

A WORD WITH YOU - By Ron Hutchcraft

9794 – “Through the Darkness With Jesus”

Matthew 27:55

July 25, 2024

Years ago I was flying like a gazillion miles a year it seemed like. And they gave me this coupon along the way. It entitled me to an upgrade to a first class seat on a future flight. Now that was a privilege that was really appreciated, especially when you've got major work to get done. They even let me board before any other passengers. I got a lot of dirty looks, but it was nice. And that meant I could get right to work on the plane instead of standing in line.

Now you could be saying, "Well, aren't you special?" Well listen, there's nothing special about me that gets me these special privileges, except that when you're a frequent flier on this airline, they give this kind of reward to anyone who flies a lot and does it consistently with them. See, the airlines want to train us to think one simple thought, customer loyalty pays off!

I'm Ron Hutchcraft and I want to have **A WORD WITH YOU** today about **“Through the Darkness With Jesus.”**

The benefits belong to those who keep traveling with the same people. And long before there were airlines, some Jewish women discovered that as they followed Jesus. Our word for today from the Word of God is from Matthew 27, we're beginning with verse 55. The scene: the crucifixion of Jesus, where most of those who had been with Jesus had taken off. But the Bible says, "Many women were there, watching from a distance. They had followed Jesus from Galilee to care for His needs. Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Jesus." They'd followed Jesus loyally through all those journeys, all those miracles, all those life-changing lessons, and the glory of Palm Sunday only five days earlier. And now, when it looks as if all is lost and there is no reason to hang on, there they are at the cross.

Jesus has died now; it is over. Even though Jesus is buried in a borrowed tomb, the Bible says, "Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were sitting there opposite the tomb." Still loyal, when all hope seems to be gone. Then, of course, on that incredible Resurrection Day, "Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb." Because of their tenacious loyalty to Jesus, these women (not any of Jesus' twelve disciples) are the first to see the empty tomb.

And then the greatest joy of all, "The women hurried away from the tomb, afraid yet filled with joy, and ran to tell His disciples. Suddenly Jesus met them." What may be the greatest thrill, the greatest privilege in all of human history, to be the first ones to ever see Jesus alive again! Those who have been His loyal followers through it all—they get

that honor; they get the privilege! Like a passenger loyal to one airline, they enjoy benefits that only the loyal experience.

Because they've stuck with Jesus when there seemed to be no reason to, they get to see Him as no others have seen Him, and they experience the unspeakable joy that is reserved for those who were faithful when it was totally dark. And you know, that is still the experience of those who will stay with Jesus through the valley, the victories, the pain, the unanswered questions, the as yet unanswered prayers. When you do, you get to see Jesus in all His power and all of His glory.

But maybe for you, the resurrection day hasn't come yet. You're still in the time of the cross right now, or the time of the tomb, the time where there seems to be no hope, no reason. Maybe you're suffering from faithfulness fatigue. You've hung on, but it's getting harder to keep hanging on. And the Lord knows how hard it is right now.

So He has sent you this reminder that the greatest benefits go to those who stay with Jesus, no matter what. He has some wonderful blessings, some unspeakable joy, and some tremendous rewards for you if you'll stay faithful for a few more miles. In the words of Galatians 6:9, "Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.

The best rewards Jesus has to give are for those who fly faithfully with Him through it all.

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