



“ONE SUNDAY MORNING”

By Mary Mayko

John 20:1 CEV “One Sunday morning while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been rolled away from the entrance.” V.11b “Mary stood crying outside the tomb.” v.16 “Then Jesus said to her, “Mary!” She turned and said to him, “Rabboni.” The Aramaic word “Rabboni” means “Teacher.”

From darkness to light, from death to life! This was one very unusual Sunday morning! How sorrowful Mary was in that early morning dawn. She was totally surprised to see the tomb open and empty! In the midst of our sadness we are often blind to the truth that surrounds us! She expected only death, and became very confused when she did not find it! The open tomb, what could it mean?

The evidence of change and of life was in plain sight, yet she missed it! Before we think how unobserving she was, think of how often we too, are unaware of the real events all around us! When our eyes are downcast and full of tears, we can miss the blessings the LORD has for us! Mary was by the tomb, the place of the dead, yet in that garden, we read it was teeming with life! The women were there, some of the disciples had come, angels were present, and last of all, the Giver of Life, Christ Jesus called out her name, “Mary!”

Her sadness turned into joy! Her thoughts of death and loss suddenly changed her Sunday morning forever! He was alive! Do you recall the very first time you became fully aware that Christ was finally alive in your own heart? The joy of His Presence became the center of everything important to you! The forgiveness and cleansing brought a new strength and meaning to you! He was and is alive in you!

A Sunday morning miracle that occurred in that garden over 2000 years ago, when Mary met Jesus and knew for sure He was alive and near her, still happens every time we really meet the Risen Christ for the first time! Mary heard the voice of Jesus calling out her name! She called Him “Rabboni” or Teacher. He is still our Teacher today. The Holy Spirit guides us through our times of death and darkness until our eyes are opened to His Light and Glory!

On Sunday mornings all over the world, Believers gather to celebrate our Risen Savior! Once a year, many people celebrate Easter Sunday, but are as blind to real life, as Mary was before she heard Him speak her name! If you listen closely today, perhaps it is your name He is calling! You can turn to Him with joy as Mary did, or continue on in your walk of darkness. The choice is yours!

One Sunday morning, Jesus came from death to Life that we may live forever with Him. Want to come along? He’s waiting for your answer!

John 1: 12 CEV “But some people accepted Him and put their faith in Him, so He gave them the right to be the children of God.”

“FAILURES WON’T FINISH US!

By Mary Mayko



Luke 22:32-34 CEV “But Simon, I have prayed that your faith will be strong. And when you have come back to me, help the others. Peter said, “Lord, I am ready to go to jail and even to die with you.” Jesus replied, “Peter, I tell you that before a rooster crows tomorrow morning, you will say three times that you don’t know me.”

When we look at Peter as he followed Jesus, we often see ourselves! He had great moments of success and as a result pride rose up in his heart and mind! Other times he failed miserably and

grieved deeply over his mistakes. The LORD looked beyond both of those experiences and saw Peter’s potential and reached out to encourage him.

Peter struggled with his sinfulness and failures. We can identify with him a lot better than someone who seems to be “perfect”! He was interested in everything concerning the Lord and asked many questions. Sometimes people tell us we do not have faith if when we ask God why certain things happen or what He wants us to do. The Word tells us wise men will always seek for the answers they need! Peter anguished over his pride and sought forgiveness. His life reassures us in our own times of failures, that God stands ready, willing and able to forgive and restore us!

Our failures will not finish us, but they will teach us valuable lessons. Sometimes we feel like giving up on ourselves or others, yet the LORD still has work for us to do. The enemy of our souls will try to keep us from going forward, but don’t waste time or stop your work to listen to him!

All the disciples saw Jesus do many miracles, but when Jesus came walking on the water, Peter was the only one with enough faith to step out of the boat! He made it fine until he took his eyes off Jesus and looked down at the water! The Spirit of God had already revealed to Peter that Jesus was the Messiah they had longed for, yet that spiritual insight did not shield him from making future mistakes and failures! *Sometimes we fluctuate between being on fire for the Lord and failing Him miserably!*

Peter loved Jesus, but was often carried away by his emotions. He cut off Malchus' ear in the Garden to defend Jesus, yet when the soldiers took Jesus away, Peter denied he even knew Him, three times! [Luke 22:55-62] What a failure, how Peter went out and cried over what he had done! Look at how gracious Jesus was to have the women tell the disciples *and* Peter, He would meet them in Galilee. [after He had risen from the grave]

Back in Galilee, Jesus did exactly as He said He would do, but it seems He was a little slow, so it wasn't long before Peter got restless and decided to go fishing again! Be careful of falling back into your old lifestyle, especially if you are a Leader! The other disciples followed Peter into the boat. They were disappointed when they did not catch any fish. Jesus called out to them from the shore and told them to cast the net on the other side of the boat. Clearly, the LORD kept His word! The net nearly broke as it was filled to overflowing with fish when they drew it up! Peter then recognized Jesus and jumped into the water, swimming over to meet Him! [John 21:1-17]

During the dinner conversation, Jesus challenged Peter to "Feed My sheep!" three times. The guilt of having denied Jesus three times had interfered with Peter's effectiveness in ministry. When we do not face our failures and sins and resolve them, Satan will use tormenting thoughts to hold us back from God's plan for us!

Peter's life was changed as the LORD personally affirmed and anointed him to minister. In ACTS we see a bold, yet humble man powerfully bringing honor to the LORD! Peter taught and preached with great authority! He had seen the Glory of God, the Risen Christ! Nothing, no failures or threats could keep him silent now!

Mark 16:15, 20 LB "And He told them, "You are to go into all the world and preach the Good News to everyone everywhere." And the disciples went everywhere preaching, and the LORD was with them and confirmed what they said by the miracles that followed their messages."

