

Divine Disruption

Matt 28:1-6

1 In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre.

2 And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it.

3 His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow:

4 And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men.

5 And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified.

6 He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay.

I. Introduction

1. Today's word is disruption.
2. **Disruption:** an event that creates confusion and/or disorder, or can be seen as something that interrupts.
3. We have all seen disruptions to everything we called normal in recent weeks.
4. This is the fourth Wednesday night Bible study that we have conducted online only.
5. This coming Sunday is Easter Sunday, Resurrection Sunday, when churches have their largest crowd of the year.
6. But this Sunday will be the 4th Sunday of online only services.
7. Four weeks of disruption in the way we conduct church, the way we work, grocery shop, and even do family.
8. This is a once-in-a-lifetime corona virus pandemic disruption, the likes of which most of the world has never seen.
9. And I don't take it lightly, calling it merely a disruption of schedule, for it has been far more than that for so many.
10. 1.4 million people across the world have become sick from the disease, and over 82, 000 individuals have died as of this morning from this disease.¹
11. It is no small matter. You talk about significant life disruptions.
12. But like other pandemics of the past, this will pass, and people will find ways to live beyond the impact of covid-19.
13. In 30 years, it will mostly be a memory with some pain and also some joy intermixed.
14. But the disruption that I want to focus on today happened in 30AD, and that disruption is still having a significant impact on people in our world today, 1,990 years later, and will continue to have an impact throughout eternity.
15. Today I want to examine three disruptions, three divine disruptions, through the eyes of one eyewitness named Mary.

II. Mary's story

A. Mary's first divine disruption

¹ <https://www.arcgis.com/apps/opsdashboard/index.html#/bda7594740fd40299423467b48e9ecf6>

1. She is called Mary Magdalene.
2. Let's talk about her first divine disruption that occurred in her first encounter with Jesus.
3. Mary had been a very sick person, and she could find no help. On top of her physical infirmity, she also suffered the torment of evil spirits who tormented her mind and body.
4. In fact, the devils were such a part of who she was, that years later, Mary Magdalene was still identified as the one "out of whom he had cast seven devils." (Mark 16:9)
5. That was her case until her first divine interruption. We have only a brief summary statement of her first encounter with Jesus, and it goes like this:
Luke 8:2 And certain women, which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary called Magdalene, out of whom went seven devils,
6. Healed of evil spirits—seven in fact, and infirmities. Her story before meeting Jesus was one of tremendous struggle.
7. What must it have been like to have seven devils constantly tormenting her?
8. What kind of personal terror had ruled her private life?
9. And how many people, perhaps even of her own relatives, had created their own version of social distancing from her because they were afraid of her evil fits?
10. And how many friends did she still have? Probably not many, given her sickness and grave torments she suffered that others feared.
11. But then into one of those dark days, walked Jesus, that divine interruption.

B. Jesus transformed her life

1. When Jesus found her, He had compassion on her and cast out all of those devils and made her whole!
2. What a relief she experienced by that deliverance. That simple touch, that simple Word from Jesus had totally interrupted—disrupted her former way of life. But oh, was she grateful for that divine disruption.
3. And to see just how dramatic this change was, you need to read the prior verse along with this one:
Luke 8:1-2
1 And it came to pass afterward, that he went throughout every city and village, preaching and shewing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God: and the twelve were with him,
2 And certain women, which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary called Magdalene, out of whom went seven devils,
4. Mary was part of the traveling ministry team who accompanied Jesus on His ministry trips. It is hard to imagine that total transformation from what her life had been previously!
5. From suffering torment of the devils and pain of sickness, to watching Jesus cast out and even torment devils...
6. Do you remember the story of the devil-possessed man who lived in the tombs, who when Jesus approached, he and fell at the feet of Jesus? And the devils cried out to Jesus from the man:
*Mark 5:7 And cried with a loud voice, and said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the most high God? I adjure thee by God, that thou **torment me not.***

7. The tormenting devil begged Jesus not to torment him!
8. That was the scene Mary was now witnessing on a regular basis.
9. And not only casting out devils like Jesus had done for her, but also healing the sick, like He had done for her.
10. Over and over again, she watched Jesus perform healing miracles.
11. What a glorious divine interruption she had experienced!

C. Mary's second divine disruption

1. But what I want to focus on tonight is another divine disruption in Mary's life that coincides with what today is—sundown tonight begins Passover.
2. Jews around the world will be hosting Passover Seders with their families in their homes tonight.
3. And most Christian churches observe Passover, although in a different form, through communion, especially at this time of year.
4. Following the Passover in 30AD, Mary Magdalene saw a dramatic change—another divine disruption to her way of life.
5. I'll say it again. Our present personal disruptions, as global as they are, will not have as a long-term impact as the shocking disruptions that Mary experienced that week in 30AD.

D. Jesus foretold it

1. Yes, Jesus had foretold his closest friends that this was coming. In the days leading up to Passover, Jesus told them:

Matt 20:18-19

*18 Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be **betrayed** unto the chief priests and unto the scribes, and they shall **condemn him to death**,*

*19 And shall deliver him to the **Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify him: and the third day he shall rise again.***

2. But Jesus knew what He was born to do.
3. He had come to serve and not to be served. He had come to give His life for others not to live it for Himself.
4. So rather than remaining in safety in Galilee, away from the influence of the Jerusalem chief priests and scribes, and far from the Romans, He had to go to Jerusalem.
5. The religious leaders didn't like Jesus—they hated Him for his bold and piercing preaching that revealed the shallowness of their traditions.
6. Jesus preached forgiveness and life, they preached condemnation and death.
7. But true to what Jesus had foretold, the Son of man was betrayed.

