

DIGGIN' DOTTIE AND THE EMPTY TOMB

Preschool
Week 1

PARENT BIBLE STUDY

Read: John 20:1-18

Mary loved Jesus dearly. He had healed her from seven demons, and it is largely assumed that she was the same Mary who washed Jesus' feet with her tears. Jesus was precious to her, and she treasured the grace, mercy, and deliverance he'd shown her. It makes sense, then, why she was the first one to go to the tomb and why she was so desperately sad when she didn't find his body there.

It is unclear why Mary didn't at first recognize Jesus when she turned around and saw his living, breathing, moving body right in front of her. But when he called her by name, Mary realized that broken and wounded body was Jesus. Jesus knew that she was confused and heartbroken. He did not harshly rebuke her when her grief turned to panic and she forgot his promises. Instead, he compassionately moved toward her, called her name, and revealed himself to her. Jesus' own words must have come to her mind then: "The sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out," John 10:3.

Sometimes our grief blinds us to the truth that God redeems all things and uses all things for good, but even then, and maybe especially then, God is full of compassion towards us. Just because God ultimately can work every painful thing in our lives for our good, does not mean that he cheapens or criticizes our pain and sadness. Instead, the same God who experienced the loss of his own son Jesus, the same God who met Mary at the tomb, sees our sadness and pain and empathizes. He is a God of mercy and comfort (2 Corinthians 1:3-4), and the Bible promises that he moves towards us in our grief. Psalm 34:18 says that "The LORD is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit."

In her moment of deepest pain and sadness, Mary experienced the most real, most precious moment with Jesus. Her story encourages us to lean into Jesus always, especially in our grief, and see that when we seek him, we will find that he is right there with us.

Would you say that Jesus is precious to you? What do you do to show that you treasure his grace?

Have you experienced the truth in Psalm 34:18? Has grief or loss strengthened your faith? How?