

# Mark 16 Commentary

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LUKE 1

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John Mark

## MARK: THE SERVANT JESUS

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## THE LIFE OF CHRIST SHOWING COVERAGE BY MARK (SHADED AREA)

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Chart from [Jensen's Survey of the NT](#) - used by permission

**Mark 16:1** When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, bought spices, so that they might come and anoint Him.

- **when:** Mk 15:42 Mt 28:1-10 Lu 23:54,56 24:1-12 Joh 19:31 20:1-10
- **Mary Magdalene:** Mk 15:40,47 Lu 24:10 Joh 19:25
- **spices:** Mk 14:3,8 2Ch 16:14 Joh 19:40

### Related Passages:

Matthew 28:1 Now after the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to look at the grave.

Luke 23:56+ Then they returned and prepared spices and perfumes. And on the Sabbath they rested according to the commandment.

**COMMENT:** So Luke's version indicates the women had spices on Friday evening but they would not be able to use them because it was the Sabbath. Mark's version indicates that they went and bought additional spices after the Sabbath ended on Saturday evening.

Luke 24:1+ But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they came to the tomb bringing the spices which they had prepared.

John 20:1 Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene \*came early to the tomb, while it \*was still dark, and \*saw the stone already taken away from the tomb.

From [The Word in Life Study Bible \(online\)](#)  
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## THE WOMEN'S ACT OF LOVE AND DEVOTION

Matthew gives us background information regarding Jesus' tomb concerning the events that occurred on Saturday

Now on the next day, the day after the preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered together with Pilate, 63 and said, "Sir, we remember that when He was still alive that deceiver said, 'After three days I am to rise again.' 64 "Therefore, give orders for the grave to be made secure until the third day, otherwise His disciples may come and steal Him away and say to the people, 'He has risen from the dead,' and the last deception will be worse than the first." 65 Pilate said to them, "You have a guard; go, make it as secure as you know how." 66 And they went and made the grave secure, and along with the guard they set a seal on the stone. (Mt 27:62-66)

**When the Sabbath was over** - This would be Saturday evening (Nisan 16) around 6 PM at sunset, which marked the end of one day and beginning of the next day.

**Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James, and Salome** - These are the same women who witnessed the entire crucifixion of Jesus (Mk 15:40+) and can testify that He died. Then two of them went to the tomb where He was laid (Mk 15:47). Here is the point - they can testify that Jesus died; that he was placed in a specific tomb and that the tomb was empty and there was no body.

**Hiebert** - In recording the events of early Sunday morning, John spoke only of Mary Magdalene (Jn 20:1), Matthew named only two women (Mt 28:1), while Luke added the name of Joanna and indicated that there were "other women with them" (Lk 24:10+). Just how many women were involved is not known, but it is clear that no men came with them. As a reward of their faithfulness, the women were the first to receive intimations of Jesus' resurrection. ([The Gospel of Mark: An Expositional Commentary](#))

**Bought spices** - The shops would have been opened after sunset on Saturday (end of Sabbath) but after buying the spices it would have been too late to go to Jesus' tomb, so that were forced to wait until the next day. Keep in mind that spices would have been costly, another reflection of their love for Jesus. Another factor that underscores their depth of devotion is their willingness to enter a tomb that had been dead for about a day and a half, for there would surely be a stench from the decay by then.

**William MacDonald** has an anonymous quote - "Their love was early astir (Mk 16:1) and was richly rewarded (Mk 16:6). There is still a risen Lord for the early riser (Prov. 8:17 = "I love those who love me; And those who diligently seek me will find me.')." (Borrow [Believer's Bible Commentary](#))

**So that** (term of purpose) **they might come and anoint Him** - Unlike the Egyptians, the Jews did not attempt to embalm bodies but simply encased them in strongly perfumed burial cloths to help mask the stench of decay. Joseph had wrapped spices with the body of Jesus in the linen cloth (John 19:39-40). So why would the women need to buy more spices? This would appear to be primarily an act of devotion and would serve to counteract the effect of the smell of a decaying body. They bought spices after the Sabbath was over. Note the fact that they **bought spices to anoint** Jesus' body indicates that **they did not expect that He would rise from the dead**. (cf Mk 8:31; Mk 9:31; Mk 10:34).

The action of these women recalls the action of Mary in Mark 14:3+ "While He was in Bethany at the home of Simon the leper, and reclining at the table, there came a woman (Mary in John 12:2) with an alabaster vial of very costly perfume of pure nard; and she broke the vial and poured it over His head." Jesus had explained her actions declaring ""She has done what she could; she has anointed My body beforehand for the burial." (Mark 14:8+).

**Hiebert** - That they still desired to do so after the body had already been in the grave two nights and a day is unusual. "Love often prompts people to do what from a practical point of view is useless." Their purpose is unmistakable evidence that they regarded the death of Jesus as real and final. They had no expectations of His resurrection. Significantly, nothing further is heard of their spices. They were not needed. ([The Gospel of Mark: An Expository Commentary](#))

**Paul Apple** on the actions of the women - Reflects the priority that Christ is first in their lives  
**Heroic Act**: - Jesus put to death by Roman authorities as a political rebel - Hated by the Jewish nation  
**Love** – not just tender feelings – but must be expressed in sacrificial giving  
What is your motivation for serving the Lord? To what extreme lengths do you go to express your love? Otherwise we have left our first love ([Mark Commentary - 556 pages](#))

#### Related Resources:

- [What was the significance of anointing spices in the Bible? | GotQuestions.org](#)
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#### Bob Utley - SPECIAL TOPIC: THE WOMEN WHO FOLLOWED JESUS ([Mark 16 Commentary](#))

##### A. The first mention of the women followers of Jesus who helped Him and the Apostolic band is Luke 8:1–3.

1. Mary, who was called Magdalene (Luke 8:2)
  - a. Matt. 27:56, 61; 28:1
  - b. Mark 15:40, 47; 16:1, 9
  - c. Luke 8:2; 24:10
  - d. John 19:25; 20:1, 11, 16, 18
2. Joanna, the wife of Chuza (Herod's servant, Lk 8:3) is listed also in Luke 24:10
3. Susanna ( Lk 8:3)
4. "and many others who were contributing to their support out of their private means" ( Lk 8:3)

##### B. A group of women are mentioned as being present at the crucifixion

###### 1. Matthew's list

- a. Mary Magdalene (Mt 27:56)
- b. Mary the mother of James and Josephus (Mt 27:56)
- c. the mother of the sons of Zebedee (Mt 27:56)

###### 2. Mark's list

- a. Mary Magdalene (Mk 15:40)
- b. Mary the mother of James the Less and Joses (Mk 15:40)
- c. Salome (Mk 15:40)

###### 3. Luke says only, "the women who accompanied Him from Galilee" (Lk 23:49)

###### 4. John's list

- a. Mary, Jesus' mother (Jn 19:25)
- b. His mother's sister (Jn 19:25)
- c. Mary of Clopas [KJ Cleophas, this could mean wife of Clopas or daughter of Clopas] (Jn 19:25)
- d. Mary Magdalene (Jn 19:25)

##### C. A group of women is mentioned observing the place of Jesus' burial

###### 1. Matthew's list

- a. Mary Magdalene (Mt 27:61)
- b. the other Mary (Mt 27:61)

###### 2. Mark's list

- a. Mary Magdalene (Mk 15:47)
- b. Mary the mother of Joses (Mk 15:47)

###### 3. Luke says only, "the women who had come with Him out of Galilee" (Lk 23:55)

###### 4. John has no record of the women seeing the tomb

##### D. A group of women came to the tomb early Sunday morning

###### 1. Matthew's list

- a. Mary Magdalene (28:1)
- b. the other Mary (28:1)

###### 2. Mark's list

- a. Mary Magdalene (Mk 16:1)
- b. Mary the mother of James (Mk 16:1)
- c. Salome (Mk 16:1)

###### 3. Luke's list

- a. "they came to the tomb" (Lk 24:1–5, 24)
  - (1) Mary Magdalene (Lk 24:10)
  - (2) Joanna (Lk 24:10)
  - (3) Mary the mother of James (Lk 24:10)

#### 4. John lists only Mary Magdalene (Jn 20:1, 11)

#### E. The women are mentioned as being present in the upper room (Acts 1:14)

1. "the women" (Acts 1:14)
2. Mary the mother of Jesus (Acts 1:14)

F. The exact relationship between the different women in these different lists is uncertain. Mary Magdalene obviously has a predominate role. A good article on "women" in Jesus' life and ministry is found in [Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels](#) borrow), published by IVP, pp. 880–886.

