

Mark 16

You could totally discredit or even destroy Christianity if you could disprove what one thing? The Resurrection! **Why is that?** Without the Resurrection, our Savior would still be in the grave just like every other great religious leader who could not conquer death. The Resurrection is the foundation of our faith – we worship a risen, living savior! All other religions worship dead people. Without the Resurrection, there is no hope beyond the grave, and the Cross is of no practical value. Without the Resurrection, Jesus is just another martyr dying for another cause.

Jesus' death on the cross was the payment for our sins, but the resurrection was the receipt, showing that the payment had been perfect in the sight of God the Father.

Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Salome (v. 1).....Where in the gospel of Mark have we seen these women before? 15:40 At the Cross; 15:47 At the burial site (tomb); 16:2 At the resurrection site (tomb).

These obscure women proved themselves to be the most devoted followers of Jesus, and they were given the privilege of being the first to see the empty grave and to proclaim His resurrection. There's a message/lesson here about devotion....no fanfare surrounded these women....they were simply faithful followers of Jesus....and as a result, they were recognized and rewarded. They were memorialized in the scriptures for their devotion.

What was their dilemma facing these three women as they approached the tomb (v. 3)? *"Who will roll away the stone from the entrance of the tomb for us?"* They knew there was a large stone covering the entrance. They had seen him buried. No question they went expecting to find Jesus in the tomb. Just like the disciples, the women didn't understand.

Matthew 27:65-66 reminds us that there was a guard set around the tomb. This shows that the stone could not have been rolled away by the women (they were not strong enough) or by the disciples (even if they were brave enough, they could not overcome the armed guards). We also understand that no one else *wanted* to roll away the stone. **Then how did it move?** Matthew 28:2 tells us that it was an angel who rolled it away. Not so that Jesus could come out, but so that others could see in and be convinced that Jesus Christ was risen from the dead

Who did the women see when they entered the tomb (v. 5)? A young man dressed in a white robe. **Who was he?** An angel **What did the angel tell them (vv. 6-7)?** *Don't be afraid. He has risen! Go tell the disciples and Peter. He is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see Him just as He told you.*

He is going ahead of you into Galilee -- For what purpose? *"There you will see Him"* was the message. The main object was to see Him; for Jesus to reveal Himself in His glorified body to His people. Jesus had predicted the scattering of His sheep and their regathering in Galilee (14:28). Jesus was not the first person brought back from the dead, but He was the first one *resurrected*.

It is surprising that Jesus wanted to meet with these men who failed Him so deeply and deserted Him, and yet the angel makes special mention of Peter (v. 7). **What does that say about Jesus' perspective on Peter?** Jesus distinguished Peter because He had special hope, special forgiveness and a special restoration plan for the one who denied Him the worst. Peter was a special needs child. Jesus still regarded Peter as one of His disciples in spite of his failure. He had not given up on Peter. He loved Peter in spite of what he had done.

What is the message for us? One of encouragement! Our relationship with God is not a performance-based relationship; it is a grace-based relationship. What we do or don't do doesn't sever our relationship with God. We don't have to earn God's favor. We already have 100% of God's favor.

What emotion did the women experience from this angelic encounter (v. 8)? Fear. Everybody was afraid, even the disciples. *"Trembling and bewildered, the women went out and fled from the tomb."* **Why were they afraid?** Fear of the unknown. They didn't understand what was happening. None of His followers understood that Jesus would rise from the dead as He had said multiple times.

Jesus appeared to Mary Magdalene (v. 9) as well as the two disciples on the road to Emmaus (v. 12). **How did His disciples respond to the news that Jesus had been seen twice (vv. 11-12)?** Disbelief. They didn't say, "Wait a

minute, this rings a bell, didn't He tell us something about rising from the dead?" He had told them several times over the previous three years that He would rise from the dead.

How did Jesus respond to their disbelief (v. 14)? He rebuked them for their lack of faith and refusal to believe.

What was the commission Jesus gave to the Eleven (v. 15)? "*Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation.*" This was a *command*, not a suggestion. The idea of a faith that would go into all the world wasn't a part of the Jewish thinking of Jesus' day. Jerusalem was their world.

What would be the results of their preaching (v. 16)? Some would believe, be baptized and be saved; some would disbelieve and be condemned.¹

Is water baptism required for salvation (v. 16)? Jesus did not say that *condemnation* would happen to the one who was not baptized, only to the one who does not believe. Condemnation is based on unbelief, not on baptism. In the early church there was a close relationship between believing and being baptized, i.e. baptism normally followed closely *after* a confession of faith. Baptism is an outward *proclamation* that a person has been saved.

Verse 16 is used by some to teach the necessity of water baptism for salvation. We know it cannot mean that for the following reasons:

1. The thief on the cross was not baptized; yet he was assured of being in Paradise with Christ ([Luke 23:43](#)).
2. The Gentiles in Caesarea were baptized *after* they were saved ([Acts 10:44-48](#)).
3. Jesus Himself did not baptize anyone ([John 4:1-2](#))—a strange omission if baptism were necessary for salvation.
4. Paul thanked God that he baptized very few of the Corinthians ([1 Corinthians 1:14-16](#))—an impossible thanksgiving if baptism were essential for salvation.
5. Approximately 150 passages in the NT state that salvation is by faith alone. No verse or few verses could contradict this overwhelming testimony.²

If baptism is not essential to salvation why do we do it? It may not be essential to *salvation*, but it is absolutely essential to *obedience*. Jesus set the example of baptism ([Matthew 3:13-16](#)) and He commanded that believers be baptized ([Matthew 28:19](#)). It becomes essential as soon as Jesus commands it.

Why was it important that the apostles be able to do these signs (vv. 17-18)? "Signs" are miracles that confirm the divine origin of the message and validate the authority of the messenger. (16:20). These signs were intended primarily for the apostolic age, although God still performs miracles today.

Why did Jesus have to leave -- 40 days after the resurrection (v. 19)? So the Holy Spirit could come. Jesus had to ascend - so that confidence would be put in the power and ministry of the Holy Spirit, not in the geographical presence of Jesus. The Holy Spirit would have been overshadowed by Jesus otherwise.

Where is Jesus now? In heaven sitting at the right hand of God the Father ([Hebrews 12:2](#)). **What is the new ministry of Jesus now?** Jesus goes ahead to *prepare a place for you* ([John 14:3](#)); to *make intercession for us* ([Romans 8:34](#)); and to *give gifts to men* ([Ephesians 4:8](#)).

What did the disciples do (v. 20)? They went out and preached everywhere. The disciples were commanded to preach the gospel to the whole creation. The Savior's goal was world evangelization. He intended to accomplish it with eleven disciples who would literally forsake all to follow Him.³

Application: We're going out into the world but we're not preachers. What are some ways we can preach the gospel?

¹ MacDonald, W. (1995). *Believer's Bible Commentary: Old and New Testaments*. (A. Farstad, Ed.) (p. 1364). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.