How many times have we failed the LORD and feel we can no longer be used by Him? God is not finished with us yet! His Resurrection power can operate within you and influence your daily life. The Holy Spirit enables us to see God as greater in us than any of our failures! He will graduate us from self glory to glorifying God! Are we allowing His gifts to flow through us? Remember, failures do NOT finish us! God does!

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“WINDS OF DIVERSITY”

BY Rev. J.K. Golding

“He causeth His wind to blow” Psalm 147:18b

Deep in the heart of Maine, as in the rolling hills of Western Virginia, and in the picturesque countryside of our great Nation’s Western States, smoke can be seen curling up to the skies from wood burning stoves.

What a sight it is! Rising from the chimney, early in the fall with a background of leaves in their autumn colors decorated with ice sparkling in the early morning sun. When in the deep snows of winter, you see that beautiful light gray smoke against a clear sky.

But! On a windy day!!! An individual learns a great deal by this smoke! When it leaves the chimney, the wind causes it to turn and go with it, in whatever direction the wind is blowing. The closer to the chimney top it turns and goes, the harder the wind is blowing and the greater the wind chill! The straighter up and higher the smoke goes before it turns, the lighter the winds, and the lesser degree in the wind chill.

Of course, one can easily see the direction in which it is blowing, so one knows the future days’ weather. For example, N, NE, or E, will be foul weather. Southwest it will be warming up to some degree.

But, I guess the most fascinating of all, are the days of variable winds. The smoke comes dancing out of the chimney twisting and turning, irregular and fickle it goes in every direction, allowing the atmosphere surrounding it to dictate its’ direction, until it scatters and disappears.

Poor city folks can’t go to a window and look across the fields at their neighbor’s chimney! They have to depend on the weatherman on the six o’clock News for all this information!

We learn a great deal more about wind when we examine the Bible. Let’s take this picture and paint it in a fashion that relates to us spiritually. We are the chimney, with the Holy Spirit burning within. Out of our mouth [chimney top] comes words,

attitudes and confessions [our smoke] and into the atmosphere, our circumstances, problems, fears, reverses and pains.

What is being seen and heard by the people around us? What is the CHILL FACTOR, as felt by the LORD?

In Exodus 14 we have the parting of the Red Sea by “a great east wind.” Israel is walking across on DRY GROUND in the midst of the sea, [14:16] and Egypt pursuing them and being swept away! After the Israelites crossed, God caused the great walls of water to close on the Egyptians. [14:23-29] Israel stood there and saw with their own eyes this great miracle, - all the dead Egyptians they had feared. The Word says they respected the LORD, understood his power, and believed Him and His servant Moses. [14:30-31]

They traveled THREE DAYS after this sight and found no water. When they did, it was the bitter water of Marah and they could not drink it. Did they pray? Seek the LORD? Look to Him for help? Trust Him to come to their aid? NO, they murmured against God and Moses, crying “What shall we drink?” [Exodus 15:22-24] It was up to Moses to seek the LORD!!

Are we a Christian that is always on the phone, seeking another for help? Answers? Do we seek the LORD for ourselves? In this case, the LORD showed Moses a tree to cast into the bitter water, and make it sweet. If we look to Calvary & put Him into the situation, the LORD will make a way.

The next stop was Elim, there was plenty of water and palm trees here, so they could take a rest and be restored. [15:27] But they, like us, must journey on!

On the FIFTEENTH day after leaving Egypt - [two weeks] they come to the wilderness of Sin. The whole congregation of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron. Listen to what they said: “Would to God we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt when we sat by the flesh pots, and when we did eat bread to the full, for ye have brought us forth into the wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger.” [16:1-3]

Does it matter to God if we murmur and complain? When we murmur, we are showing a sullen dissatisfaction with things, our life in general - money, home, family etc. All that God has given us, and the place in which He has positioned us - so we are murmuring against Him!!

In John 6:43 Jesus forbids murmuring, “Murmur [complain] NOT among yourselves.” In Phil.2:14 Paul says: Do ALL things without murmurings and disputing. [arguing] In Exodus 16:7 Moses reminds the people the Lord hears our murmurings against the Lord: And what are we, [Moses and Aaron] that ye murmur against us?”

Have you considered: God sends the winds - those in our life, as well as those in the Heavens? Psalms 147:18b “He causeth the wind to blow, and the waters flow.” Wind in the natural blows chaff away. Psalm 1:4 “Like the chaff which the wind driveth away.”

Some of our greatest spiritual lessons are learned by the winds that swirl about us. The Psalmist reminds us that in Ps. 135:7 “He causeth the vapors [mists] to ascend from the ends of the earth. He maketh lightnings for the rain; He bringeth the WIND out of His treasuries.” [His own Resources]

Wind! It cannot be seen, yet it dries the earth, drives great ships, directs our weather, removes flood waters, and brings Rain!!

In Luke 12:54, 55 we read how significant the movement of it can be, according to Jesus: “And He said also to the people, when ye see a cloud rise out of the west, straightway ye say, there cometh a shower; and so it is. And when ye see the south wind blow, ye say, there will be heat, and so it cometh to pass.”

In the Book of Revelation, a picture of the great day of “His wrath” [6:17] and when the seals are opened [:12] we read in [7:1] “After these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth; holding the four winds of the earth, that the WIND SHOULD NOT BLOW on the earth, nor the sea, nor any tree.”

Take a few moments to consider the significance of that! As your testimony flows out of your mouth into all the variable winds - others learn a great deal about your REAL walk with the LORD! The winds of our world are changing daily, politically, economically, spiritually, climatically, as well as technologically.

What is the CHILL FACTOR to those listening to you?? To the LORD??

**He’s a good God - walk close to Him!
Rev. J. Kehl Golding**