



## CELL GUIDE

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**TOPIC** Resurrection Sunday

**SPEAKER** Elder Edric Sng

**THEME** Focus on the Spiritual

**DATE** 16 April 2017

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## MESSAGE SUMMARY

### TWO QUESTIONS POSED BY THE 'GARDENER'

John 20 details Mary Magdalene's trip to the tomb of Jesus on the third day since Jesus' crucifixion. She stands outside the tomb crying, thinking that perhaps Jesus' body has been stolen. In her sorrow, she is posed two questions from a man she mistakes for the gardener: *Why are you crying? Who is it that you are looking for?* It turns out that the man who posed her these questions was no ordinary man, but Jesus Himself.

Today, the same two questions that Jesus posed to Mary may be posed to us instead. *Why are we crying? Who is it that we are looking for?* These questions can be helpful as we consider the difficulties we experience in life, for the answer to the latter question is of infinite importance.

### WHY ARE WE CRYING?

We begin by looking at the life and death of Jesus, the Son of Man. Even though He spoke nothing but the truth – that He was the Son of God — He was accused of blasphemy. This accusation eventually resulted in one of the cruellest of deaths, crucifixion on the Cross. But the Jews weren't satisfied to simply have Him crucified; they compounded His disgrace by whipping Him and mocking Him with a crown of thorns. He was disfigured with 39 lashes. He was crucified alongside two criminals.

The weight of sin of the entire world was placed on Jesus' shoulders, and He experienced, for the first time in His life, separation from God His father, whom He had to call Eloi – "My God!" – instead.

Mary Magdalene was recorded as a witness to Jesus' entire ordeal. As a first-hand witness to the life-transforming power of Jesus, the death of Jesus was a tremendous blow to Mary. The picture of Mary whose hope was seemingly crushed at Calvary should be one that is familiar to us: A picture of a person so overwhelmed by circumstances that one becomes broken.

What do we do when work, studies, illnesses, fears and depression overwhelm us? What do we do when we seem to have hit a dead-end or have lost our direction in life, when the goals that used to spur us on no longer hold any attraction or motivation? The answer to these questions lies in the second question that Jesus posed to Mary.

## WHO ARE YOU LOOKING FOR?

The promise of Jesus is beautiful. In Revelations 21:4, God promises to wipe every tear from our eyes, and death, mourning, crying and pain will be eradicated for good. Without Jesus, our efforts will leak and the rewards will be meagre (Haggai 1), and even the best life seems to be able to offer will do nothing but disappoint in the long run.

Jesus died to reverse the curse of sin and to restore us to God's original design and intention for creation. So that we may have hope and a freedom from sin and its consequences – and be reunited with God and live forevermore.

We need Jesus. With Jesus, the lame will walk and the blind will see. He not only restores us physically but restores us spiritually; He gives us hope and a purpose, to love Him and to share His goodness with all who will listen. Jesus died that we would not have to pay the horrible price for sin. Jesus died that His children, and the people whom He recognises as friends – us – would be reconciled with the Father.

## THE RESURRECTION

The death of Jesus is a significant point in history, but even more important than His death is His resurrection. Through His resurrection, He demonstrated that He was not just the Son of Man, but also the Son of God. That day He walked out from that empty tomb, He reached out to all men as Lord, Saviour and Friend who desires to renew us and wash us clean.

# QUESTIONS

What are common issues you see people struggling with that may cause them to lose hope?

What is the significance of Jesus' resurrection? What difference does Jesus' resurrection make to your life and the way you respond to your circumstances?

Share with the cell an area in your life where you're having a hard time. Pray for one another that the power of the Resurrected Christ will help those among us who are hurting.