### Bob Utley - SPECIAL TOPIC: BURIAL SPICES ([Mark 16 Commentary](#))

#### A. Myrrh, a fragrant gum from Arabian trees

1. This spice is mentioned twelve times in the OT, mostly in wisdom literature as a perfume
2. It was one of the gifts brought by the Magi to baby Jesus (cf. Matt. 2:11)
3. Its symbolism is striking
  - a. used in "holy anointing oil" (Exod. 30:23–25)
  - b. used as a gift for a king (Matt. 2:11)
  - c. used to anoint Jesus at His burial (cf. John 19:39 and symbolically in John 11:2). This was according to Jewish customs described in the Talmud (i.e. Berakhoth 53a).

#### B. Aloes, a fragrant type of wood

1. connected to fragrant perfume (cf. Num. 24:6; Ps. 45:8; Pro. 7:17; Song of Songs 4:14)
2. it was used, mixed with myrrh, by the Egyptians as part of the embalming process
3. Nicodemus brought a large amount of this to Jesus' burial and anointed Him with it (cf. John 19:39). This was according to Jewish customs described in the Talmud (i.e. Betsah 6a).

### Mark 16:2 Very early on the first day of the week, they came to the tomb when the sun had risen.

- Mt 28:1 Lu 24:1 Joh 20:1

#### Related Passages:

Matthew 28:1 Now after the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to look at the grave.

Luke 24:1 But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they came to the tomb bringing the spices which they had prepared.

John 20:1 Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came early to the tomb, while it was still dark, and saw the stone already taken away from the tomb.

## THE SUN HAD RISEN THE SON HAD RISEN! HALLELUJAH!

**Very early** - **Early** is probably before 6 AM (see note below) and is another indicator of their eagerness to show their devotion to their Lord. How much before sunrise (6 AM)? We cannot know exactly but John says **Mary Magdalene** preceded the others and "came early to the tomb, while it was still dark." (Jn 20:1) It is notable that the Jews did give most of the days of the weeks names as we do, but instead numbered them and giving the seventh day the name Sabbath.

**Early** (4404)(**proi** from **pro** = before) is an adverb of time closely paralleling our English word early or the phrase in the morning. Proi means early, in the (early) morning; in Jewish time reckoning, the last watch of the night. Mark used the term **proi** to refer to the fourth watch of the night, the hours from 3 to 6 a.m. Uses in Mark - Mk. 1:35; Mk. 11:20; Mk. 13:35; Mk. 15:1; Mk. 16:2; Mk. 16:9

**James Edwards** - The apocryphal Gospel of Peter 50–54 ([What are the apocryphal gospels?](#)) attributes the women's visit in the

early morning darkness to fear, lest they be seen by the Jews. Mark makes no mention of fear of the Jews but notes the sunrise perhaps to insure that the women had not mistaken the tomb in the darkness. (Pillar NTC-Mark) (See [The Gospel according to Mark](#))

**On the first day of the week** - On the Jewish Calendar this day would be the [Feast of First Fruits \(Zola Levitt\)](#) (or [here](#)), the day we commonly refer to as Resurrection Sunday or Easter. In Jewish terms this is the day after their seventh day, the Sabbath (Sunset Fri to Sunset Saturday), and is the day we refer to as **Sunday**. Christians sometimes refer to Sunday as the "*Sabbath*" but that is not accurate from a Jewish perspective. "All four Gospels state that the resurrection took place on Sunday." (ESV Study Bible) John MacArthur adds that "From then on, believers set aside Sunday to meet and remember the marvelous resurrection of the Lord (see Acts 20:7; 1Cor 16:2). It became known as the Lord's Day (Rev 1:10)." (See [The Gospel according to Mark](#))

**A T Robertson** on the timing of the resurrection - Some people are greatly disturbed over the fact that Jesus did not remain in the grave full seventy-two hours. But he repeatedly said that he would rise on the third day and that is precisely what happened. He was buried on Friday afternoon. He was risen on Sunday morning. If he had really remained in the tomb full three days and then had risen after that, it would have been on the fourth day, not on the third day. The occasional phrase "after three days" is merely a vernacular idiom common in all languages and not meant to be exact and precise like "on the third day." We can readily understand "after three days" in the sense of "on the third day." It is impossible to understand "on the third day" to be "on the fourth day." ([Mark 16 Commentary](#))

**They came to the tomb when the sun had risen** - **They** of course refers to the women. So by the time they arrived the darkness of Jn 20:1 had passed.

**Jones** says, "The work of anointing needed light, it was useless to arrive before sunrise; hence Mark's 'very early' means at the earliest useful moment. ([Mark 16 Commentary](#))

**J C Ryle** comments "Let it be noted, that this early visit to the sepulchre is a strong proof of the love and affection of these holy women. For women to go to a place of burial, near a crowded city, before the sun was risen, faith and courage were needed." ([Mark 16 Commentary](#))

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#### **Norman Geisler - MARK 16:2—[Was Mary at the tomb before sunrise or after?](#)**

**PROBLEM:** Mark states that Mary was there "very early in the morning ... when the sun had risen" (v. 2). But John says it was "early, while it was still dark" (John 20:1).

**SOLUTION:** There are two general possibilities here. One possibility suggests that the phrase "when the sun had risen" (Mark 16:2) merely denotes early dawn (cf. Ps. 104:22), when it was "still dark" (John 20:1), relatively speaking. Another view holds that Mary came alone at first when it was still dark before sunrise (John 20:1), and then again later after sunrise, she returned with the other women (Mark 16:1). In support of this is the fact that only Mary is mentioned in John, but Mary and the other women are named in Mark. Also, Luke (24:1) says it was "very early in the morning," implying after sunrise, when the "women" [not just Mary] had come. Likewise, Matthew (28:1) speaks of it being "after the Sabbath, as the first day of the week began to dawn" that "Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb." Only John mentions Mary being there alone "while it was still dark" (John 20:1). (When Critics Ask)

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#### **MORNING**

"My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up" (Ps. 5:3). "In his favour is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning" (Ps. 30:5b). "Yea, I will sing aloud of thy mercy in the morning: for thou hast been my defence and refuge in the day of my trouble" (Ps. 59:16b). "Cause me to hear thy lovingkindness in the morning; for in thee do I trust: cause me to know the way wherein I should walk" (Ps. 143:8a). "And very early in the morning the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun ... and when they looked, they saw that the stone was rolled away: for it was very great" (Mark 16:2, 4). "I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and offspring of David, and the bright and morning star" (Rev. 22:16). - James Custer

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#### **The Dayspring From On High**

"Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the day spring from on high hath visited us" (Luke 1:78).

This is an unusual but beautiful name for the coming Savior given Him by Zacharias when he was "filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied" (Luke 1:67). In that same prophecy, Zacharias also called that coming one "the Highest" and "the Lord" who would "give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins" (verses 76-77). Just six months later, Jesus was born.

The Greek word here translated "dayspring" is so translated only this one time. It refers to the metaphorical spring from which the sun springs forth each day, and so is usually translated simply as "the east." It is interesting that it is used three times in connection with the story of the wise men "from the east" who saw "his star in the east" and then, when they reached Bethlehem once again, "the star, which they saw in the east," led them to the one who was himself "the dayspring" (Matt. 2:1, 2, 9).

