



Women with Jesus at the Cross and the Tomb

Bible Study

[Please provide: musical accompaniment; Bibles, hymnals, and copies of the Bible study for attendees.]

Beginning with Ash Wednesday and for 40 days following, we are in the period of the church year called Lent. It is a time to remember the suffering, death, and burial in preparation for the resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. As we approach and journey through Lent, let us focus on the women who were present when Jesus was crucified on Calvary and later at His tomb.

Let us begin with prayer: Lord Jesus Christ, be with us as we study Your Word, meditating upon those women who were near You at the cross and the tomb. In Your holy name. Amen.

Sing “When I Survey the Wondrous Cross” LSB 425 or 426, TLH 175, LW 114 or 115

I. Standing Near the Cross – read **John 19:25-27**

- Four women are mentioned:
 - Mary, the mother of Jesus
 - His mother’s sister – tradition holds this is Salome, mother of James and John, the sons of Zebedee
 - Mary, the wife of Clopas – the only time she or Clopas are mentioned
 - Mary Magdalene

The women took a risk by being present at the cross. It took courage for them to stand there in the midst of the hatred and ridicule. Their attendance was intended to encourage Jesus.

Jesus’ mother, Mary, is experiencing what Simeon had predicted years before in Luke 2:35. As she stood there, her grief must have been nearly unbelievable. How did she survive, watching her son die before her eyes? Sometimes our hearts break when our children suffer or experience pain. Like Mary, how can we demonstrate concern for our child(ren)?

Jesus had delivered Mary Magdalene from demons (Mark 16:9, Luke 8:2). She had an attitude of gratitude and showed it by using her resources to assist Jesus in His ministry. She may have been a single woman as she had the time and resources to travel with the disciples.

Gratitude is not part of fallen human nature; it’s a behavior that must be learned. How can we have a spirit of gratitude? (Focus on God, not self; be grateful for even small things and even in the midst of suffering.)

II. Watching From a Distance

- A. At the cross – read **Matthew 27:55-56** or **Mark 15:40-41**
- Women mentioned:
 - Many women

- Mary Magdalene
- Mary, mother of James the younger and Joses (ESV calls him Joseph)
 - She followed Jesus and cared for His needs.
 - Her son, James, was one of the twelve disciples.
 - She was married to a man name Alphaeus (Luke 6:15).
 - She had another son, Matthew, who was a disciple (Mark 2:14).
- Salome, mother of Zebedee's sons James and John

How did Salome feel as she saw Jesus hanging there, especially after asking Him for special favors for her sons earlier?

Did anyone notice where these women were standing? They were watching from a distance, whereas earlier, some of them were near the cross when Jesus had spoken to His mother.

B. At the tomb – read **Mark 15:47 or **Luke 23:55-56****

- Two women mentioned:
 - Mary Magdalene
 - Mary, the mother of Joses and Joseph

They came to see where Jesus was laid. That was important as the body had to be prepared with spices for burial. The women were “watching,” first at the cross and then at the tomb.

What can we do as we watch and wait for our Lord's return? (Remain in the Word, partake of the Lord's Supper, be diligent in prayer for others and ourselves, use our time and talents for His glory) Look for specific ways this week to enhance your “watching” for the Lord.

III. At the Empty Tomb – read **Mark 16:1 or **Luke 24:10****

- Women mentioned:
 - Mary Magdalene
 - Mary, mother of James
 - Salome, mother of disciples, James and John
 - John was known as the Beloved and wrote the Gospel of John, Letters of 1, 2, and 3 John, and Revelation.
 - Tradition says Salome was Mary's sister so she would be Jesus' aunt.

These women were last at the cross, first at the tomb. What would be the emotions of these women as they beheld the empty tomb? Did they come to the tomb expecting to see Jesus alive? How has your faith upheld you in times of distress?

Do you remember to thank the Lord for keeping your faith strong in difficult times?

IV. The Report – read **Luke 24:9-11**

- Women mentioned:

- Mary Magdalene
- Susanna
- Joanna, who was a follower of Jesus (Luke 8:1-3)
 - She helped to support Jesus out of her own means.
 - She had experienced healing at Jesus' hand.
 - She was married to Cuza, the manager of Herod's household.
- Mary, the mother of James
- Other devout women

Sharing the good news of the resurrection was the first thing on their minds.

Think of someone you can share the Good News with this week.

V. Appearances

- One woman mentioned – read **John 20:11-18**
 - Mary Magdalene (Mark 16:9)
 - Characterized by some as a prostitute, the Bible says only that Jesus cast out seven demons from her.
 - Her response to grace from God was to follow Him.
 - She called Him, Rabboni – teacher, master, the strongest expression of reverent love.
- Many – read **Matthew 28:8-10**
 - The other women

Jesus' first two appearances after the resurrection were to His women followers. Given the lowly position of women in society in Jesus' day, what does His appearance to women first say about His understanding of the importance of women? How does that relate to you as a woman today? How has God's grace affected your life? How can you give thanks to the Lord for the grace He has bestowed upon you?

These faithful women were honored for their devotion. They came and saw, and then went and told. We, too, are invited to "come and see," but this is always followed by "go and tell."

Let us pray: Lord Jesus, thank You for our salvation procured for us by Your death and resurrection. May we use this Lenten season to meditate upon Your passion, and then rejoice at the news of Your resurrection on Easter Sunday. Be with each of us this day; guard and protect us at all times. In Your life-giving name we pray. Amen.

Sing "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross" LSB 425, TLH 175, LW 114 or 115
 or "My Song Is Love Unknown" LSB 430, LW 91
 or "Were You There" LSB 456, LW 505

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