

20200412 (Easter Sunday)

Psalms 118:1-2, 14-24; John 20:1-18

While it was still dark

## INTRODUCTION

### 1. Are we going to get through this?

According to Dr. Alan Wolfelt, director of the Center for Loss and Life Transition in Colorado, one caller asked him a question that is on the hearts of many right now: "Are we going to get through this?"

It became obvious as the conversation continued that she was experiencing feelings of grief and in search of borrowing some much-needed hope.

### 2. Conversations among disciples after the crucifixion

Their leader had been arrested. Their teacher who had understood them died on the shameful cross. The Saviour who had cast demons out of Mary Magdalene was laid in a tomb.

It became obvious among the disciples as the conversation continued, "Are we going to get through this?"

They were experiencing feelings of grief and in search of hope.

Theme: What did Easter mean for them? How different does this Easter mean for us as we are going through the COVID-19 crisis?

## BODY

### 1 Devastated by loss

#### 1.1 Bereaved women struggle and grieve under Sabbath regulation

People in times of Jesus believed that the dead person's spirit remained in the tomb for three days. Thus, they usually visited the tomb during the first three days after the burial. However, Sabbath regulations prohibited such visits on the Sabbath.

Imagine the women's loss, grief, and suffering while they had remained in their house until the Sabbath ended!

## 1.2. Bereaved Canadians struggle and adapt and grieve under COVID-19 measures (By Holly McKenzie-Sutter, The Canadian Press Sun., March 29, 2020)

The global COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted the grieving process for many across Canada. Those grappling with losing a loved one are also contending with travel restrictions, isolation and limits on gatherings keeping them apart from family and friends when they need them most.

2 And now, it was...

### 2.1. Darkness vs New day

“Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark” (v.1).

It is interesting to see the comparison: it was still dark vs. the first day of the week.

The sentence “It was still dark” shows the women were going through life feeling bad, sad, and lonely.

In contrast, the Gospels speak of this not as the third day after the crucifixion but as the first day of the week. Perhaps the gospel writers want to emphasize the new day begins by the resurrection of Jesus.

### 2.2 The first day of our family devotion

As the COVID-19 started to lock down our family in March, we decided to start our family devotion time. We’d tried it a few times, but we failed to implement it in our routine. However, due to the COVID-19 crisis, we’ve been able to practice it almost everyday. Although the COVID-19 pandemic brings us moments of anxiety and pain, it also gives us an opportunity to heal the broken relationship and bring new life. It is a new beginning.

## CONCLUSION

“Are we going to get through this?”

After seeing the risen Christ, the answer of the women was “Yes.”

The life of Mary had changed from the darkness of loneliness, exhaustion, and despair to the light of togetherness, empowerment, and joy.

I am told that people have been reaching more people than they used to.

They have been making more phone calls, sending more emails, and celebrating with cards and photos.

Easter Sunday of 2020 is still dark due to the virus, but it is the moment of deep gratitude as Christians because Jesus is risen indeed. Like Jesus on Easter, we too will rise after we beat COVID-19.

Jesus Christ is risen today! Amen!