Easter Sunday 17th April 2022

Luke 24: 1-12 Soliloquey of Mary Magdalene in the garden

I don’t know what to do. I don’t know where to go. I am so confused!

I feel so alone.

How I miss Jesus – my heart aches from the loss.

He was my best friend – and yet those words don’t even do justice to the feelings I have for Him.

Nothing like a boyfriend, or a betrothed, nothing like that – but something even deeper.

More like a brother, but closer even than that.

No-one else saw me in the same way that He did. He knew my past, every detail – and yet He accepted me.

He forgave me of my past actions – but in a way beyond what we have been taught. It was always the case that our transgressions would be punished – public humiliation generally. I accept that – but Jesus saw beyond what I was doing – what anyone does – to the reason behind the action.

He saw the pain, isolation, fear, vulnerability behind choices made – or orders taken. Even on the cross whilst dying, He asked God to forgive those who had crucified Him, or mocked Him.

He never condoned wrong-doing, but He also did not make us live in our sin. He did not condemn us to always being that person, reminding us that we were …….well, whatever sin anyone had succumbed to.

No, He saw me as a woman who had future choices to make, He believed I could make better choices. And knowing someone believes in you, well that helps you make right choices!

He saw the potential of what I could become……who knows what that will be now!

Peter, John and the rest of them all try – they are friends to me. I know that – but since Friday, that horrific day, everything has changed.

Especially after what Judas Iscariot did, no-one knows who to trust now.

John, such a sweet young man, he is so caring. But his first devotion is to Mary, the mother of Jesus. He has taken to heart the final command Jesus gave to him – to accept Mary as his mother. And so He should, Mary has lost her eldest son.

I’m not jealous of the care and support she is receiving – at least I don’t think I’m jealous……just feeling so alone!

All of us have been through so much over the last few years – but fear has swept through the whole group.

Afraid of the Romans, afraid of the Pharisees and religious leaders and now wary of each other. If Judas could betray Jesus, to offer Him to the hands of our adversaries – how can any of us feel safe?

Peter was usually the one who would have something to say; not always wise, but always something……..but he has changed too. Gone very quiet. I mean it’s almost as though he doesn’t trust what will come out of his mouth now. Who knows what happened to him over the last couple of days! But he has gone very quiet, and slightly removed from us all.

I suppose we all feel alone, and scared.

And confused.

Life with Jesus was always unpredictable, we never knew where we would end up, who we would speak with, or what miracles we would witness – so many.

Such goodness and compassion – why did the religious leaders feel so threatened?

We always felt more in danger from them than the Romans!

It was them, God’s chosen people, who rejected Jesus. Perhaps they thought that Jesus would lead an uprising – overthrow the Roman’s by force and war.

I think that is what Judas wanted – and when he saw Jesus was never going to do that – I mean, riding on a donkey was a clear sign He was no battlefield warrior – well, Judas must have felt deceived.

Although Jesus NEVER said that was His way – just the expectation of Judas and others like him.

Just as much as Judas wanted that – the Pharisees didn’t! They were quite settled with the Romans. They were given the power over the Jews, to keep them in order – and I think they liked that status, that power, that comfortable leadership.

The only way they could see to keep that was to eradicate Jesus. His teaching was so very different.

Humble, peaceful and yet with so much authority. He was more than simply a mouthpiece of God – like He knew our Father, personally.

Not book knowledge, or following laws, but knowing the desire of God – and why wouldn’t He. The time He would spend in prayer. Not just a list of wants, but a real conversation.

Instead of listening, the Pharisees just wanted Jesus gone. But to pursue Him to such an horrific death, crucifixion, the ultimate public humiliation. So cruel. And for absolutely no crime! They led the Romans and the crowd to crucify an innocent man. Murderers!

And yet, I know that Jesus would not continually see them as that – He would see them as individuals who made mistakes, but would let them have opportunity to do right on their next choice! True forgiveness again.

Yes, life was unpredictable with Jesus. But His death, at least after enduring such pain on the cross I thought that death would bring Him peace.

I wasn’t looking forward to seeing His lifeless body, to minister to Him by preparing His body with spices – but at least I could have seen Him laid to rest.

But I did not even get that. His body has gone!

I know, we have been told that after three days Jesus would be raised again. Another pearl of wisdom that in truth we didn’t understand. Would the disciples have taken it? But for what purpose?

And I saw the disciples, real shock at the news of the disappearance. And what would the benefit have been? Yes, it may trick the Romans – but our belief was that Jesus was the Son of God, really and truly. What would be the purpose of trickery?

What could we follow it up with? None of us believe in lies or spreading lies. No, that serves no purpose.

Perhaps the Romans took it? Or the Pharisees? But why? If they were frightened that there was any truth in the claim, this would only enhance it.

There is no reason.

Where is He? I feel so alone, so confused.

Oh, are you the gardener? Where have they taken the body of Jesus? Did you see who took Him, where they have taken Him?

Jesus? Jesus, is that You? It is! It really is You , Jesus! My Lord, my Lord, You are risen!