

# THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST

**TEXT: MARK 16:1-20**

## **Introduction:**

1. We started this series of messages from the Gospel of Mark on August 31, 2008.
2. Tonight, after two years, we will conclude the series.
3. Last week we looked at the burial of the Lord Jesus Christ. Tonight we will look at His resurrection.
4. Romans 1:4 says the Lord Jesus Christ “declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.”
5. The resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ is one of the most important doctrines in the Bible. The bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead is the crowning proof of Christianity.
6. If the resurrection did not take place, then Christianity is just another false religion. But if it did take place, then Jesus Christ is God and the Christian faith is absolute truth.
7. The apostle Paul said in I Corinthians 15:17, “And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins.”
8. Philip Schaff, the church historian, put it this way: “The resurrection of Christ is therefore emphatically a test question upon which depends the truth or falsehood of the Christian religion. It is either the greatest miracle or the greatest delusion which history records.”
9. I heard about a missionary in Turkey who was speaking to a crowd of Muslims and he asked them this question, “Suppose I am traveling, and have reached a fork in the road. I search for a guide and I find two guides: one is alive, and the other is dead. Which of the two should I ask for directions?” Everyone cried out, “The living one! The living one!”
10. “Then,” said the missionary, “why send me to Mohammed, who is dead, instead of to Christ, who is alive?” Thank God, Christ is alive today.

## **I. THE EMPTY TOMB (16:1-8).**

1. The sabbath was past; it was now Sunday morning – “the first day of the week” (16:2). The same women who were at the cross came to the tomb early that Sunday morning “at the rising of the sun” (16:2).

2. Because Christ rose from the dead on the first day of the week, Christians worship on Sunday, the first day of the week.
3. Saturday was the Jewish sabbath, but Sunday is the Lord's Day.
4. The apostle John says in Revelation 1:10, "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day..."
5. The apostle Paul wrote, "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come" (I Cor. 16:2).
6. These faithful women were wondering who would roll away the heavy stone from the door of the sepulchre, when they looked and saw that it was already rolled away (16:3, 4).
7. William MacDonald said, "How often it happens when we are intent on honoring the Saviour that difficulties are removed before we get to them."
8. The Scofield Study Bible gives the order of events, combining the four Gospels (page 1043):
  - Three women, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and Salome, start for the sepulchre, followed by other women bearing spices.
  - The three find the stone rolled away, and Mary Magdalene goes to tell the disciples (Luke 23:55—24:9; John 20:1, 2).
  - Mary, the mother of James and Joses, draws nearer the tomb and sees the angel of the Lord (Matthew 28:2). She goes back to meet the other women following with the spices.
  - Meanwhile Peter and John, warned by Mary Magdalene, arrive, look in, and go away (John 20:3-10).
  - Mary Magdalene returns weeping, sees the two angels and then Jesus (John 20:11-18) and goes as He bade her to tell the disciples.
  - Mary (mother of James and Joses), meanwhile, has met the women with the spices and, returning with them, they see the two angels (Luke 24:4, 5; Mark 16:5).
  - They also receive the angelic message, and, going to seek the disciples, are met by Jesus (Matthew 28:8-10).
9. As strange as it would seem, some of the new Bible translations end here at Mark 16:8.
10. They would end the Gospel of Mark with these words – "And they went out quickly, and fled from the sepulchre; for they trembled

and were amazed: neither said they any thing to any man; for they were afraid” (16:8).

11. What a strange way to end the Gospel of Mark – “For they trembled and were amazed...for they were afraid” (16:8).
12. Compare that with Mark 16:20 in our authorized King James Version – “And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.”
13. According to proponents of the modern translations, the Gospel of Mark should end with verse 8.
14. Regrettably, the *Scofield Study Bible* supports this position (p. 1069). I love the *Scofield Study Bible*, but this is one of the places where I strongly disagree with it.
15. The overwhelming majority of manuscripts, as well as the writings of many church fathers, contain Mark 16:9-20.
16. Some of the critics claim that Mark’s original ending was lost, but this would contradict what our Lord said about preserving His Word. He said in Matthew 24:35, “Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.”
17. Dean Burgon, one of the greatest Greek scholars of his day, wrote a book defending Mark 16, which has never been answered.
18. There is an excellent article called “The Last Twelve Verses of the Gospel of Mark,” written by the great “apostle to Islam,” Samuel M. Zwemer, in David Otis Fuller’s book, *Counterfeit or Genuine*.
19. Even J. Vernon McGee, who supported the critical text, realized that they were wrong in this instance. “I believe that these last twelve verses are a part of the inspired Scripture and shall treat them as any other portion of the Word of God...The internal evidence is not enough to dismiss it either, as the style is still that of Mark – brief and blunt.”
20. At the end of his comments on Mark 16:5-7, Dr. McGee says, “And this, frankly, doesn’t seem to me to be an appropriate place for Mark to end his gospel, as some of the critics claim.”

## **II. THE RISEN SAVIOUR (16:9-14)**

1. Our Lord’s first appearance after His resurrection, was to Mary Magdalane, “out of whom He had cast seven devils” (16:9).
2. From the other Gospels we learn that she ran from the sepulchre and told Peter and John. Coming back with her they found the sepulchre empty, as she had said. They returned to their home but

she stayed at the empty tomb, and it was there that our Lord appeared to her (cf. John 20:1-18).

3. Again Mary Magdalene went back to town and told the disciples what had happened – that she had seen the risen Saviour. But they “believed not” (16:11).
4. Mark refers to our Lord’s appearance on the Emmaus Road (16:12), but the full account is found in Luke 24:13-31.
5. Unfortunately, when these two disciples tried to explain that they met the Lord on the road to Emmaus, “neither believed they them” (16:13).
6. Unbelief has always been a problem (16:14)! This appearance to “the eleven” took place on that Sunday night (cf. Luke 24:36; John 20:19-23; I Cor.15:5). Our Lord had to “upbraid them” for their unbelief.

### **III. THE GREAT COMMISSION (16:15, 16)**

1. The great commission is found in Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, and the book of Acts. Mark 16:16 is not teaching baptismal regeneration for “he that believeth not shall be damned” (cf. John 3:18, 36).
2. Baptism is closely associated with conversion, in that it should normally follow conversion, and it is the expected outward expression of belief. Baptism is not necessary for salvation, but salvation is necessary for baptism.
3. These signs followed the preaching of the Gospel during the apostolic church age (16:17, 18; cf. Heb. 2:3, 4).
4. Paul calls these “the signs of an apostle” (II Cor.12:12).
5. Some churches today claim to have apostles but this is unscriptural (cf. Eph. 2:20).
6. “These signs” disappeared in the early church after the canon of Scripture was complete. Deliberately picking up and passing around poisonous snakes is ridiculous and unscriptural – this Scripture is speaking of God’s protection (cf. Acts 28:3-5).
7. Our Lord’s ascension into heaven and present ministry at the right hand of God is recorded here (16:19), and in Luke 24 and Acts 1.
8. This took place 40 days after His resurrection (cf. Acts 1:1-11). “The right hand of God” signifies power and honor.
9. In obedience to our Lord’s command, the disciples “went forth and preached every where.”
10. W. Graham Scroggie said, “Nothing in history is more wonderful than the fact that a handful of unschooled men were put in charge of the greatest enterprise of all the ages, and without any material

resources or temporal facilities, faced up to impossible odds, and gloriously won through!”

**CONCLUSION:**

1. When we started this series two years ago, I mentioned that Mark’s Gospel is the Gospel of action.
2. That is the way Mark began, and that is the way he ends.