

Sunday Celebration (April 11, 2010)

**John 20**

***"Power Perfected in Weakness"***

**INTRO** ... Power & Weakness

THIS WEEK ... Human Weakness & the Call of God — **Can You Really Do What God's Called You To Do?**

## **THE WEAKNESS OF MAN**

**John 20:1-10** ... Peter & John and the Other Disciples

John MacArthur sited 5 Characteristics of "the 12"

**John 20:24-29** ...John 20 highlights the absence of the 11 ... and then ZOOMS IN on Unbelief in THOMAS

***What Kind of Men Are These? .... They are WEAK***

**John 20:11-18** .... Weakness in the form of "Mary Magdalene"

Introduction to Mary Magdalene...

**Luke 8:1-3** Soon afterward he went on through cities and villages, proclaiming and bringing the good news of the kingdom of God. And the twelve were with him, 2 and also some women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities: Mary, called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out, 3 and Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod's household manager, and Susanna, and many others, who provided for them out of their means.

***During the "DRESS REHEARSAL" she is WEEPING and OUT OF TOUCH with what God is Doing***

***- Why is She Weeping? ...***

“ If Mary had found the seal of the tomb unbroken, and her Master’s body lying cold within, she might well have wept! The very absence of the body which made her weep, was a token for good, and a cause of joy for herself and all mankind.” **J.C. Ryle**, “Expository Thoughts of John”, vol 3, p. 413

***2 CHARACTERISTICS of WEAKNESS: (1) She’s Weeping over what she should be rejoicing over; (2) She’s unaware of the nearness of God***

***.... Frequently Our Response when we CLING to Something God INTENDED TO DIE!***

“ How often we are anxious when there is no just cause for our anxiety! ...Two-thirds of the things we fear in life never happen at all, and two-thirds of the tears we shed are thrown away, and shed in vain. Let us pray for more faith and patience, and allow more time for the full development of God’s purposes. Let us believe that things are often working together for our peace and joy, which seem at one time to contain nothing but bitterness and sorrow.” **J.C. Ryle**, “Expository Thoughts on John”, vol 3, p. 412

***What Kind of Woman Was Mary Magdalene? .... She Was WEAK!***

## **THE CALL OF GOD**

... This is GOD’S CORE TEAM — “The 12” Will Lay the Foundations of the Church  
... the 120 Will Plant the First Church in Jerusalem in a little over a Month!

- **Mary Magdalene ...**

- What kind of past do you think this woman had?

– The Hope of Redemption ... Her “NATURAL PAST” does not define her GOD-GIVEN FUTURE.

“The resurrection is the keystone that holds the arch of the gospel and the Christian faith in place. It is amazing that Jesus hands the announcement of this keystone to a woman; she is to be the very first person to put it in place. Such is the wonder of the gospel and the depth of Christ’s love.” **Mark Johnston**, “Let’s Study John”, p. 255

***"Too many live their lives under the governance of the past rather than the pronouncement of the gospel!"***

- **The Twelve**

“These were perfectly ordinary men in every way. Not one of them was renowned for scholarship or great erudition. They had no track record as orators or theologians. In fact, they were outsiders as far as the religious establishment of Jesus’ day was concerned. They were not outstanding because of any natural talents or intellectual abilities. On the contrary, they were all too prone to mistakes, misstatements, wrong attitudes, lapses of faith, and bitter failure. ... They spanned the political spectrum. One was a former Zealot— a radical, determined to overthrow Roman rule. But another had been a tax collector— virtually a traitor to the Jewish nation and in collusion with Rome. At least four and possibly seven were fishermen and close friends from Capernaum, probably having known one another from childhood. ... Yet with all their faults and character flaws—as remarkably ordinary as they were— these men carried on a ministry after Jesus’ ascension that left an indelible impact on the world.” **John MacArthur**, “Twelve Ordinary Men”, p. xii

- **All of Us**

**1Cor 1:26-31**

2 Tim 1:8-9 “share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God, who saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but because of his own purpose and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began”

## **The “Layers” of God’s Calling**

**1Pet 2:9**

1 Cor 10:31 So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God

Col 3:12-14, 17-23

***God's Powerful Calling is Joined to Us— With All of Our WEAKNESS! ... Because Power is Perfected In Weakness!***

“ There was no second string, no backup players, no plan B if the Twelve should fail. The strategy sounds risky in the extreme. In earthly terms, the founding of the church and the spread of the gospel message depended entirely on those twelve ordinary men with their many obvious weaknesses... But Christ knew what He was doing. From His divine perspective, the ultimate success of the strategy actually depended on the Holy Spirit working in those men to accomplish His sovereign will.” **John MacArthur**, “Twelve Ordinary Men”, p. xv

– What Made the Difference was God’s Sovereign Will and the Empowerment of the Holy Spirit. The fumbling cast of players in John 20 will soon be unstoppable, courageous, wise, understanding the Scriptures, (Acts 2 on)

**Isa 46:8-11** “Remember this and stand firm, recall it to mind, you transgressors, 9 remember the former things of old; for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me, 10 declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done, saying, ‘My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose,’ 11 calling a bird of prey from the east, the man of my counsel from a far country. I have spoken, and I will bring it to pass; I have purposed, and I will do it.

Some of us need this for how we see our own lives...

Some of us need this for how we see others that God has called...

“ Let us learn from the case before us, to make allowances for wide varieties in the inward character of believers. To do so will save us much trouble in the journey of life, and prevent many an uncharitable thought. Let us not judge brethren harshly, and set them down in a low place, because they do not see or feel things exactly as we see and feel, and because things do not affect or strike them just as they affect and strike us. The flowers in the Lord’s garden are not all of one colour and one scent, though they are all planted by one Spirit. The subjects of His kingdom are not all exactly of one tone and temperament, though they all love the same Saviour, and their names are in the same book of life. The church of Christ has some in its ranks who are like Peter, and some who are like John; and a place for all, and a work for all to do. Let us love all who love Christ in sincerity, and thank God that they love Him at all.” **J.C. Ryle**, “Expository Thoughts on John”, vol 3, p. 392