There is one other sunrise appropriately presaged here. Many years later, the women who had tearfully watched the Lord being crucified and buried came to His sepulcher to anoint Him with sweet spices "**at the rising of the sun**" (Mark 16:2) immediately after He had risen from the dead. Here a closely related word is the word translated "rising."

There is another great sunrise coming, as promised in the last chapter of the Old Testament. "But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings" (Mal. 4:2). He who is himself "the light of the world" (John 8:12) will someday even replace the sun in the new Jerusalem. There will never be another sunrise after that, for "there shall be no night there... neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light" (Rev. 22:5).

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**Sunrise Hope** Read: 1 Corinthians 15:20-28 | Very early in the morning, on the first day of the week, they came to the tomb when the sun had risen. —Mark 16:2

Think of what it would be like if we went to bed some night knowing that the sun would not rise again the next morning. Think of the coldness, the unending darkness, the inescapable fingers of death that would gradually move across the earth. Plants would wither, flowers would wilt, trees would die, and all of life would perish for lack of sunlight.

But praise God, the sun does rise every day. Its warm, life-giving light floods the earth. The "death" of a sunset each day is followed by the "resurrection" of a sunrise the next day—and our hope is renewed. Every morning the rays of the sun remind us that the long night of sin and darkness will give way to eternal day in heaven.

Even more sure than the rising of the morning sun is the certainty of our resurrection in Jesus Christ. The dark night of death came upon Him, and His lifeless body was laid in the tomb. But He arose! And in His resurrection is the promise of our own resurrection to life. The apostle Paul declared, "Even so in Christ all shall be made alive" (1 Corinthians 15:22).

The next time you see the sun rise and watch its rays brighten the morning sky, let hope fill your heart. It is a reminder of your own sure resurrection! [David Egner](#)

Rejoice in glorious hope!  
Our Lord the Judge shall come  
And take His servants up  
To their eternal home.  
—Wesley

Christ's resurrection is the guarantee of our own.

**Mark 16:3 They were saying to one another, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance of the tomb?"**

- **Who:** Mk 15:46,47 Mt 27:60-66

## WHO WILL ROLL THE STONE?

**They were saying to one another** - **Saying** is in the [imperfect tense](#) indicating this question came up several times as they approached the tomb.

**Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance of the tomb?"**- This is further evidence that the women held out no hope for the resurrection. Only Mark records this discussion on the way to the tomb. The women realized they had no men with them to move the heavy stone away from the entrance to the tomb. Since they had last visited the tomb on Friday evening, they did not know it had been sealed and a guard posted, which took place on Saturday (Mt 27:62–66).

**James Edwards** - The anxiety of the women about this significant detail is due, in part, to the fact that all the men were hiding (John 20:19). The women were evidently left to chance at finding workers in the area to help them roll the stone away from the opening of the tomb. (Ibid)

**Utley** - This stone was round and shaped to fit into a sloping groove dug just in front of the rock vault's opening. It was relatively easy to roll into the trench, but very difficult to remove. ([Mark 16 Commentary](#))

**Paul Apple** applies v3-4 - (Mk 16::3) Problem: How Can We Gain Access to Jesus? (Mk 16:4) Solution: God Must Make a Way ([Mark Commentary - 556 pages](#))

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**Mark 16:3 - The Preventive Angel** - "Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre?" (Mark 16:3).

Jesus had said He would rise on the third day, but here heartbroken women had come seeking the living among the dead. Like thousands of His disciples to this day they crossed the bridge before they reached it. They did not count on divine intervention and expected no angels. The grave had been secured by stone, seal, and soldiers. A heavenly visitor who not only rolled the stone away but sat on it in heavenly triumph may have seemed possible in their remotest thinking but not probable. How often in my pitiful doubts and fears have I met the inevitable in my nervous dread and never counted on the preventive angel. Then when I reached the spot I had dreaded I was shamed again at the pitiful failure of my faith and could hear Jesus' "O ye of little faith, how long will it be ere ye believe me?" As a boy I used to look at the familiar picture of the guardian angel standing with a little child at the edge of a cliff. Theoretically and theologically I believed in heavenly helpers who minister to the heirs of salvation, but when a crisis arose my hopes of their intervention were slim. But now with the long look back over eight decades I know that I was often attended by preventive angels though I knew them not. They arrived at my place of danger before I did. Stones and seals and soldiers mean nothing when a mighty angel comes down to roll the stone away. (Vance Havner)

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### **The Stone Which Blocked the Way - Ian Paisley**

"Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre?" Mark 16:3

Christ was dead. Yes, really and truly dead. He was also buried. Really and truly buried.

#### **The Stone Set**

Note, the stone was set there by man to block the entrance. As long as it stood there the doorway was blocked. There was no way out of the sepulchre.

That stone is a type of our sin. Sin blocks the way out of the sepulchre of spiritual death for us all.

#### **The Stone Sealed**

The priests were anxious to destroy even the memory of Jesus. His words had stung their memories.

A Christless religion allied to a Christless state joined in sealing the stone. That sealed stone speaks of our sin, sealed with Christless Christianity and Godless State-Authority endeavouring to stop the rising again of the Son of God.

#### **The Stone Seat**

"And, behold, there was a great earthquake, for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it." Matthew 28:2

The angel made the stone his seat and declared from there the resurrection message, "Christ is not here, He is risen!" So, from the ruin of our once prized fortress of sin, the Gospel goes forth offering full pardon to all who will come and see the place where the Lord lay. Remember, the stone was removed, not to let Christ out, but rather to let you in to see that He was already gone. (See Romans 10:9.)

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### **Mark 16:3-4 - Angels Ahead**

And they said among themselves, Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre? And when they looked, they saw that the stone was rolled away: for it was very great. Mark 16:3, 4.

Others, like Dr. Jowett, have caught the precious lesson of these verses. How often have we set out expecting trouble and dreading the difficulty ahead, to find upon arrival that God had "rolled away the stone"! Like the lepers in Samaria's gate, we venture forward, to find that God has scattered the enemy.

What "stone" lies ahead of you? You are wondering how you will get it rolled away, you lie awake all night making plans to remove tomorrow's obstacle. And how often have you reached the place appointed, to find that God had anticipated your dilemma.

Some stones we can roll away. "Take ye away the stone," commanded Jesus at Lazarus' grave. Some hindrances we can remove, and we must if the miracle is to follow. But the stone that is too big for us God's angel can handle.

Some saints in weakened condition wonder how it will be when they come to death. Fear not. The grave could not hold Jesus nor will it hold you. For Him the stone which enemies thought they had made sure would hold Him in the grave was turned into a throne



of triumph with an angel sitting on it.

Do not walk in dread. God's angel will arrive at the dilemma first. Are you looking for stones ahead or angels ahead? (Vance Havner)

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### Mark 16:3 GOD WILL MOVE THE STONE

Who shall roll away the stone? [Mark 16:3](#)

The women who sought to anoint the dead body of Jesus are to be commended for their tender love and regard for the Savior. Yet as they came near the place of burial, the practical difficulty of moving the heavy stone which sealed His tomb brought them unnecessary anxiety of spirit. Actually it had already been moved, and so their fears were groundless. So, too, we are often needlessly concerned over prospective difficulties which He graciously removes or helps us overcome when we have to meet them. Let us therefore be encouraged to exercise greater faith in facing possible obstructions on the pathway of duty. We may be sure of the Lord's providential assistance in such matters when we advance in His name and for His glory!

