

THE GATHERING STORM OF VICTORY

JOHN 20

John 20:11-18

(1) Word Biblical Commentary; George Beasley-Murray

“Do not touch Me.” Present imperative with negative calls for a cessation of an act in progress,” lit., “Don’t keep on trying to hold Me.”

VERSES 11,12:

Her weeping now is not because Jesus is dead, but because His body has disappeared. That kind of loss would be a concern to anyone at anytime, but among Jews of the near Orient at that time, abuse or outrage of the dead was a shocking thing (Philistines’ exposure of the dead body of Saul and his sons, and the bravery of the men of Jabesh-Gilead is recovering them and giving them a proper burial, I Sam. 31:9-13).

The presence of the angels is a witness that the powers of heaven have been at work here. Their position at the tomb, one at the head and the other at the feet where Jesus had lain, is a reminder of the silent testimony of the grave clothes, but of another order; it witnesses that God, not robbers, has taken Jesus, for a purpose yet to be revealed.

VERSES 13,14:

The angels do not at once announce that Jesus is risen. (*The angels were no substitute for Jesus*)

We are to understand that Mary suddenly becomes aware of the presence of another near the tomb, and she turns to see who it is. In harmony with other resurrection narratives, Mary does not recognize the lord. The EMMAUS COUPLE, THE DISCIPLES FISHING IN THE LAKE OF TIBERIAS. Mark on the emmaus couple, Jesus appeared in a different form; Luke: “Their eyes were held so as not to recognize him” and when He broke bread, “their eyes were opened and they recognized Him.

“A little reflection will show that the special outward forms in which the Lord was pleased to make himself sensibly recognizable by his disciples were no more necessarily connected with His glorified person than the robes which he wore” (Westcott).

The latter feature is bound up with the revelation of Christ by the Spirit, not without relation to the preparedness of the human spirit. Bultmann: "It is possible for Jesus to be present, and yet for a man not to recognize him until his word goes home to him."

Then it was that the revelation took place. It needed no more than the utterance of her name, in the way Jesus used to speak to her. **The Shepherd had called his sheep by name, and the sheep heard and joyfully responded (John 10:3).** Jesus thereby re-established the personal relationship that Mary thought she had forever lost; only now it was to be set on a deeper level than had been possible when Mary knew Jesus as "Rabbi."

VERSE 17:

She prostrated herself before Jesus and sought to clasp His feet. "Contact belongs to the primary ways in which man in this world becomes aware of outward reality. But meeting and contact with the risen Jesus takes place on another plane, namely in faith, through the Word or in the Spirit."

Mary is given a message to the disciples that Jesus is about to ascend to the Father. Mary is told not to attempt to hold on to Jesus because He has not yet ascended.

"To My father and their Father, to My God and their God." "Brethren." The distinction between the only Son of the father and the sons who by the Spirit share that sonship is naturally assumed.

(2) B. F. WESTCOTT

John's record of resurrection is not simply a history, still less an exhaustive history, but a revelation of spiritual truth through outward acts.

VERSE 11:

In vs 10: "Then the disciples went away."....as feeling that nothing more could be learned upon the spot. A stronger affection rivet to the spot one of a weaker nature.--- 'she continued standing.

The angels one at the head and one at the feet -- like the cherubim on the mercy-seat, between which the Lord of hosts dwelt," Ex 25:22.

VERSE 12:

SEETH: Both here and in v. 14, the word (beholdeth) suggests the idea of a silent contemplation for a time.

VERSE 13:

My Lord (not the Lord) and I know not, not we know not -- the relation and the loss are, in this case, regarded as personal and not as general.

VERSE 14:

“When she had thus said, she turned....”, as unwilling to continue a conversation which promised no help. THE VISION OF ANGELS MAKES NO IMPRESSION UPON HER.

THE GARDENER: She was pre-occupied with her own reflections. We see that only which we have the inward power of seeing. Till Mary was placed in something of spiritual harmony with the Lord she could not recognize him.

VERSE 16:

“Mary!” That direct personal address awakens the true self. What the word of common interest (woman) could not do, the word of individual sympathy does at once.

