

The Lord's Day — Eutychus, Mary Magdalene, and the Heart's Occupation

Ministry · June 6, 2021

The Lordly Day — Belonging Entirely to Him

Revelation 1:9–10 opens John's vision with a note about when it took place: I became in the Spirit on the Lord's day. The expression in Greek is the same construction as the Lord's supper — not partly his, but entirely his. The Lord's supper belongs entirely to Him. The Lord's day belongs entirely to Him. Someone who said Sunday morning is for church and Sunday afternoon is for soccer was not describing the Lord's day — he was describing the Lord's morning. And J.N.D.'s footnote on this verse says it is the characteristic of the day: the Lordly day. It belongs to Him.

John was in the Spirit on this day. That occupation — of being in the Spirit and therefore receiving a revelation of the Lord's glory and of what was to come — is the characteristic occupation of the Lord's day. Not that every Sunday morning will produce a vision like John's. But the spirit of that occupation — of being in the Spirit, set apart to Him on the day that belongs to Him, with heart and mind engaged — is what the Lord desires from each of us on this day.

Eutychus — Sitting in a Window, Looking Down

Acts 20:7 gives one picture of the Lord's day. The disciples were assembled to break bread. Paul discoursed to them until midnight. And Eutychus, sitting in a window opening, fell asleep and fell from the third story. The writer makes no attempt to disguise that Paul talked for a long time. And Eutychus was tired. That is a natural thing.

But there are two things worth noting about Eutychus. He was sitting in a window — at the opening, with what was outside available to his attention. He was not looking up; he was looking out, and probably down from the height of the upper room. And he was in the assembly, having come to remember the Lord, but his occupation during the meeting was not one of engagement. Something outside was more present to him than what was inside.

The Lord's disciples fell asleep in Gethsemane too. It was very late; tiredness is natural. He said: you could not wait here with me for one hour? But tiredness alone does not produce spiritual sleep. The woman at the tomb who had been thinking for two days about what she was going to do as soon as she was able — she was not tired, or if she was, her heart's engagement carried her through.

Mary Magdalene — Two Days of Preparation

Mark 15:47 shows Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joseph watching where the Lord's body was laid. Then the Feast of Unleavened Bread began, and the Sabbath followed — two days during which they could not go. Mark 16:1 records: and the Sabbath being past, Mary of Magdala, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, bought aromatic spices, that they might come and embalm him. And very early on the first day of the week, they came to the sepulcher, the sun having risen.

Do you suppose these three women woke up Sunday morning and said, what shall we do today? Or had they been thinking for two days about what they were going to do as soon as they were able? Every hour of Friday and Saturday they had one intention: as soon as the Sabbath is over, as soon as we can move, we are going to embalm the body of the Lord. That is what they were occupied with through two days of enforced waiting.

We remember the Lord every Sunday. We have come to do this hundreds of times. Do we wake up Sunday morning and think: oh, this is the day we

remember the Lord? Or are there six days of the week in which the thought is already working, in which the heart is already preparing, in which the desire to be in His presence on the first day of the week is already stirring? The difference between Eutychus and the women at the tomb is not intelligence or spiritual superiority. It is the state of the heart.

The First to See Him — and the Commission Given

John 20:1 records that Mary Magdalene came early, when it was yet dark, to the sepulchre. Peter and John ran to it, looked in, and went away again to their own home. But Mary stood without, weeping. She looked in and saw two angels. She turned and saw the Lord — and did not recognise Him. He said one word: Mary. She turned and said: Rabboni. Teacher.

The disciples went home. Mary stayed. The disciples went to their own occupation. Mary's occupation was Him. And the Lord appeared first to her — out of whom He had cast seven demons, the one from whom He had delivered the greatest bondage — and gave her the most blessed announcement: go to my brethren and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God. The risen Lord, the first announcement of the resurrection, given to a sister. Not to John, not to Peter, but to the one whose heart was most entirely engaged with Him.

*Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord,
and that he had spoken these things unto her. — John 20:18*

Where I Am — the Magnet of the Heart

John 14:2–3 contains the Lord's desire for us: I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also. John 17:24: Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my

glory. That expression — where I am — is a magnetic phrase. It draws the heart. He wants us where He is. And Colossians 3:1–3 makes that present and practical: seek the things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

Where Christ sitteth is where I am. That is the pull on the heart that produces the Mary Magdalene state rather than the Eutychus state. That is what makes the Lord's day a Lordly day rather than a morning obligation. Ephesians adds the further dimension: we are already seated with Him in heavenly places in Christ. Colossians sees us on earth looking up; Ephesians sees us already there in God's reckoning. The more these truths are meditated on through the week, the more naturally the heart is drawn toward the first day of the week with anticipation rather than duty.

If we are looking down — at what is outside the window, at the things of the earth, at the preoccupations of the week that have not been laid aside — we will be like Eutychus. If we have been thinking for two days about what we want to do when we are able, our hearts prepared, our minds occupied with Him, we will be like the women at the tomb who could not get there early enough. He desires to be our first thought, not our afterthought. He desires that the first day of the week, the Lordly day, be genuinely His — and that we come to it prepared in our hearts, to find in His presence that peace which He said He gives not as the world gives.