

## THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

NOVEMBER 30TH, 2025 // GOSPEL OF MARK

### HE HAS RISEN! (MARK 16:1-8) IT'S OVER, RIGHT?

The same three women mentioned at Jesus' crucifixion (15:40) brought spices to anoint His body early in the morning.

- The anointing was an act of love and devotion, and it would reduce the smell of decomposition in the heat. They loved Jesus and followed Him, but **they thought the story was over.**

#### "WHO WILL ROLL AWAY THE STONE... FOR US?"

The women were aware a stone was placed over the tomb where Jesus' body was laid (15:46-47) but were not aware of what had transpired before they arrived (Matthew 27:62-66; 28:2).

- 1st Century manuscripts indicate the stone would have weighed 1½-2 tons and was so large that **"20 men could not roll it away"** (*Bezae manuscripts; Cambridge library in England*).

#### "HE HAS RISEN! HE IS NOT HERE."

The women entered the tomb, encountered two angels (Luke 24:4), and were alarmed. **The angels testified of the work that was taking place behind the scenes in the tomb.**

- Though we may not see God at work, that does not mean He is not working. **God is working on our behalf in a way that we cannot fully grasp** (Jeremiah 29:11; Romans 8:28).

### INVITATION AND DIRECTIVE

The women were invited to **"see the place where they put him,"** then to **"go, tell his disciples and Peter."**

- The women were directed by the angel to go and **invite the disciples and Peter to meet the resurrected Jesus in Galilee** (14:28), where He would give them final instructions before ascending back into Heaven.

### REMAINING SILENT WHILE PROCESSING

Mark records that the women fled from the tomb, trembling and overwhelmed with astonishment.

- We know that the women did in fact report what they were told to the disciples (Mark 16:11; Luke 24:9), so when Mark says, **"they said nothing to anyone,"** it means **they were not trying to rationalize their experience between themselves or with others.**

### PREFACE (MARK 16:9-20)

#### ARE VERSES 9-20 PART OF THE ORIGINAL TEXT?

The earliest complete copies of Mark in Greek, as well as about 100 other ancient manuscripts translated into other languages, end with verse 8.

- If the early church fathers, into the 4th Century, state that Mark ends with verse 8, should we also consider verses 9-20 as not being part of the original text?

#### SHOULD VERSES 9-20 BE INCLUDED IN MARK?

There are variations found in other manuscripts with two other endings. Though the endings do not contradict each other, one is shorter and the other has additions. Since 1/3 of the vocabulary is different from the rest of Mark, and there is an awkward grammatical transition between Mark 16:8 and 16:9, most contemporary scholars reject these verses as original.

#### IF MARK DIDN'T WRITE IT, WHO DID?

It is possible that vs. 9-20 were added later by scribes, believing the original ending was lost and wanting to provide a more satisfactory ending using Matthew's and Luke's Gospel accounts.

- The question of who wrote the ending of Mark's Gospel **should not push us into a place of questioning the divine inspiration of the text** (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

### LOOKING AT BOTH SIDES

Many early Christian writers have referred to this passage in their writings, showing that many early Christians knew about this passage and accepted it as a genuine and reliable account of what happened after Jesus' resurrection.

- **Lacking an origin with Mark does not discount the writing's reliability.**

### HOW SHOULD WE VIEW THESE VERSES?

When the longer ending of Mark is rightly interpreted, we find there is nothing doctrinally problematic.

- Even if Mark didn't write it and it was written later by scribes who borrowed from the accounts of other Gospel writers, **the passage is theologically sound and consistent with the rest of Scripture.**

### THE APPEARANCES (MARK 16:9-13)

#### "HE APPEARED FIRST TO MARY MAGDALENE"

John's account describes Mary's dramatic encounter with the resurrected Jesus, though she thought He was the gardener (John 20:11-18). While Mary was crying outside the tomb, Jesus revealed Himself to her before anyone else.

- Mary told Peter and John about her encounter (John 20:2-10), which the other disciples probably overheard, but **they refused to believe it.**

#### "HE APPEARED IN A DIFFERENT FORM"

Luke details how the risen Jesus walked with two men leaving Jerusalem on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-35). These two men shared an experience like Mary's, yet when they told the disciples, they did not believe them either.

- **Jesus reveals Himself to us in times of confusion, doubt, and sorrow** to offer us a hope only found in the resurrected Lord.

### THE COMMISSIONING (MARK 16:14-18)

#### "HE APPEARED TO THE ELEVEN"

Jesus rebuked the disciples' unbelief and the hardness of their hearts.

- We cannot escape our responsibility to respond to the truth that Jesus came into this world, giving His life as a ransom. Sadly, many will deliberately reject Him. **We are unable to see the beauty of the light while in love with the darkness** (John 3:16-19; Hebrews 10:26).

### WE'RE AT WAR!

The command to **"go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation"** was the marching orders from the great Commander.

- Everyone who claims to follow Christ has enlisted in the spiritual battle against good and evil. As soldiers in this battle, **we do not stand defiant to the marching orders of Christ**, our Commander. Instead, **we obey.**

### THE SEED OF THE CHURCH

The command to go wasn't obeyed immediately. The disciples stayed in Jerusalem for several years. It was not until the early church was persecuted that they went out to spread the gospel in the world.

- A willingness to sacrifice and endure persecution for the sake of the gospel is **a testament that we serve a risen Savior.**

### IT IS UNBELIEF THAT CONDEMNS US

V. 16 is a **promise of salvation to those who believe** and are baptized out of obedience and a **warning to those who do not believe.**

- Notice it does not say whoever is not baptized will be condemned, but only whoever does not believe. A person who does not believe will not move forward in obedience—**it is their unbelief that condemns them** (John 3:16-18).

### "AND THESE SIGNS WILL ACCOMPANY THOSE..."

These verses are not inviting us to go out and seek dangers but are a promise of divine power and protection as we accomplish our divine purpose in a dangerous world.

- Drinking poison or handling snakes were never meant to be tests or barometers for our faith. Instead of "tempting" God, **we simply trust Him.**

### THE ASCENSION (MARK 16:19-20)

#### HE HAS NOT LEFT US!

Jesus told His disciples that it was better for them that He went away (John 16:7). Jesus wasn't leaving or abandoning His disciples (Matthew 28:20).

- Jesus ascended to **prepare a place for us** (John 14:3), **to intercede for us** (Romans 8:34), and **to give us good gifts to build up the body of Christ** (Ephesians 4:8-13).

### WE ARE CO-LABORERS WITH CHRIST (1 CORINTHIANS 3:9)

The book of Mark ends with a truth that continues today: the Lord is working with followers today, as the gospel is preached everywhere.

- Notice the word that is preached is confirmed by accompanying signs. **Signs will follow Believers, instead of Believers following after signs** (Matthew 16:4).

### IT'S NOT OVER!

- Are there situations in our lives that we consider finished without hope of them changing?
- God takes the hopeless stories of our lives and rewrites them. With the Lord, it is never over **until He says it's over.**
- Be slow to arrive at a conclusion that God is not bringing you to.

### INVITATION AND DIRECTIVE

- We are all invited to witness the resurrection of Jesus.
- We are all directed to then go tell others.
- We have confidence that Jesus has given us everything we need to accomplish what we are commissioned to do. **He is with us and so is His promise of divine power and protection.**

### HE IS RISEN!

- An empty tomb shows that the Father did not forsake Jesus, death is swallowed in victory, and our Savior lives!
- His resurrection gives us assurance of our own resurrection (1 Thessalonians 4:14).
- His resurrection means that **His ministry to seek and to save the lost continues** (Luke 19:10; Hebrews 7:25).