E. Procession to the cross and to the tomb

1. Judas! He sold Jesus for 30 pieces of silver. How could he? And he betrayed Jesus to the troop of soldiers with a deceiving kiss. How could he?
2. Mary was not in the garden prayer meeting when Jesus was arrested, but she got word pretty soon.
3. It is likely that Mary was among the women present in the procession to Golgotha.

Luke 23:26-27

26 And as they led him away, they laid hold upon one Simon, a Cyrenian, coming out of the country, and on him they laid the cross, that he might bear it after Jesus.

27 And there followed him a great company of people, and of **women**, which also bewailed and lamented him.

4. What we know for sure is that Mary Magdalene was at the foot of the cross:
John 19:25 Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene.
 5. And we know for sure that Mary Magdalene stayed there with Him until Jesus gave His last breath:
Mark 15:37-40
37 And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost.
38 And the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom.
39 And when the centurion, which stood over against him, saw that he so cried out, and gave up the ghost, he said, Truly this man was the Son of God.
40 There were also women looking on afar off: among whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the less and of Joses, and Salome;
 6. And we know for sure that Mary followed Joseph of Arimathaea as he placed His body in the tomb:
Matt 27:59-61
59 And when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth,
60 And laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock: and he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre, and departed.
61 And there was Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary, sitting over against the sepulchre.
 7. ***Mark 15:47*** And Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses beheld where he was laid.
- F. First day of the week
1. And we know for sure that Mary was there on the first day of the week when the greatest divine disruption in human history occurred.
 2. You see, up to this point, the events of the past several hours had moved along in a predictable fashion.
 3. Because of the tension caused by Rome and their authoritarian rule, they had regularly witnessed arrests, trials, and death sentences repeated over and over again.
 4. But what followed was unprecedented. It was just before dawn on the day following Passover, that Mary and her friends took burial spices to cover the body of Jesus with:
Luke 24:1 Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain others with them.
 5. But what she saw when she arrived, she could not have prepared herself to see:
Matt 28:1-8
1 In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre.
2 And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it.
3 His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow:

4 And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men.
 5 And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified.
 6 He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay.
 7 And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and, behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him: lo, I have told you.
 8 And they departed quickly from the sepulchre with fear and great joy; and did run to bring his disciples word.

6. The apostle John added an additional detail about what happened when they first discovered the empty tomb and could do nothing but cry in anguish. The angels asked her a question:

John 20:13-15

13 And they say unto her, **Woman, why weepest thou?** She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him.

14 And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus.

7. And Jesus asked her the same question:
 15 Jesus saith unto her, **Woman, why weepest thou?** whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away.
8. The height of emotions of what she had seen in the past few days was off the charts. Today, we would probably diagnose her as having an episode of post traumatic stress disorder.
9. Tears were evidence of a broken heart.
10. She had seen her life transform from a demon possessed past, to being totally healed and delivered by Jesus, to following Him from place to place and witnessing miracle after miracle.
11. Then her Messiah was betrayed, arrested, sentenced to death, and crucified.
12. All according to the scriptures, but still, this was a divine disruption. Something that ripped her heart out.

G. Mary's third divine disruption

1. You can call this the divine disruption number 3. Sorrow is turned to joy.

2. As we read in Matthew, tears of sorrow were quickly turned into shouts of joy:

Matt 28:5-8

5 And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified.

6 **He is not here: for he is risen,** as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay.

7 And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and, behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him: lo, I have told you.

8 And they departed quickly from the sepulchre **with fear and great joy;** and did run to bring his disciples word.

3. And then on the way to tell the disciples, she sees Jesus and knows it is Him:

Mark 16:9-11

9 Now when **Jesus** was risen early the first day of the week, he **appeared first to Mary**

Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils.

10 And she went and told them that had been with him, as they mourned and wept.

11 And they, when they had heard that he was alive, and had been seen of her, believed not.

4. How could she explain what she was seeing? How could she even believe her own eyes?
5. We can understand why she had a hard time convincing the disciples when she had a hard time believing her own eyes.
6. That is what a divine disruption can do.

III. Conclusion

1. Interruptions can have the effect of setting us on a new path. For the early followers of Jesus, his life and ministry introduced one disruption after another.
2. For them, storms had always followed a usual pattern of blowing in, blowing up, and blowing out.
3. But in the middle of one particularly perilous storm, Jesus disrupted that pattern:
Matt 8:26-27
26 And he saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm.
27 But the men marvelled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him!
4. Jesus disrupted patterns of nature! What kind of man was this?
5. The normal had been disrupted.
6. Jesus has a way of disturbing the natural course of events in order to transform lives from brokenness, bondage, and burdens, into wholeness, liberty, and freedom,
John 8:36 If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.
7. We are living through disruptions, perhaps of the greatest magnitude you have ever experienced.
8. But remember from the events of this week from Jesus' arrest, trial, death and resurrection, that He can take life's disruptions, and transform them into divine disruptions that bring about a greater good than you could have ever imagined.
9. Imagine the world without a Savior who died and rose again. That tragedy, that divine disruption was the key to the greatest joy a human can possibly experience in this life or in eternity to come.