VERSE 17:

“Touch Me not.” Tenses imply that she was already clinging to Him when he spoke.
“Touch,” with a view to retain.

The Ascension would be presented as the beginning and condition of a new union. Mary substituted a knowledge of the humanity of Christ for a knowledge of His whole person.

“Do not cling to me,” as if that falls under the senses you can know me as I am; for there is something beyond the outward restoration to earth which must be realized before that fellowship toward which you reach can be established as abiding. When the last triumph is accomplished, then you will be able to enjoy the communion which is as yet impossible.

“This is the reward of thy love, that thou shalt bear the message of the coming and more glorious change to those whom thou didst bear the tidings of what seemed to be thy loss and theirs.”

VERSE 18:

The emphasis is thrown on Mary's immediate departure on her mission. For this purpose she was ready to leave the Lord at once.

(3) LEON MORRIS, NIC.

There is a wonderful condensation involved, for we have no reason for thinking Mary as being a particularly important person. Yet it was to her and not to any of the outstanding leaders in the apostolic band that the Lord appeared first.

VERSE 11:

“But,” in contrast to the two who went home.

VERSES 12,13:

The depth of her grief is perhaps due to the emphasis the Jews of the day placed on correct and seemly burial. They regarded with abhorrence any disrespect paid to a corpse. Uncertainty as to what happened to Jesus’ body was worrying Mary and distressing her deeply.

The verb (crying) denotes not a quiet, restrained shedding of tears, but the noisy lamentation typical of Easterners.

“Why are you crying?” Indeed, why does she weep? -- when we should all have had cause to weep to all eternity if what she wept for had been given her, the dead body of her Lord!

(3) BARCLAY

Someone has called this story the greatest recognition scene in all literature. To Mary belongs the glory of being the first person to see the Risen Christ. [The first person to see the Risen Christ did not recognize Him -- neither did the two on the Emmaus Road. And it has always been so, that people do not recognize Jesus. Why is that?]

1. She could not recognize him because of her tears. Her tears blinded her eyes so that she could not see. When we lose a loved one, etc., there is sorrow in our heart, tears shed and unshed. Tears there must be but through the tears we must see Jesus.

2. Because she was facing the wrong direction. She could not take her eyes off the tomb, and she had her back to Jesus. She was facing the wrong direction.

[3] She was looking for a corpse, not the Living Lord. I’m glad she didn’t find what she was looking for. Catholic relics, Shroud of T, shards from the cross. Often when we come to church, we’re looking for the Jesus that used to be, instead of the Jesus that is, alive and among us. A sense of His presence.

(4) TURNER AND MANTEY

VS 13: "My Lord." Mary revealed in this reply how personal her faith was and also that to her he was divine and master and guardian of her soul.

VS 14: Apparently he had assumed a slightly different appearance for these occasions so that his resurrection body was not identifiable with his earthly body.....Another possibility is that their capacity to see was affected temporarily (Luke 24:16).

VS 16: This time he pronounced the name so she would recognize him. Much can be conveyed by a word sympathetically uttered.

VS 17: The prohibition here reminds Mary that the previous personal fellowship by sight, sound, touch no longer exists and that the final state of glory has not yet begun.

LIT., "For I am not yet in an ascended condition." Perfect tense. The perfect tense states the continuing results of an action which has occurred. The use of the perfect tense does not deny that he had fellowship with God between the time of his death and his resurrection.

VS 18: "I have seen" Eureka! The perfect tense emphasizes the lasting impression of having seen Christ. She not only saw him but held on to him and talked to him.

COMMENT: Mary lingered at the opened sepulcher, loath to leave. Probably love constrained her.

She was among the last to leave the scene of the crucifixion (Mark 15:40; John 19:25) and the first to return to the tomb on Easter morning.

Her first disappointment turned out to be a blessing in disguise. It is infinitely better that Jesus' body was not in the tomb. If it had been there would have been no resurrection and no bad news.

She erred in assuming that Jesus resurrection body was the same body which he possessed before his death.

It should be kept in mind that the one to whom this truth was made known was the one who carried with the patience born of love and the persistence which springs from hope.

