don’t want to discover and have to square with the fact that he’s actually broken just like them; that he’s actually vulnerable and human just like them; that he actually gets confused and anxious and struggles at times . . . just like them.
  - b. He goes on to note how, when he had knee surgery and was on crutches, one of his counselees refused to even look at him. She didn’t want to see it. “You can’t be the wizard if you’ve got a hobbled leg.”

2. You get what’s happening here, right? They don’t want to look behind the curtain for fear that they’ll come to see he’s just a little man and not the wizard they hoped he was—the one who could truly lead them home and make all things new.

C. And I think for Mary here, it’s kind of like that.

- 1. It’s like she’s having to look at Jesus in crutches, Jesus bashed and bruised, Jesus on the cross, Jesus in the tomb.
- 2. The curtain is being thrown open and she’s having to square with the fact that: “I guess he’s not the wizard, I guess he’s not the Savior, I guess he can’t really fix me and the wreck that is my life . . . because he’s gone. I guess he really was just a man after all—not the redeemer I hoped he would be.

- a. I guess it's just the same old, same old: you hope in something and it doesn't pan out."

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

### A. Don't you relate to her here?

1. Don't you feel broken? Unlovable at times? Physically, emotionally, spiritually a mess? Don't you want to be put back together? Don't you want to be made new?
2. Maybe you've come to Christ and he's done some amazing work in your heart; but isn't it true that you still struggle and doubt and you wonder: Is Jesus just a mere man behind the curtain? Is this even real? Is he really able to save? Is he really up to good? Don't you lose sight of him? "I can't find his body anywhere. I can't find him in my life right now." Don't you lose hope?
3. Don't you get tired of the same old, same old?

### B. Well, Easter is about how all of that starts to shift.

1. 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!

### A. So let me show you where I'm getting this in our story here. There are all these hints pointing us towards this new creation that's available to us in Christ through the gospel.

1. And I want to make sure you see it.
2. And, more than that, I want you to experience it, I've been praying that you experience it.

### B. As we look more intently at Mary's encounter with Jesus here, I see three ways this is hinted at for us: (1) Hint #1: When She Goes; (2) Hint #2: Who She Sees; and (3) Hint #3: What She Hears. So let's take these one at a time now . . .

## Hint #1: When She Goes

### "The First Day"

### A. Did you notice this? When exactly does Mary head out to the tomb? Well, John makes sure that we know. Look back up at [v. 1](#): "Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came to the tomb . . ."

1. On this verse, D.A. Carson comments: "It is remarkable that all four Gospels (cf. Mt. 28:1; Mk. 16:2; Lk. 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 (Mk. 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" (PNTC).

- a. I, for one, think he's right! They all emphasize the fact that this is happening on the first day of a new week, because they want us to see that there's a new creation arriving in Jesus.
- B. You remember [Gen. 1](#), perhaps, and the seven days of creation that are presented there.
- 1. God works and works and works. And on Friday, the sixth day, he is "finished" ([Gen. 2:1](#)).
  - 2. Then he rests on Saturday, the seventh day, the Sabbath.
- C. Well, with Jesus, when it comes to our redemption now . . .
- 1. He works and works and works, and then on Friday, in John's gospel, do you remember what he cries out from the cross? "It is finished" ([John 19:30](#)). He's offered up full payment for our sin. Then he bows his head and breathes his last.
  - 2. And he's taken down from the cross. And he's set in the tomb just before the start of the Sabbath, where he remains in the tomb resting all the day long in fulfillment of the commandment.
  - 3. And then, on the first day of a new week, on Sunday, he rises up from the grave and marches out from there on a mission. Something new is happening. New creation is coming!

