

The Prattmont Church of Christ is just what the name suggests, a church that belongs to Christ. We are not a denomination; we are simply a group of Christians trying very hard to practice the teachings of our Head, Jesus Christ. The New Testament offers a complete pattern for what each local church should be like—its organization, its worship, its work, etc. We are committed to following that pattern. We cordially invite you to attend our services. We would also welcome any comments or questions about this bulletin.

**TIMES OF SERVICES:**

*Sunday*

Bible Study.....9:00 A.M.  
 Worship.....10:00 A.M.  
 Training Class.....5:00 P.M.  
 Worship.....6:00 P.M.

*Wednesday:*

Bible Study.....7:00 P.M.



*Weekly Bulletin*  
 April 7, 2019

**Clinging to the Master**

*by Irvin Himmel*

Mary Magdalene was the first to see Jesus after his resurrection (Mk. 16:9). When he spoke to her, she supposed that he was the gardener. It was not until he called her by name that Mary turned and said to him, “Rabboni,” which means Master.

Jesus said to Mary, “Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God” (John 20:17).

Why did Jesus forbid Mary Magdalene to touch him? This question is puzzling especially in view of the Master’s having said to others following his resurrection, “Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me, have” (Luke 24:39).

Also, it was after his resurrection and before he ascended to the Father that Jesus said to Thomas, “Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing” (John 20:27). For what

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reason would some be invited to handle his body while Mary was forbidden to touch him?

Shortly after the appearance to Mary, Jesus met certain women as they went to tell his disciples about the empty tomb, "And they came and held him by the feet, and worshiped him" (Matt. 28:10). Why were they allowed to hold him by the feet but Mary was prohibited from touching him?

The key to this puzzle seems to be in the meaning of the word "touch" as it is used in John 20:17. It denotes much more than reaching forth with the hands to make contact. It signifies "to cling to, lay hold of" (Vine). The New King James Version renders it, "Do not cling to Me." The New International Version translates it, "Do not hold on to me."

Mary longed for unbroken fellowship with her Master. She wanted to cling to him. Jesus told her not to hold on to him, for he had not yet ascended to the Father. The constant communion which she desired must wait until after his return to heaven. Jesus would not resume his daily visible association with his followers. He would soon leave this physical realm to be with the Father on high. The fellowship which we now have with Christ is far richer and need not be interrupted.

Now that Jesus Christ has ascended to the Father and is seated at his right hand in the heavens, we should cling to him and hold to him.

(1) We have fellowship with Christ. Through submission to the gospel we are brought into a shared relationship with our Savior. "And truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ" (1 John. 1:3). This divine and precious communion is sustained by our walking in the light, confessing our sins, keeping his commandments, loving one another, abiding in him, believing in him, and overcoming the world.

(2) The Spirit of Christ dwells in our hearts by faith. "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts,

crying 'Abba, Father'" (Gal. 4:6). Paul prayed for his brethren that they might "be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith" (Eph. 3:16-17). "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom" (Col. 3:16).

(3) We must hold on to our profession of him. "Seeking then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession" (Heb. 4:14). One who confesses that Jesus is Lord should stick to that acknowledgment. "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering" (Heb. 10:23).

(4) We must cling to the Lord. The converts to Christ at Antioch of Syria were exhorted by Barnabas, "that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord" (Acts 11:23). The true disciple continues with the Master, abides in him, and refuses to turn loose.

To Mary Magdalene the crucifixion of Jesus was a horrible experience. Perhaps her hopes were shattered. To see the Master alive brought joy indescribable. She yearned for his abiding presence, but Jesus was not long to remain in the visible flesh and bone body. She must not hold on to him. Soon he would ascend to the Father. After the ascension and the sending of the Spirit to guide the apostles, uninterrupted fellowship began to be offered through the gospel. No longer does the Master forbid clinging to him. Through the message of the apostles he encourages us to come to him, to abide in him, and to hold constantly to him.

I will cling to my Savior and never depart,  
I will joyfully journey each day,  
With a song on my lips and a song in my heart,  
That my sins have been taken away.

Via *Guardian of Truth* XXXIII: 8, p. 244, April 20, 1989