An anonymous author has given additional practical admonitions concerning this text in Mark's gospel in the following poetic words: What poor weeping ones were saying nineteen hundred years ago, we, the same weak faith betraying, say in our sad hours of woe; looking at some trouble lying in the dark and dread unknown, we, too, often ask with sighing, "Who shall roll away the stone?" Many a storm-cloud hov'ring o'er us never pours on us its rain; many a grief we see before us never comes to cause us pain. Ofttimes, on the dread tomorrow sunshine comes, the cloud has flown! Why then ask in foolish sorrow, "Who shall roll away the stone?" Burden not thy soul with sadness, make a wiser, better choice; drink the wine of life with gladness, God doth bid thee, saint, rejoice! In today's bright sunlight basking, leave tomorrow's cares alone; spoil not present joys by asking: "Who shall roll away the stone?"

Christian, go forward today on the pathway of service undaunted by possible future obstacles! Let your heart be cheered by the thought that God will somehow "move the stone." - [Our Daily Bread](#)

Oft, before we've faced the trial,  
We have come with joy to own  
Angels have from Heav'n descended,  
And have rolled away "the stone!"  
—Anon.

Take courage: if God doesn't choose to remove an obstacle, He will help you plow around it!

**Mark 16:4 Looking up, they saw that the stone had been rolled away, although it was extremely large.**

- **they saw:** Mt 28:2-4 Lu 24:2 Joh 20:1

#### Related Passages:

Matthew 28:2-4 (**MATTHEW ALONE EXPLAINS HOW THE STONE WAS ROLLED AWAY**) And behold, a severe earthquake had occurred, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled away the stone and sat upon it. 3 And his appearance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow. 4 The guards shook for fear of him and became like dead men.

Luke 24:2 And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb,

John 20:1 Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene \*came early to the tomb, while it \*was still dark, and \*saw the stone already taken away from the tomb.

### THE STONE WAS ROLLED AWAY

As noted above [Mary Magdalene](#) arrived before the other women and "saw the stone already taken away from the tomb." As the other women arrived they of course noticed the same thing.

**Looking up** ([anablepo](#)) implies they had been walking alone with downcast eyes as would be expected of women grieving the loss of their Lord. As they approached the tomb their eyes rose up and beheld a strange site to them. **Bruce** adds "With downcast eyes and heavy hearts (Bruce) they had been walking up the hill."



**They saw that the stone had been rolled away, although it was extremely large** - The earthquake when the angel rolled away the stone (Matt. 28:2) may have affected only the area around the tomb, since the women apparently did not feel it.

**The stone was rolled away not to let Jesus out, but to let the witnesses in!**

**Utley** on **extremely large** - Grave robbing was a common occurrence because of the value of the spices and other burial objects. The location and type of the vault as well as the size of the stone would show it was a rich man's tomb (cf. Isa. 53:9+). ([Mark 16 Commentary](#))

How was the stone rolled away? Mt 28:2 says "an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled away the stone and sat upon it." Why was there need for an earthquake? This would frighten away the Jewish soldiers who had been sent to seal and guard the tomb so that no one stole Jesus' body (Matt. 27:62–66).

**They saw** (beheld, observed) ([2334](#))([theoreo](#) from [theaomai](#) = to look at closely or attentively or contemplatively - even with a sense of wonder; cp **theoros** = a spectator) refers to physical sight but can also mean to gaze, to look with interest and purpose, beholding intensely or attentively. **Vincent** explains [theoreo](#) "was more than simple seeing. The verb means looking steadfastly, as one who has an interest in the object, and with a view to search into and understand it: to look inquiringly and intently. (Ed Note: And even with a sense of amazement.)

**MacArthur** fills in the background details writing that the women "knew Joseph had secured the gravesite with a large, heavy stone (Mark 15:46) and wondered how they would be able to remove it. Because Friday was the last time any of them had seen the tomb, they were unaware that the religious leaders had sealed it on Saturday and set a detachment of Roman soldiers to guard it (cf. Matt. 27:62–66). They were also unaware of the localized earthquake that occurred earlier that morning, and the arrival of the angel who rolled the stone away and incapacitated the soldiers (Matt. 28:2–4), ultimately causing them to flee (v. 11). By the time the women arrived at the tomb, the soldiers had disappeared and the tomb's entrance was wide-open. (See [Mark 1-16 MacArthur New Testament Commentary](#).)

#### Related Resource:

- [Who Moved the Stone? by Frank Morison](#) - an apologetic discussion of the truth of the Resurrection. Morison writes in the Preface "it is essentially a confession, the inner story of a man who originally set out to write one kind of book and found himself compelled by the sheer force of circumstances to write another."
- [Daniel Akin's sermon on Mark 16:1-8](#) has 15 passages of apologetical discussion on the Authenticity of the Resurrection

**Mark 16:5 Entering the tomb, they saw a young man sitting at the right, wearing a white robe; and they were amazed.**

- **entering:** Lu 24:3 Joh 20:8
- **a young:** Da 10:5,6 Mt 28:3 Lu 24:4,5 Joh 20:11,12
- **and they:** Mk 6:49,50 Da 8:17 10:7-9,12 Lu 1:12,29,30

#### Related Passages:

Matthew 28:2 And behold, a severe earthquake had occurred, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled away the stone and sat upon it. 3 And **his appearance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow**. 4 The guards shook for fear of him and became like dead men.

Luke 24:3 but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. 4 While they were perplexed about this, **behold, two men suddenly stood near them in dazzling clothing**; 5 and as the women were terrified and bowed their faces to the ground, the men said to them, "Why do you seek the living One among the dead?"

## AN AMAZING ANGELIC VISITATION

**Entering the tomb** - Luke 24:3 says "when they entered they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus." **Utley** notes that " John 20:11 has Mary outside the tomb looking in, but Luke 24:3 confirms that, at least at some point, the women went in." ([Mark 16 Commentary](#))

**They saw a young man sitting at the right, wearing a white robe**- Luke 24:4 describes two angels noting that "two men suddenly stood near them in dazzling clothing." Mark does not explicitly identify the young man as an angel but Matthew 28:2 does writing "an **angel** of the Lord descended from heaven." While Luke describes two angels, Mark and Matthew describe one angel, Matthew adding "his appearance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow" (Mt 24:3) MacArthur explains the numerical difference noting that "Because only one of the angels spoke, Mark and Matthew mention only him"

**Edwards on sitting at the right** - The position of the angel "on the right side" of the tomb, a detail without apparent significance, is not the kind of thing a fabricator would include and hence witnesses in favor of a historical remembrance.

**Hiebert** - The **right** side marks his position in relation to the women as they entered. The burial area was to the right of the vestibule. ([The Gospel of Mark: An Expository Commentary](#))

**Daniel Akin** - Interestingly Luke 24:3-4 and John 20:12 inform us that there were actually two angels present, the number to establish a valid witness (Deut 17:6; 19:15). Matthew (28:5) and Mark simply focus on the spokesman, the one who conversed with the women.

**And they were amazed** - **Amazed** describes a mixture fear and wonder, astonishment and distress, to the point that they bowed their faces in dread. "**Amazed**" is the same word used in Mark 14:33+ to describe the agony Jesus experienced in the garden of Gethsemane. Luke 24:5 says "the women were terrified ([emphobos](#)) and bowed their faces to the ground."

John explains that the first reaction of Mary Magdalene was that "she ran and came to Simon Peter and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and \*said to them, "They have taken away the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid Him." (John 20:2)

**Amazed** (Only used in Mark)(1568)([ekthambeo](#) from **ek** = out + **thambos** = amazement) means to be quite astonished, greatly amazed, moved to a relatively intense emotional state because of something causing great surprise or perplexity, be very excited. In Mark 14:33 it means be distressed, greatly disturbed, describing Jesus' deep distress at Gethsemane. In Mk 16:5 it means be frightened or alarmed at seeing sitting in Jesus' empty tomb. Uses 4x all in Mark - Mk. 9:15; Mk. 14:33; Mk. 16:5; Mk. 16:6 and not in Septuagint.