### "Early, While It Was Still Dark"

- A. Here is the reason too, I think, that all the Gospel writers not only put an accent on the day of the week, they also put an accent on the time of day.
- 1. Every one of them mentions in one way or another, as John does here, that it's early, at early dawn, just as the sun is about to come up, just as light is about to break through the veil of darkness.
- B. So John says: "[Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark . . .](#)" (v. 1).
- 1. You can sense the tension. Mary is still in the shadows, but morning's light is coming!
  - 2. We've reached a turning point, not just in the day, but in the history of the world. Jesus' resurrection initiates the new creation—and light is streaking through!
- C. You remember, don't you, how the first creation in [Gen. 1](#) begins? "<sup>1</sup>In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.<sup>2</sup>The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.<sup>3</sup>And God said, 'Let there be light,' and there was light" (vv. 1–3).
- 1. The first creation began with light piercing through darkness.
- D. And so it is with this new creation in Jesus . . .

1. We mustn't forget that it is John who specifically sets up Jesus' new creation work alongside the first creation back in the opening verses of this, his own, Gospel: "<sup>1</sup>In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.<sup>2</sup> He was in the beginning with God.<sup>3</sup> All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.<sup>4</sup> In him was life, and the life was the light of men.<sup>5</sup> The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. . . .<sup>14</sup> And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. . . .<sup>16</sup> For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace" (John 1:1–5, 14, 16).

a. Jesus was there at the start in [Gen. 1](#). And he's here at the re-start in [John 1](#) . . . and [John 20](#). Creation fell, but Christ redeems!

E. He's come to make all things new. That's why Mary comes to the tomb when she does, that's why Jesus rises when he does: at the start of a new week, at the start of a new day.

## Hint #2: Who She Sees

A. This is interesting. Of course, we know she sees Jesus, right? But she doesn't really see him, does she? She supposes he must be what, do you remember? The gardener.

1. Look at [v. 15](#): "Supposing 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.'"

a. On one level, this is perhaps just an honest mistake on Mary's part: she can't see through the veil of tears; it's still quite dark and the sun has only just come up; or something like this.

b. But on another level, John highlights this little detail for us, regarding Jesus as this gardener, intentionally I think, as a means of linking us back to another garden in Scripture and another gardener . . .

B. You see, we're back in Genesis again. We're back in that first creation. On the sixth day, as the capstone of all his creation God creates man, Adam, and he sets him where? In a garden. In the garden of Eden. And he's told to work and to guard it ([Gen. 2:15](#)).

1. But he doesn't. He lets the serpent in—not just into the garden grounds, but into his heart.

2. The first humans fall into sin and human nature is warped along with it.

3. In judgment, we're thrust from God's presence, and, you know, we don't really want to be there anyways . . . even though he's the fountainhead of all beauty and goodness.

a. In other words, 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 the first Adam broke.

C. And that one arrives in Jesus . . .

1. Adam, as Paul says in Rom. 5, “was a type [a foreshadow] of the one who was to come” (v. 14).
  - a. So he writes: “<sup>12</sup> [S]in came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned . . . .<sup>15</sup> But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if many died through one man’s trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many. . . .<sup>17</sup> For if, because of one man’s trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ” (vv. 12, 15, 17).
  - b. Or as he puts it most pointedly in 1 Cor. 15:21-22: “<sup>21</sup> For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead.<sup>22</sup> For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive.”

D. So does Mary see Jesus or a gardener? Answer: Yes. Both.

1. Jesus is the second Adam.
2. Jesus is the better gardener.
3. Jesus is the one who’s come to make a way for us back into the garden paradise of God’s presence.
  - a. As he says to that repentant thief next to him on the cross: “Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise [Gk. paradeisos = the garden]” (Luke 23:43).

E. And this leads us to the third and final hint . . .

### Hint #3: What She Hears

#### “Mary”

- A. What does Mary hear from Jesus? Well, at first, she hears virtually nothing, right?
  1. It’s similar to what we noted regarding her sight. She sees him, but doesn’t see him.
  2. Well now, she hears him, but doesn’t hear him.
    - a. But that all changes when at once she hears Jesus speak her name: “Jesus said to her, ‘Mary.’ She turned and said to him in Aramaic, ‘Rabboni!’ (which means Teacher” (v. 16).
- B. Now, why would I say this is a hint towards the new creation that’s come in Jesus?
  1. Well, do you remember what it was that catalyzed the first creation? What was the means of creating, the vehicle by which God created all things? It was his word.
    - a. As we read previously from Gen. 1: “And God said, ‘Let there be light,’ and there was light” (v. 3).



b. Or as John put it: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God” (John 1:1).

