

Resurrection Appearances – 2:-

As we look at the record of events at the tomb on that first Easter Day in the Gospel of John, we find that he concentrates on a few individuals rather than a group of women and ‘the disciples’. My comments on the visit of Peter and John to the tomb can be found at [ctrch.org.uk/lent2022/Easter Day.pdf](http://ctrch.org.uk/lent2022/Easter%20Day.pdf)

Read John chapter 20, verses 11 – 18:-

After the two disciples had left, Mary appears to be alone in the garden. However, when she looks into the tomb there are two angels visible to her (why were Peter and John unable to see them?). As they spoke to her (verse 13) she must have sensed a presence behind her and turning round she thought the person was the gardener! I have some questions about the resurrected body of the Lord Jesus because it does appear to be the same, yet different. At first sight He was unrecognised when He appeared to Mary (John chapter 20, verse 14,) to the two disciples on the road to Emmaus (Luke chapter 24, verses 13 – 16 ff.) and at lakeside (John chapter 21, verses 4 – 5). In all these instances there is a lack of expectation of the Lord’s presence.

Mary thought she was talking to ‘the gardener’. She was not even thinking about a resurrection, only the loss of his earthly body. Maybe her deeply felt emotions blocked the spiritual reality. It is only when the Lord Jesus spoke to her, at the level at which she could hear what was said, that she understands the reality of His presence. Notice that the Saviour actually deals with Mary at a very human level. If she is unable to respond to the physical absence of his body in the tomb then she can respond to the very personal level as he calls her by name. Notice also that she was not allowed to hang onto him! She was to be a witness to his risen life as she shares with the other disciples.

However the testimony of the women was not believed by the apostles as a group – see Luke chapter 24, verses 10 – 11. (I wonder about John? - see John chapter 20, verse 8. Was he too young to have much influence or was he still debating if it was true?).

We have no record of that first Easter Day until the afternoon as two of the disciples walk (back home?) to Emmaus. The distance is estimated at about 7 miles (60 stadia). (some texts have a distance of 20 miles = 160 stadia but if the couple had already walked 20 miles to the village, even if they were strong walkers they would not have set out to walk 20 miles back to Jerusalem in the dark!)

Read Luke chapter 24, verse 13 – 35:-

Again there was no recognition of the stranger who came up to them on the road. He shows himself to have a very deep understanding of the Old Testament scriptures

“and beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.” (Luke 24, verse 27). Again it is the familiar actions of the Lord Jesus which opens the disciples eyes. He assumed the role of the host *“took the bread and blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. And their eyes were opened and they recognised him”*. (Luke 24, verses 30 and 31).

Alleluia! Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

*Lo! Jesus meets us, risen from the tomb;
Lovingly he greets us, scatters fear and gloom;
let the Church with gladness, hymns of triumph sing;
for her Lord now liveth, death hath lost its sting.
Thine be the glory, risen conquering Son,
Endless is the vict'ry, thou o'er death hast won.*

*No more we doubt thee, glorious Prince of life;
life is naught without thee; aid us in our strife;
make us more than conquerors, through thy deathless love:
bring us safe through Jordan to thy home above.
Thine be the glory, risen conquering Son,
Endless is the vict'ry, thou o'er death hast won.*

Edmond Budry 1884