**MacArthur** - Evidence for the resurrection begins with the simple yet conclusive fact that Jesus' tomb was empty. The Roman soldiers knew it was empty (Matt. 28:11), as did the Jewish religious leaders (v. 13), the women (Luke 24:3; John 20:2), Peter and John (John 20:6-7), and others like Joseph of Arimathea. Significantly, Jesus' enemies never disputed the empty tomb. Instead, they tried to explain it away by bribing the soldiers to lie and say His disciples had stolen the body (Matt. 28:12-15). In reality, the tomb being empty had nothing to do with the disorganized and cowardly disciples (cf. Mark 14:50; John 20:19), and everything to do with Jesus rising triumphantly from the dead, just as He promised He would do (cf. Matt. 12:40; Mark 8:31; 9:31; 10:33-34; Luke 13:32; 18:33; John 2:19). (See [Mark 9-16 MacArthur New Testament Commentary](#))

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## James Smith - Handfuls of Purpose - TAUGHT IN THE SEPULCHRE Mark 16:1-8

"When brighter suns and milder skies  
Proclaim the opening year,  
What various sounds of joy arise,  
What prospects bright appear!

Thus like the morning calm and clear,  
That saw the Saviour rise;  
The spring of Heaven's eternal year  
Shall dawn on earth and skies."

Very early in the morning the two Marys came to the sepulchre at the rising of the sun, but the Son of God had already risen. He who was before all things rose from the dead before sunrise.

1. Whom they sought. "Ye seek Jesus," said the messenger from Heaven to them. They sought Him that they might anoint Him (vs. 1-6). But the living Christ is never found among the dead. Anxious sinners often seek Him where He cannot be found, among their own dead works or in their own unregenerate hearts. He is not here.

2. When they came. "Very early in the morning, the first day of the week" (v. 2). Although they did not find Him where, and as they expected, yet they found Him (John 20:18). "They that seek Me early shall find Me." Seek Him early in the morning of life, early in the morning of each day, especially the first day of the week. This first day of the week was the first new Sabbath of the new creation.

3. Where they went. "And entering into the sepulchre" (v. 5). It would appear that they stooped down and went right into the grave (John 20:11). In this place of death they had this great revelation of His resurrection power. Where else can we learn it as an experience but by stooping down into His grave? It is by being made "conformable unto His death" that we are made to know the "power of His resurrection" (Phil. 3:10). We must stoop down to be crucified with Christ if the risen One is to live in us (Col. 3:1-3). We stoop to conquer.

4. What they received. They found precious treasure in the tomb of Jesus. It is not death to enter here, but life for evermore. Here they pass from the natural life of sense into the spiritual life of faith. By faith enter the grave of Christ as crucified for you, and ye shall be quickened by resurrection life. They received—

1. A VISION OF THE HEAVENLY ONE. "They saw a young man sitting, clothed in a long white garment" (v. 5). Here in this new tomb, where the Lord Jesus was the only one that ever lay, are they brought into fellowship with a sent one from Heaven. As the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus Christ was not yet glorified, may we not suppose that this young man came as a timely and temporary substitute to take the things of Christ and show them to these early seekers? It is still true that when we put self and self-wisdom in the place of death we shall be taught of God.

2. A WORD OF COMFORT. "He said, Be not affrighted" (v. 6). There is nothing to fear in the grave of your Redeemer. There is a living One there, the ever youthful Spirit of God, waiting to comfort the sorrowful seeker.

3. A PROOF OF HEAVENLY SYMPATHY. "Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth." It must have been a relief to them that this God-sent messenger knew the deeper yearnings of their soul, and was at one with them in their interest. The Holy Spirit is all this and much more to us. "He helpeth our infirmities and maketh intercession according to the will of God" (Rom. 8:26, 27)

4. THE ASSURANCE OF VICTORY. "He saith unto them, He is risen." This was exceeding abundantly above all that they asked or thought. He is not stolen; He is risen. He died for our sins and rose again for our justification. This young man, sitting in the place where Jesus was laid, acts the part of a forerunner of the Holy Spirit in bringing the assurance of life to the hearts of these Saviour-loving women. Peter tells what effect this renewed hope had (1 Peter 1:3).

5. AN EVIDENCE OF RESURRECTION. "He is not here; behold the place where they laid Him." The place where they laid Him was empty. The clothes were there, and perhaps lying folded (not doubled up), just as they were when He was in them. The position of the linen clothes and the napkin evidently astonished the disciples (John 20:6-8). Who could doubt the resurrection who have themselves passed from death into life, and "know Him and the power of His resurrection" (Phil. 3:10).

6. A GREAT COMMISSION. "Go your way, and tell." Testimony for Christ must follow the reviving influence of His resurrection life. They received their commission from an angel from Heaven. The Holy Ghost said, "Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them" (Acts 13:2). "Ye shall be witnesses unto Me ... to the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

7. A PRECIOUS PROMISE. "He goeth before you into Galilee, there ye shall see Him." Blessed prospect that is ever before them that go in His Name. Ye shall see Him, and be made like Him (1 John 3:2). Having been sent "they went out quickly." They were not disobedient to the heavenly vision. Go thou and do likewise, and in the doing of His will there ye shall see Him.

**Mark 16:6 And he said to them, "Do not be amazed; you are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, Who has been crucified. He has risen; He is not here; behold, here is the place where they laid Him.**

Wuest - And he says to them, Stop being utterly amazed. Jesus you are seeking, the Jesus of Nazareth, the crucified. He was raised. He is not here. Behold the place where they laid Him.

- **Do not be amazed:** Mt 14:26,27 28:4,5 Rev 1:17,18
- **you are looking for:** Ps 105:3,4 Pr 8:17
- **Jesus the Nazarene:** Joh 19:19,20 Ac 2:22,23 4:10 10:38-40
- **He has risen:** Mk 9:9,10 10:34 Ps 71:20 Mt 12:40 28:6,7 Lu 24:4-8,20-27,46 Joh 2:19-22 1Co 15:3-7

#### Related Passages:

Matthew 28:5 The angel said to the women, "**Do not be afraid**; for I know that you are looking for Jesus who has been crucified. 6 "He is not here, for He has risen, just as He said. Come, see the place where He was lying.

Luke 24:4 While they were perplexed about this, behold, two men suddenly stood near them in dazzling clothing; 5 and as the women were terrified and bowed their faces to the ground, the men said to them, "Why do you seek the living One among the dead? 6 "He is not here, but He has risen. Remember how He spoke to you while He was still in Galilee, 7 saying that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again." 8 And they remembered His words,

**R T France** notes that "None of [the Gospels] includes an account of the actual rising of Jesus from death, and all assume that this has taken place at some time prior to the discovery of the empty tomb. The setting for the discovery is remarkably down-to-earth...This is not the stuff of a heroic epic, still less a story of magic and wonder, and yet what underlies it is an event beyond human comprehension: the Jesus they had watched dying and being buried some forty hours earlier is no longer dead but risen.... It is in this incongruous combination of the everyday with the incomprehensible that many have found one of the most powerful and compelling aspects of the NT accounts not of Jesus' resurrection (for there are none) but of how the first disciples discovered that he had risen. (The Gospel of Mark, New International Greek Testament Commentary)

**And he said to them, "Do not be amazed; you are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, Who has been crucified** - The angel's message confirmed the women were at the correct tomb. Only Mark identifies Him as **Jesus the Nazarene** to the women. Lk 24:5+ adds what appears to be a mild rebuke by the angelic messenger - "Why do you seek the living One among the dead?"