Not she with traitor's kiss her Master
stung;
Not she denied Him with unfaithful
tongue;
She when apostles fled could danger
brave,
Last at His cross and earliest at His
grave.

E.B. Browning

JOHN 12

(1) LEON MORRIS, NIC

John has practically concluded his account of the public ministry of Jesus. This chapter contains Jesus' last words and acts before the general public. John selects three incidents: the anointing at Bethany, the triumphal entry, and the visit of the Greeks to Jesus.

VERSES 20-28

Verse 20: This curious incident is peculiar to John. Clearly John regards their coming as significant. But he does not treat their presence as important. Jesus recognizes in their coming an indication that the climax of His mission has arrived. Immediately he hears of them he says, "The hour is come." Evidently John means us to understand that this contact with the Greeks ushered in the climax. The fact that the Greeks had reached the point of wanting to meet Jesus showed that the time had come for Him to die for the world. He no longer belongs to Judaism, which in any case has rejected Him. But the world whose Savior he is, awaits Him and seeks for Him.

Verse 21: "See", of course, means something like "interview." The point of the inquiry: Jesus was the Savior of the world and this group of Gentiles symbolically represents the world seeking its salvation from Jesus.

Verse 23: Jesus' answer is surprising. He totally ignores the Greeks and neither immediately nor subsequently makes any reference to them whatever.

Plainly their coming is important. Jesus sees it as evidence that His mission has reached its climax and that he is now to die for the world, Greeks included.

"The hour is come": The references in John to "the hour." Though unobtrusive, this is one of the most important ideas in John's Gospel. This is that for which Jesus is destined. The verb "is come" is in the perfect tense. "The hour has come and stays with Me". There is no going back on it. [The point of no return}.

But Jesus speaks not of tragedy but of triumph. He is not to be dishonored. He is to be glorified, and that by way of the cross.

Verse 24: The solemn “verily, verily” introduces a statement of importance. RE: the grain of wheat. It is only through “death” that its potentiality for fruitfulness becomes actual.

Verse 25: “Loses” often means “destroy.” Phillips translates, “The man who loves his own life will destroy it.” John means us to understand that loving the life is a self-defeating process. The PRESENT TENSE where we might expect a future tense: “The man who loves his life is destroying it right now.”

Verse 26: The outcome of all this is service to Christ. Throughout this verse there is emphasis on the first-personal pronoun. It is personal relationship to Christ which is important. The servant must follow His Lord. Being where the lord is entails suffering. It means losing the life for the master’s sake. There is no other way of Christian service.

VERSE 27: Christ feels His soul troubled. “My soul is in turmoil.” The perfect tense points to a continuous state. Note: Jesus is to use the same verb of the disciple’s not being troubled (14:1,27). But the price of their peace is His trouble of spirit.

“What shall I say?” The words reveal the natural human shrinking from death. Note: “Horror of death and ardour of obedience are fused together.”

Verse 28: Jesus prays that the Father will glorify His name. The overruling sovereignty of God is implied.

Even the noble cry out in despair -
we tend to think the noble are better off - They
have less reason to turn to X - because we
are impressed by their success & wealth
because like Communism, the Gospel has its greatest
appeal among the common people - Gospel a soap
for their misery - They have nothing to lose & everything to
gain.

Hopjens slides us because of who & what we are -
"You can't get there from here." Need to be somewhere
else - Be someone else.

The phenomenon of great people (artists, poets, etc.)
are greatly troubled people John Cheever, etc. Bob Dylan,
Vincent Van Gogh

even the people who write no books - they are no better off than anyone else
they are not experts, who having arrived safely at the top, now tell us how to do
it - we are all fellow pilgrims - all we can offer are the tracks of
fellow travelers.

→ the 3 "beliefs" - the purpose of signs was belief in ~~the~~
Jesus as X, Son of God, not as Jesus, Healer & Miracle Worker

Waiting for the
Apocalypse

John 4 - Signs on
demand. No.
Nobleman's son

The Seven Signs of John
THE BEST BEATITUDE

Text: John 20:24-31

Introduction:

I. SIGNS

John 1:14-"And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth."