- i. All things were made through him.
- ii. And the Word became flesh in Jesus and dwelt among us.
- iii. And then he dies, and rises, and speaks a new word over us, a word of re-creation.

C. So here he speaks this word over Mary and, in so doing, he jumpstarts her heart, he unplugs her ears, he opens her eyes, and he brings her back to life (in a spiritual sense).

1. This is what Paul is referring to in 2 Cor 4 when, writing of regeneration or conversion, he says: “God, who said, ‘Let light shine out of darkness,’ has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ” (v. 6).

a. Do you see how he parallels the creative word of God in Gen. 1 with the re-creative word of Christ in our salvation?

- i. The first word brought light into the darkness of the cosmos.
- ii. The second word brings light into the darkness of my soul.

(1) This is how we get saved. God speaks over a hard-hearted, deaf-eared, blind-eyed, spiritually dead sinner: “Let there be light” . . . and, suddenly, we see!

D. If I could just say something else about this word from Jesus here.

- 1. He doesn’t actually say: “Let there be light” over Mary here, does he? No of course not. That would be weird.
- 2. 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.

a. Because it shows us how personal this whole exchange really is.

b. 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, though he knows how big of a screw up I really am.

- i. I can clean up (kind of) for a church service. Oh, it’s Easter I better where a collared shirt. Sometimes I even put on a tie. I can smile, I can sing. I can clean up.
- ii. But Jesus knows, I’m a mess. I’m a sinner. I’m nothing worthy of love or affection . . . and yet he calls me by name.

(1) “Nick!” “\_\_\_\_\_!” “\_\_\_\_\_!” “\_\_\_\_\_!” “Mary!”

E. I wonder: do you hear him calling you by name, even here this morning?!

1. “<sup>3</sup>[H]e calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.<sup>4</sup>When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice” (John 10:3-4).

### “Do Not Cling to Me”

A. And now how does Mary respond? I love this.

1. She grabs him. She just lays hold of him. Like: “I’m not going to lose you again!”
2. But then she hears something else from Jesus, right? And at first it’s a bit puzzling, I think. Look at it there in v. 17: “Jesus said to her, ‘Do not cling to me . . . .’”

B. Now what are we to make of this?

1. Is this just a plea from Jesus for a little more personal space? Like: “You’re in my bubble, Mary! Please take a step back. I’m getting a little claustrophobic. Do not cling to me.” Is that what this is?
  - a. No, of course not. Jesus is not averse to touch. He embraces lepers. He invites the little kids to come sit up on his lap. He lets the woman with the flow of blood touch him, and she’s healed.

C. So what is it, then? It does seem a bit odd. After all, as I just said, isn’t Jesus calling Mary out here so he could call her in even closer? Isn’t this the point?

1. Well yes, but, you see, I think Jesus is onto the fact that Mary doesn’t fully get it quite yet. She thinks maybe things are going back to the way they were. Maybe this like what he did with Lazarus, and now he’s back and things can return to what they had before.
  - a. But this is not just a re-start. This is re-creation.
  - b. Jesus doesn’t just give us a “new lease on life.” He’s working for a new heavens and new earth.
  - c. He hasn’t died and resurrected so things can go back to the same old, same old. He has died and resurrected to make all things new, to bring in something even better than Mary can yet perceive in this moment.

### “For I Have Not Yet Ascended”

A. This is why he goes on to explain: “Do not cling to me [why?!], for I have not yet ascended to the Father . . .” (v. 17).

1. You say: “I still don’t understand.”
2. Well, if you’d been reading along in John’s gospel up to this point, I think you would . . .