**James Edwards** - The visit to the tomb is vintage Markan irony: the living are consumed with death, but the Crucified One is consumed with life. The Crucified One, says the angel, has been raised! The angel invites the women to see the place where they last saw the body of Jesus (Mk 15:47). The references to the place of his burial and to Jesus as the crucified one are of crucial importance. The women are not directed to a mystical or spiritual experience or to a numinous encounter. They are directed specifically to Jesus, who died by a crucifixion they witnessed, was buried in a place they witnessed, and now has been resurrected. The verbs in Mk 16:6 refer to both sides of the Easter event. The announcement of the divine emissary establishes an inseparable continuity between the historical Jesus and the resurrected Jesus. The one whom the angel invites them to know is the one whom they have known. The announcement of the angel is literally the gospel, good news, and the place from which the gospel is first preached is the empty tomb that both received and gave up the Crucified One. A new order of existence is inaugurated. The NIV reads, " 'He has risen!' " but the Greek is more precise, " 'He was raised.' " "Risen" could suggest that Jesus arose on his own, but "was raised" rightly implies that he was resurrected by God. At this moment and in this place the women are witnessing "the kingdom of God come with power" (Mk 9:1). (See [The Gospel According to Mark](#))

**Do not be amazed** (1568) (see above on [ekthambeo](#)) and is a [present imperative with a negative](#) calling them to stop this reaction.

**Looking for** (2212) ([zeteo](#)) implies giving attention and priority to and deliberately pursuing after. The most common sense of this word is to "**seek**". Uses in Mark - Mk. 1:37; Mk. 3:32; Mk. 8:11; Mk. 8:12; Mk. 11:18; Mk. 12:12; Mk. 14:1; Mk. 14:11; Mk. 14:55; Mk. 16:6;

**Robertson** on **Who has been crucified** - The crucified one (ton estaurōmenon). This also in Matt. 28:5. This description of his shame has become his crown of glory, for Paul (Gal. 6:14), and for all who look to the Crucified and Risen Christ as Saviour and Lord. **Has been crucified** ([stauroo](#)) is in the [perfect tense](#) indicating a past action at a point in time with continuing effect. [Mark 16 Commentary](#))

**He has risen** - **Risen** is [egeiro](#) in the aorist tense (has happened in past) and the passive voice (see divine passive) which would be more accurately translated "has been raised." (cf. Acts 2:24, 32; 3:15, 26; 4:10; 5:30; 10:40; 13:30, 33, 34, 37; Rom. 4:24–25; 6:9; 7:4; 8:34; 10:9; 1 Cor. 6:14; 15:4, 12–20; 2 Cor. 4:14; Eph. 1:20; Col. 2:12; 1 Thess. 1:10; 1 Peter 1:21). The first announcement of Jesus' resurrection was made by a heavenly messenger.

I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received,  
that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures,  
and that He was buried, and that  
He was raised ([perfect tense](#) = permanence) on the third day  
according to the Scriptures,  
(1 Corinthians 15:3-4+)

**Utley** - The resurrection is the central pillar of the Christian faith (cf. 1 Cor. 15). This shows God's approval of Jesus' life and sacrifice. This is a recurrent theme of Peter (cf. Acts 2:24–28, 32, 3:15, 26; 4:10; 5:30; 10:40; 1 Pet. 1:13, 3:18, 21, and Paul, Acts 13:30, 33, 34, 37; 17:31; Rom. 4:24, 8:11; 10:9; 2 Cor. 4:14). This is confirmation of the Father's acceptance of the Son's substitutionary death (cf. 1 Cor. 15). Theologically all three persons of the Trinity were active in Christ's resurrection: the Father (Acts 2:24; 3:15; 4:10; 5:30; 10:40; 13:30, 33, 34; 17:31); the Spirit (Rom. 8:11); and the Son (John 2:19–22; 10:17–18). ([Mark 16](#))

## [Commentary](#))

**MacArthur** writes "the women received hope and comfort from the heavenly messengers. It was angels who brought tidings of great joy at the birth of Jesus (Luke 2:10–15); and angels who announced the wondrous reality of His resurrection....Though Jesus Himself possessed the authority to lay down His life and to take it up again (John 10:18), the New Testament also teaches that He was raised by the power of both the Father (Rom. 6:4; Gal. 1:1; 1 Peter 1:3) and the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:11). That reality is not contradictory but rather affirms the unity of God within the Trinity, since each member of the Godhead participated in the resurrection (as they did in creation, cf. Gen. 1:1–3; John 1:1–3)." (See [Mark 9-16 MacArthur New Testament Commentary](#))

Luke fills in the details writing that "as the women were terrified and bowed their faces to the ground, the men said to them, "Why do you seek the living One among the dead? 6 "He is not here, but He has risen. Remember how He spoke to you while He was still in Galilee, 7 saying that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again." 8 And they remembered His words." (Lk 24:5-8).

**Has risen** (has been raised) (1453)(**egeiro**) means literally to rise (stand up) from a sitting or lying position (Mt 8:26, 9:5), to awaken from sleep (Mt 8:25), figuratively to "awaken" from death (rise up). **Egeiro** was used literally also to raise up or lift up a person either sitting or lying down. Figuratively **egeiro** was used to "raise up" a person from illness, thus restoring them to health. Figuratively as used in Romans 4:24, **egeiro** describes the bringing back of Jesus from the dead and thus raising Him or causing Him to rise. The idea of wake up from death is conveyed by **egeiro** because sleep was used as metaphor of death for believers (there is however no "soul sleep"). To raise up to a position as was David in Acts 13:22 (referring to his "promotion" to king). **Ralph Martin** adds that "In the NT **egeiro** is found 141 times. Of these, 73, or slightly more than half, refer to the resurrection of the dead. Of these 73, again, some 48, or about two-thirds, refer to the resurrection of Jesus. There are other references in the NT to the resurrection of Jesus, but about 50 places use this word." (Word Meanings in the NT)

**He is not here behold** - This declaration should make every believer shout "Hallelujah!" The interjection **behold (idou)** calls them to focus their attention to the shelf or niche carved out of the rock where Jesus' body had been laid. Mark does not tell us what they women saw but we can deduce from what Peter and John saw, the women saw the same thing. John writes "And so Simon Peter also \*came, following him, and entered the tomb; and he saw **the linen wrappings lying there, and the face-cloth which had been on His head, not lying with the linen wrappings, but rolled up in a place by itself:**" (John 20:6–7).

**Hiebert** - His resurrection explains why they cannot find His dead body in the tomb. The living one is not to be found among the dead. His actual resurrection is nowhere described, and no human eye saw it. The angel with his message provided the needed connecting link between the resurrection event and the condition in the tomb. ([The Gospel of Mark: An Expository Commentary](#))

**Here is the place where they laid Him**- The slab was empty except for the grave clothes. "The empty tomb has ever since been an apt symbol of Christianity." (Hiebert)

### Related Resources:

- [What is the harmony of the Gospels?](#)
- [Can the various resurrection accounts from the four Gospels be harmonized?](#)

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**Sad Or Glad?** : Mark 16:1-14 - They mourned and wept. —Mark 16:10 Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. — John 20:20 The first Resurrection Day began with gloom and despair for the disciples of our Lord. Three days earlier, their Master had been crucified and buried. We can imagine them huddled together behind closed doors as "they mourned and wept" (Mark 16:10). But John told us that before the day ended the disciples "were glad" (John 20:20). From mourning in the morning—to gladness in the evening! What made the difference? Seeing their resurrected Lord made all the difference. It changed mourning into gladness, weeping into joy. There is still a deeper and a greater lesson here. All their mourning and weeping had been unnecessary. Jesus did not sympathize with their heartbreaking sorrow, but instead He "rebuked their unbelief and hardness of heart" (Mark 16:14). He had told them repeatedly that He would rise from the dead on the third day (Matthew 20:19; Mark 10:34; Luke 18:33). His enemies remembered ([Matthew 27:62-66](#)), but His disciples forgot. They were filled with sorrow because they didn't believe His promise. We too can have great reason to be filled with joyous anticipation and hope as we await the coming of our resurrected Lord. —[M.R. DeHaan, M.D.](#)

Yes, Christ the Lord is risen,  
Has come forth from the grave;  
He breaks the chains of death for you  
And now has power to save. —Woodruff

Christ's empty tomb fills us with hope.