Gospel of John could be subtitled: "We beheld His glory." John's account of Jesus' ministry is the unfolding story of HOW the Word made flesh revealed His glory.

1. NEW TESTAMENT WORDS FOR "MIRACLE."

Terata, teras -- Acts 2:19, translated "wonder" and emphasizes the character of the miracle as something outside the usual course of events. In early Greek it was to describe something that scared people -- "a clap of thunder" called "a wonder in heaven."

There is not a description of "wonder" on its own -- the phrase is always "signs and wonders."

Paradoxon, paradox, pictures the contradictory nature of the miracle, its incongruity with the order of the natural world, and its strangeness to the usual current of thought.

Dunamis, dynamite, dynamic, stresses the power revealed in the performance of the miracle, and implies the spiritual energy which produced it.

SEMEION, implies that the deed is an indication of some power or meaning behind the deed to which it is secondary in importance.

It is the only word John uses for "miracle." John presented the miracles not merely as supernatural deeds nor manifestation of supernatural power, nor exception to the usual current of events, BUT AS MATERIAL WITNESSES TO UNDERLYING SPIRITUAL TRUTH.

Signs: Variations
on the same theme,
each touching a
different aspect.
X Displays his
glory in every work &
craning of the
life.

In John SIGN is the key to theological interpretation.

In Homer, denotes optical impressions which suggest or make possible certain insights It always has to do with an object or circumstance which makes possible, or is designed to make possible a specific insight or perception. It refers to what strikes the eye.

It works for Clarification, Confirmation and Certainty.
A sign is a symbolical anticipation.

2. To those who believe, the miracles are signs which feed their faith; to those who do not believe, signs may be multiplied indefinitely without producing faith (12:37).

To rightly understand them is to apprehend Christ by faith. The miracles once grasped in their true meaning lead at once to the Christology, since they are a manifestation of the glory of Christ.

3. THE SEVEN SIGNS

- (1) Changing water into wine (2:1-11).
- (2) Healing of the nobleman's son (4:46-54).
- (3) Healing of the impotent man (5:2-9).
- (4) Feeding of the five thousand (6:16-21).
- (5) Walking on the water (6:16-21).
- (6) Healing the man born blind (9:1-7).
- (7) Raising of Lazarus (11:1-44).

4. THE SIGNS OF JESUS AND THE GLORY OF GOD are interrelated, 12:37bff, with emphasis on the fact that it is the privilege of believers alone to grasp the point at issue. With the signs, faith arises if the glory which shines therein is "seen."

**In His signs Jesus is in some sense made transparent and causes His true being, His sonship, to be manifested in its glory.

IIL: CANA; At Cana the headwaiter saw only the wine, the servants saw the miracle, but the disciples saw His glory and believed.

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The servants saw the sign but not as a sign, as a miracle. The sign was meant to point beyond the miracle to Jesus, but they never saw past the miracle.

They saw the sign and said: "It is a miracle!"
The disciples saw the miracle and said, "It is a sign!"

5. The signs were performed "in the presence of His disciples." The signs were not products of the writer's personal imagination. Historical facts attested to by witnesses.

6. JOHN TELLS US THERE WERE MANY MORE SIGNS DONE BY JESUS, but these are written..."

Certain deeds performed by Jesus were so startling that they deserved special notice and called for explanation.

**John is aware that Jesus worked many more signs than these mentioned (20:30; 21:25). John made his selection of signs in order that his readers may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. He chose these specific signs, not because they were the most amazing or the most dramatic -- but because these seven would best reveal the identity and manifest the glory of Christ.

These signs are the decisive thing in establishing Jesus as the Messiah.

7. The significance of the signs of Jesus goes beyond the immediate hour and those who share in it as spectators. By having Jesus link words of revelation concerning His person with a series of signs (6:32ff; 9:39; 11:25; cf. 5:17), John brings out the fact that the signs have a constant power to establish faith because Jesus always remains the One He is. That is, if Jesus changed, then the signs of 2000 years ago would be out of date, ineffective. But since He is the same, there is no need for new or additional signs. If these signs were not enough, John would have told of more. But faith is not forced by the many signs given -- there is no need to pile up a lot of signs.