B. For, in [John 14](#), the night before his crucifixion, Jesus had gathered his guys and was talking with them about what’s coming. And he tells them: “I’m going to die, I’m going to rise, and I’m going to go to my Father, and it’s going to be hard. And you’re going to wonder where I’m at, what I’m doing, why I’m gone. But . . . ‘<sup>1</sup>Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me.<sup>2</sup>In my Father’s house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place

for you?<sup>3</sup> And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also' (vv. 1–3)."

1. "I go to prepare a place for you" . . . "in my Father's house."

C. Now, again, let me tell you what he doesn't mean by this.

1. He doesn't mean he's going to go wash some sheets and do a little vacuuming to get the house ready or something like this.
  - a. My parents are coming in town this week, so you could say we're "preparing our place for them"—which essentially means we're panic-cleaning, doing all the stuff we should be doing all year long, but now we've got to do it all at once so that when they come we don't have dust-bunnies the size of the Easter bunny hopping down our hallways. Anybody with me in that? Well, that's not what Jesus is doing.

D. Do you want to know what he means when he says he's going to prepare a place for us? I think the author of Hebrews gives us the picture when he talks about Jesus as our high priest.

1. The high priest in Israel, if you recall, once a year, he would go into the most holy place of the temple, where God was said to dwell, and he would bring the blood of the sacrifice, the blood-payment for our sin, and he would make atonement for the people.
  - a. So God could continue to dwell in their midst—even though he is holy and righteous and just and we're everything but.
2. But all this was just a foreshadow of what Jesus would do in ultimate sense, what Jesus does when he ascends.
  - a. He comes into the presence of his Father, the heavenly holy of holies, not with the blood of bulls and goats which could never really take away sins, but with his own blood, that which only ever could.
  - b. And with that blood he pleads our case. "Oh I know they're sinful and broken in many ways; Oh I know they deserve your judgment; but I want them here with us. You can't exact from them, what you've already received from me. There is no double jeopardy in the courtroom of heaven. I've already paid the price for their admission at the cross. Let my sacrifice atone for their sin, let my perfect life count for their righteousness. Let them come back to you and find life!"

E. And, in this way, I say, he prepares a place for us. And, in this way, we he brings us back not just to his Father and his God, but to the one who, through him, is now our Father and our God.

1. Did you notice how he puts it there in the latter part of v. 17? "[G]o to my brothers and say to them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'"
  - a. Jesus restores us to relationship with the one for whom we have been created.
  - b. Jesus has come to lead us out and into a new heavens and new earth.
  - c. Jesus has come to bring us home!

## Now and Forever!

- A. It starts today as we come to Jesus in repentance and faith. Paul says: “[I]f anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come” (2 Cor. 5:17).
- B. But, of course, it will all culminate in the age to come, when Christ, as he says, “will come again and . . . take [us] to [himself], that where [he is we] may be also.”
1. This is what John catches a vision of in Rev. 21:1-5 when he writes: “<sup>1</sup>Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. <sup>2</sup>And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. <sup>3</sup>And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, ‘Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. <sup>4</sup>He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.’ <sup>5</sup>And he who was seated on the throne said, ‘Behold, I am making all things new.’”
- C. You remember, what Yalom was saying—that people didn’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’ He was just a mere man.
- D. But, you understand, the gospel surprises everyone, including Mary, when it moves in the very opposite direction.
1. It’s because Jesus enters into on our weakness, our shame, our frailty;
  2. 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;
  3. it’s because of these things . . . that he is able to lead us home!
    - a. Because he suffered and died in our place.
    - b. And he rose to offer us forgiveness, salvation, and new life in him—now and forever!
- E. You go behind the curtain and . . .
1. You find that he’s a man, but you also find that he is God.
  2. You find that he is weak, but you also find that he is strong.
  3. You find that he is low, but you also find that he is high and lifted up.
  4. You find that he has died, but you also find that he is risen!
- F. So what’s it going to be?
1. Are you going to keep going with the same old, same old?
  2. Or are you going to come to Christ and let him lead you into all things new!
    - a. I plead with you: Come to him today. Wherever you are, come to him today!