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**Mark 16:6 Resurrection - "And he said to them, "Do not be amazed; you are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who has been crucified. He has risen; He is not here; behold, here is the place where they laid Him."**

Alfred Lord Tennyson expressed his belief in the resurrection in his poem, "Crossing the Bar." He gave instructions that it was to appear in every book of his poems that should ever be published, and always at the end of the book. He wanted all who read his works to see this assertion of faith in the face of death.

It is the lily, above all other flowers, that we associate with Easter. One particular lily, the lotus lily, seems to have a built-in immortality. Seeds from this lily that have lain dormant for a thousand years have been known to germinate and grow.

Ernest Renan said, "You Christians are living on the fragrance of an empty vase." He referred, of course, to the empty tomb. But the apostolic witnesses never appealed to the empty tomb as proof of the resurrection. They appealed to Christ's appearances, to the fact that he ate with them, and to his ever-present power. Rudolf Bultmann said that the disciples' believing led to their seeing. The book of Acts says that their seeing led to their believing.

When Clement of Rome wrote to the Corinthians about the resurrection, he chose the fable of the phoenix bird. The phoenix was an Arabian bird, the only one of its kind. It lived for one hundred years. When the time of death was near, it built a nest of spices, including frankincense and myrrh, entered the nest, and died. In the decay of its flesh a worm was produced, nourished by the dead body of the bird. The worm grew feathers and became strong enough to fly. It then carried the bones of its parent to Heliopolis in Egypt.

The bodies of the last Czar of Russia and his family were discovered in 1979, but the finder feared to tell of it until 1989. Everyone thought the bodies of the royal family had been destroyed by acid. The finder feared that the knowledge of the discovery would not be welcomed by the Communist government, so he kept quiet for ten years. In contrast, when the disciples found that the body of Jesus was not in the tomb, they immediately told everyone everywhere.

In Sir Thomas Malory's story "Le Morte d'Arthur," some people say that King Arthur is not dead and will come again to win the Holy Cross. Others say he is dead and on his tomb are these words: "Here Lies Arthur, Once and Future King." No inscription was put on the tomb of Jesus. He didn't stay there long enough. But he alone is the once and future King.

The most famous clock in the world is London's Big Ben. It stands by the Houses of Parliament and towers above Westminster Abbey. It is a familiar landmark. The chimes play the tune of a hymn. The hymn is "I Know That My Redeemer Liveth."

The great Hungarian poet Sandor Petofi was killed in an abortive revolt in 1848. He is honored in Budapest's Petofi Bridge, in composer Franz Liszt's music, and in a legend that says he will rise again to help his nation in some future hour of need. Of course, no one takes the legend seriously, but the resurrection of Jesus Christ is taken seriously by millions.

In parts of Yugoslavia, it is still the custom to put food on the grave forty days after death. Sure enough, the food disappears! Local people call it the "gypsy cafeteria." We put flowers, not food. We no more imagine that the dead will smell the flowers than Yugoslavians imagine the dead will eat the food. We do it because we ourselves need to remember, need to be grateful, need some tangible expression of grief. But we are certain that some day the dead will rise, not to eat and drink as before, but to live eternally.

The Russian word for Sunday, voskresicnye, means resurrection. Every communist, every atheist, must speak of the resurrection when referring to the first day of the week!

As the bird with day's last gleam  
Wearily sings itself asleep;  
As it twitters in its dream,  
Ever fainter comes its peep.  
So my songs scarce reach the ear,  
Overtaken by my night.  
But the loud ones will burst clear,  
When it comes—another light.—Ernst Curtius

Dean Henry Aldrich (1647-1710) wrote: "What is lovely never dies, but passes into other loveliness, stardust, or seafoam, flower or winged air." Most of us are not satisfied with such nebulous ideas of immortality. The risen Christ, by contrast, appeared to his followers, talked with them, ate with them, and gave every indication that he was alive. It was not that he was alive in their memory, or alive in some poetic sense, or in some spiritual sense. He was truly alive, as alive as he had been before the cross.



In Armenia the national insignia is not the hammer and sickle so familiar all over the former U.S.S.R. but a flowering cross, symbolizing Christ's resurrection!

(Source of above illustrations - [1000 Windows - Robert Shannon](#))

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## **O Glorious Day**

[\(play\)](#)

One day when Heaven was filled with His praises  
One day when sin was as black as could be  
Jesus came forth to be born of a virgin  
Dwelt among men, my example is He  
Word became flesh and the light shined among us  
His glory revealed

Living, He loved me  
Dying, He saved me  
Buried, He carried my sins far away  
Rising, He justified freely forever  
One day He's coming  
Oh glorious day, oh glorious day

One day they led Him up Calvary's mountain  
One day they nailed Him to die on a tree  
Suffering anguish, despised and rejected  
Bearing our sins, my Redeemer is He  
Hands that healed nations, stretched out on a tree  
And took the nails for me

Living, He loved me  
Dying, He saved me  
Buried, He carried my sins far away  
Rising, He justified freely forever  
One day He's coming  
Oh glorious day, oh glorious day

One day the grave could conceal Him no longer  
One day the stone rolled away from the door  
Then He arose, over death He had conquered  
Now is ascended, my Lord evermore  
Death could not hold Him, the grave could not keep Him  
From rising again

Living, He loved me  
Dying, He saved me  
Buried, He carried my sins far away  
Rising, He justified freely forever  
One day He's coming  
Oh glorious day, oh glorious day

One day the trumpet will sound for His coming  
One day the skies with His glories will shine  
Wonderful day, my Beloved One bringing  
My Savior Jesus is mine

Living, He loved me  
Dying, He saved me  
Buried, He carried my sins far away  
Rising, He justified freely forever  
One day He's coming



Oh glorious day, oh glorious day

**Mark 16:7 "But go, tell His disciples and Peter, 'He is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see Him, just as He told you.'"**

Wuest - But be going; say to His disciples and Peter, He is going before you into Galilee. There you will find Him, just as He told you.

- **tell:** Mk 14:50,66-72 Mt 28:7 2Co 2:7
- **there:** Mk 14:28 Mt 26:32 28:10,16,17 Joh 21:1 Ac 13:31 1Co 15:5

#### Related Passages:

Matthew 28:7 "Go quickly and tell His disciples that He has risen from the dead; and behold, He is going ahead of you into Galilee, there you will see Him; behold, I have told you."

Luke 24:1-8 But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they came to the tomb bringing the spices which they had prepared. 2 And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb, 3 but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. 4 While they were perplexed about this, behold, two men suddenly stood near them in dazzling clothing; 5 and as the women were terrified and bowed their faces to the ground, the men said to them, "Why do you seek the living One among the dead? 6 "He is not here, but He has risen. Remember how He spoke to you while He was still in Galilee, 7 saying that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again." 8 And they remembered His words,

### GO AND TELL WE WILL MEET AGAIN!

**But** - Term of contrast. Hiebert says "the strong adversative, **but**, recalled them from their wonder and awe to the task that the resurrection of Jesus placed upon them." ([The Gospel of Mark: An Expository Commentary](#))

**Go tell** - They had come to anoint but the angel says go and announce. **Go** is a command in the [present imperative](#) to keep on going ("go quickly" in Mt 28:7). **Tell** is a command in the [aorist imperative](#) meaning to tell it every time. Don't hesitate to tell the good news. These women had been faithful to the end on the Cross and even now faithful to the tomb and would be rewarded with the privilege of being the first to proclaim "He is Risen! Jesus is alive!" Can you imagine their hearts pounding as they hurried back to tell the disciples!

**THOUGHT** - Their knowledge of the Truth of the resurrection called for action. That was true then and is still true, and even more so as the final curtain in the great drama of redemption draws ever closer. This begs a simple question are you going and do you tell the lost that Jesus is alive? As one writer has said command to the women. Their knowledge of the truth called for action. "God does not disclose the Resurrection fact except to enlist people in a task."

**His disciples and Peter** - Only Mark has this detail that **Peter** is singled out. This is not to condemn but to comfort Peter who had denied Him. This would assure Peter that although He had denied Christ, Christ would never deny him!

