

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

From the gospel of John which we have just heard, Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples:

“I have seen the Lord”

“I have seen the Lord”

We are here this morning to echo Mary Magdalene’s words “I have seen the Lord”. We are here to echo Mary’s words “I have seen the Lord” is that too simple or too difficult to understand?

The reason, the real reason, that we hear those words this morning, is that in Mary Magdalene’s words, in Mary’s story, in the garden; we have proof on this Easter morning, we have proof in that story, of the resurrection of Our Lord Jesus Christ – too simple or too difficult an idea.

The Holy Spirit speaks to us this morning through that over familiar story so that we will leave this church, this morning, echoing those words – “I have seen the Lord” – too simple or too difficult.

Too simple – every one of us female and male, we are made in the image of God we carry that image within us of God, which Our Lord Jesus Christ took upon himself to show God is with us and to show you, me, we are of value, infinite value to God. And remember as soon as you begin to say female and male are not quite equal, sexuality is straight forward, disabled perhaps means not quite understanding. Say any of those things and the image of God within is diminished. Resurrection, new life, is being denied, say any of those things and you do not see the Lord, you do not hear the Holy Spirit, you do not feel God with you – too simple, or too difficult.

Prove the resurrection – too difficult? an idea.

Mary Magdalene ran with the news “I have seen the Lord” – she saw God, Almighty God, the God of love, she saw the Lord God. She heard God’s Holy Spirit, he called her by her name “Mary”, she felt God with her, she wept and wept and wept.

But she never moved.

Read that text again when you get home and you’ll notice that Jesus speaks to Mary, she hears only the gardener. He calls her by her name quietly gently but confidently and Mary turns: - she turns her life around – too simple or too difficult.

She never moves, it's not about shouting the length and breadth of the garden, she simply turns and recognises Jesus and remember as you hear the gospel stories throughout Easter tide. Remember Jesus is always described as having all the wounds of crucifixion on his body. She recognised him by His wounds and He said "Do not hold me". Do not hold on to the wounds and the grief and the regrets and the disappointments and the hurts – do not hold me. There is resurrection, new life, new hope, new light through which to see our lives, to give us Hope in who and what we are, where we are. She never moved, her encounter with her Lord and God, her encounter with love which is accepting, understanding, brings the peace of being Held, knowing I am wanted – here is proof in the wounds, in the regrets, in the disappointments, in the loneliness, in the misunderstandings, in the hurts – do not hold on – see God as He is wounded but accepting, seeking you, new light on our experience – new life in Resurrection because remember resurrection is not resuscitation, don't hang on, do not hold on to the regrets, look at them in the new light of – what might have been if only and oh it can make you laugh – There is resurrection in the laughter, which proclaims "I have seen the Lord". Mary never moved – she simply turned – her life around. Too simple or too difficult.

Resurrection is new life not resuscitation, new life where we are, she never moved. God calls us by name, as Jesus said Mary, quietly, confidently. She saw God's love, acceptance, peace in the very wounds of Jesus, but she never moved – too simple or too difficult.

And she wept, and wept and wept.

She felt God, she felt in herself the Passover which Christ has sacrificed for us, she never moved she turned her life around = Tears consist of two elements salt and water. The salt water of the Jewish Passover meal, symbolises the salt of affliction, pain, exile and the water of the Red Sea which brings the exiles Home. The Holy water I will use in a few moments time to bless us contains salt to drive out the devil to turn our lives around through the waters of baptism, new life, new perspective and new light; such Hope. Too simple or too difficult.

Mary wept and wept and wept; she went to the tomb because that was all she had left of Him, was grief and pain and disappointment. But quietly, confidently, gently He called her by her name: Mary, as He calls us. She never moved; she turned round and recognised Jesus and she recognised His wounds and His pain and His suffering, which was Hers and is ours.

Too simple or too difficult. Why doesn't God act in Kenya, on an aeroplane, or what haunts me I had to stand to usher in the great festival at Christmas while mourning those whose presents were wrapped under the tree and were never opened. God is love of such depth and breadth that it gives freedom to humankind – we pray; but God weeps and weeps and weeps. Too simple or too difficult.

As Mary wept she heard Jesus call, she recognised him through His wounds which take our wounds to God's heart and soul and she felt God's presence in the tears which were of sorrow and then as He called, as she saw Him. She never moved but the tears turned to Joy. Resurrection new life, new light.

When the beloved dies, we see their lives in a new light the past difficulties are nothing. We bring to remembrance the affection, the warmth, being Held: Too simple or too difficult. As Jesus said: "Do this in remembrance of me".

In a few moments time we will renew our baptismal promises, we will be blessed with the waters through which Christ sacrificed our Passover and I will admit Ben and Bryce to Holy Communion.

And we will see resurrection, new life, see faith in a new light. There are those who say young people shouldn't receive Holy Communion until they understand. Change is always difficult – we've never done it like this before – the seven last words from the cross. Too difficult or too simple.

As you see Ben and Bryce admitted to Holy Communion, by the Bishop, who holds the office of the representative of the apostles in our day. Just remember, Mary Magdalene never moved but she turned her life around, she heard Jesus Holy Spirit, she saw God's Passover and she felt God's presence; Holy Communion so that we can say I have seen the Lord. Alleluia, Allelulia, Allelulia.

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Argyll and The Isles

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