The signs do not compel us to believe; they challenge us to believe.

The Christological knowledge is permanent, so that these are an imperishable message.

The post-Easter community needs no new signs. It has the word of the witnesses.

Verse 31: "These are written" perfect tense, "These are written and now stand recorded..."

WHAT DOES THIS SAY TO "SIGNS AND WONDERS" MINISTRIES? THAT THEY ARE UNNECESSARY! John makes it clear that these seven signs recorded in John are adequate for faith in Christ. To say we need signs and wonders today to bring people to Christ is to belittle the Word of God and diminish its power. "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead."

(1) We need to stick to these signs because they are the only ones we can know for sure are of God. Satan deceives with lying wonders, miracles. Contemporary signs can be works of the Devil.

Satan could release someone. "He would never do that." If he could deceive a hundred more by doing it, he would do it. He can take one step backwards, and two steps forward.

(2) Verse 29--"Blessed are those who have not seen, yet they believe." Christ says that there is a higher faith than that which springs from visible evidence.

UNSEEING BELIEVERS: Theirs is a faith called forth by The Word of the Gospel; their trust revealed through the Word of God is of special worth in His eyes. "Happy are they, who without having Thomas' experience, share his faith."

This last and greatest Beatitude is the special heritage of the church.

Thomas is a representative of those who will never have the opportunity to see, touch, hear at first hand Christ.

Thomas is here presented not as an ideal, or exemplary individual, but a type of those who live on a lower level and demand physical tests.

THE BLESSING is intended for those who believe without "seeing" signs and wonders.

Thomas's doubt is representative of the common attitude of man . . . so miracle is granted to human weakness, so is visible appearance of the Risen One granted to the weakness

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of the disciples. Really there should be no need of it. Really the sight of the Risen One should not be the first thing to make disciples believe the "word which Jesus spoke" (2:22). The word alone should have the power to convince them.

FAITH THAT REQUIRES SIGNS AND WONDERS IS WEAKER FAITH THAN WHICH WHICH DOES NOT.

"God showed me a miracle and I believed." THAT WAS A CONCESSION TO YOUR WEAKNESS!

II. BELIEVE

"My Lord and My God," is a confession that issues forth from the depths of Thomas' soul. So it comes about that the most outrageous doubter of the resurrection utters the greatest confession.

The confession of Thomas is startling in its starkness, and is rightly regarded as the culmination of the revelation of God in Christ recorded in the fourth Gospel.

1. By recalling Thomas' own word the Lord shows that He was present at the very time Thomas questioned the resurrection.

2. His sublime instantaneous confession, won from doubt, closes historically the progress of faith which John traces.

3. "Do not be unbelieving, but believing." Rather, it is "become not unbelieving." Belief and unbelief both grow. Thomas "was not," but he "was on the way" to be "faithless."

V. 27 -- "Be not faithless," present imperative -- "do not continue disbelieving."

Verse 29: Since both Greek verbs are in the perfect tense the emphasis is upon the effects of seeing and believing.

Verse 30, 31 -- "These are written" -- perfect tense: "written and now stand recorded."

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Verse 31: "That you may believe", the use of the Greek present tense suggests coming to believe in Christ and then continuing to believe in Him.

Verse 31 -- "In order that by believing", instrumental use of the present participle. Again the use of the present tense denotes continuance in believing, not just initial or merely temporary faith.

Verse 29 -- Jesus describes the faith of Thomas and that of believers who have not "seen" in perfect tense verbs, indicating a firm faith.

The tense of the verb marks the process as continually going on. The transformation is regarded as present and not as a future result.

4. It is plain that much more than propositional faith is intended -- it is personal faith. "MY"

5. John does not think of faith as a vague trust, but as something with content. Here he singles out two things in faith's content: That Jesus is the Christ, the long expected One, the fulfilment of God's promise.

Two, the Son of God, Deity, sovereignty.

6. This means that faith should stand alone -- our confidence is not in signs and miracles, wonders, and anything that is visible, not tried by the court of our own senses. We either believe or we don't believe.

III. LIFE