**William Barclay** - "It was characteristic of Jesus that he thought, not of the wrong Peter had done him but of the remorse he was undergoing. Jesus was far more eager to comfort the penitent sinner than to punish the sin." ([Mark 16 Commentary](#))

**He is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see Him, just as He told you** - This recalls Jesus' promise in Mark 14:28- "But after I have been raised, I will go ahead of you to Galilee." (also in Mt 26:32) Jesus would go there before they did and would meet there. **There you will see Him** did not exclude appearances in Jerusalem. The words **just as He told you** underscore the veracity and faithfulness of what Jesus said. He would keep every promise to them and to us **just as He told you!**

**Akin** on Jesus **going ahead...to Galilee** - What a word of grace! What a word of forgiveness, hope and promise. What a pledge for a new beginning from the very place where they first began to walk with Him. Peter would especially be grateful for this word! ([Mark 16:1-8 The Resurrection of the Great King Note that this message](#) ends with about 15 pages of discussion on the Authenticity of the Resurrection)

**Hiebert** comments that "Because of their lack of faith, the disciples did not immediately act on these words. The appearances to

them in the vicinity of Jerusalem were necessary to convince them of the reality of His resurrection." ([The Gospel of Mark: An Expository Commentary](#))

**James Edwards** - This announcement, a fulfillment of 14:28, is a remarkable word of grace and encouragement. The flight of the disciples, even Peter's pitiful denial, have not been the last word. It is not given to human beings to speak the last word. The last word belongs to the risen Lord, " 'I am going before you.' " The first act of Jesus' ministry was the calling of four fishermen into community with himself (1:16–20); and the first word of the resurrected Jesus is the reconvening of the same community of disciples (14:27–28). The announcement of the angel is not one of deserved blame but a promise of gathering and going before them! God completes his plans for the church despite human failure. If the word of grace from the resurrected Lord includes a traitor like Peter, readers of the Gospel may be assured that it includes those of their community who have also failed Christ. (See [The Gospel According to Mark](#).)

**Spurgeon** - "He goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see him, as he said unto you." Mark 16:7.

WHERE he appointed to meet his disciples, there he would be in due time. Jesus keeps his tryst. If he promises to meet us at the mercy-seat, or in public worship, or in the ordinances, we may depend upon it that he will be there. We may wickedly stay away from the appointed meeting-place, but he never does. He says, "Where two or three are met together in my name, there am I"; he says not "There will I be," but, "I am there already."

Jesus is always first in fellowship: "He goeth before you." His heart is with his people, his delight is in them, he is never slow to meet them. In all fellowship he goeth before us.

But he reveals himself to those who come after him: "There shall ye see him." Joyful sight! We care not to see the greatest of mere men, but to see HIM is to be filled with joy and peace. And we shall see him, for he promises to come to those who believe in him, and to manifest himself to them. Rest assured that it will be so, for he does everything according to his word of promise: "As he said unto you." Catch at those last words, and be assured that to the end he will do for you "as he said unto you."

## THE RESURRECTION COMPARISON OF GOSPEL ACCOUNTS

EVENT	Mt 28:1-8	Mk 16:1-8	Lk 24:1-10	Jn 20:1-8
<b>When?</b>	At Dawn	Just after sunrise	Very early in the morning	While it was still dark
<b>Who comes first?</b>	Mary Magdalene and the other Mary	Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome	Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and others	Mary Magdalene
<b>What do they find?</b>	earthquake with angel who rolls back the stone	stone rolled away	stone rolled away	stone removed from the entrance
<b>Whom do they see?</b>	angel sitting on the stone	young man in white robe, sitting on the right	two men in clothes that gleamed like lightening	no one
<b>What do they do?</b>	ran to tell his disciples	fled from the tomb, afraid to say anything	told what had happened to the Eleven and others	ran to tell Peter and the disciple, the one Jesus loved
<b>What happens next?</b>	Jesus met them		Peter goes to the tomb to investigate	Peter and the other disciple investigate

<b>What is the third scene?</b>	guards report to chief priests and are bribed		story of two disciples on Emmaus road	Mary sees two angels in white, seated where Jesus' body had been
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When we examine these four accounts, we notice some similarities. First, all agree that the events happened around dawn, although they disagree about whether it was already light. Given that the events happened over a period of time, this difference is hardly significant. Second, all agree that Mary Magdalene was at least one of the ones discovering that the body had disappeared. The purposes of the individual narratives seems to determine how many other women are mentioned (with Luke, who has a special interest in women, noting the most women). Third, all agree that the women find an open, corpseless tomb. Matthew seems to imply that they also saw the opening of the tomb, although he may narrate the opening of the tomb as something that happened while the women were traveling and before they arrived at the tomb. None of the other Gospels mentions the guards, so how the tomb gets opened is less of a problem for them. Fourth, all agree that the women saw one or more angels (only Luke has two). However, the angel in John's account appears to be functioning in a different narrative role than the ones in the other accounts. It is, perhaps, more accurate to say that John does not inform us if Mary saw anyone at the tomb before going to tell the disciples. What the angels say also differs, although in all cases the women are informed that Jesus is not there. In the various accounts they are told not to fear (and that they were afraid anyway), to report to the disciples and to meet Jesus in Galilee. Finally, all agree that the women left the tomb, and three of the four accounts note that they did inform the disciples. (Mark breaks off with verse 8, the longer ending probably not being part of the original text; it is debated whether an original ending of Mark has been lost or whether he intended to break off with the women in fear and the question of whether they would follow Jesus into Galilee hanging in the air.)

Furthermore, two of the accounts agree that the woman or women met Jesus, that they tried to hold on to him, and that he sent them on their way. However, John appears to put this meeting after Peter and the beloved disciple investigate, and Matthew puts it before the women report to the disciples.

What can we conclude from this data? First, it is possible to make this data into a coherent story. If we assume that the pre- or postdawn timing depends on whether one gives the time of the women starting their trip or their arrival at the tomb, if we assume that the earthquake and angelic descent happened before the women arrived at the tomb, if we merge what the angels say into one account, if we assume that the angels moved around, and if we assume that Mary Magdalene remained behind at the tomb while the others went and reported (and thus had a separate meeting with Jesus), one can make a single coherent account out of the various stories. Obviously, if there were two angels, one writer could report only one. Not every writer has to report all of the details another mentions. In other words, these are different stories but not necessarily conflicting stories. All could be true at the same time.

Second, while it is possible to make the data fit into a coherent story, we cannot be sure that we have the right coherent story. We have a jigsaw puzzle of information and cannot be sure that we have all of the pieces. Thus, since the Scripture has not given us a single unified story, we must be careful or else we will end up believing that our reconstruction is the truth. A reconstruction may be the truth or it may distort the truth. Perhaps if we had some other critical pieces of information we would make quite a different reconstruction.

Third, these stories are exactly what one would expect to discover after a significant event like the resurrection. The chancellor of this author's university died at the end of an address to the student body. Within an hour of the event a sociology professor had his thirty students each write down their own account of what had happened. Each was instructed to write as honest and detailed account as they could, given the limited time of the class period. When the accounts were later compared, there were numerous differences in detail, although all agreed that the chancellor had died at the end of his address. Presumably each Gospel writer had a series of stories about the resurrection to sort through. For example, we know that Matthew knows and values Mark's account, but in the resurrection story he obviously has some independent information as well. The Evangelists selected and combined data to get the accounts that they give us. But even the beloved disciple in John is not an eyewitness of most of the events, so we are not surprised to find a lot of differences in their reporting what happened.

Finally, when we try to put the stories together, we miss the point of the authors. The church accepted into its canon four separate Gospels, viewing each as inspired by God. It did not put into the canon a harmony of these Gospels (although such existed). The fact is that each writer is trying to bring out his unique perspective and theological insights by the details he includes or leaves out (although, unless Matthew and Luke are differing from Mark, which we know that they knew, we often cannot be sure that the author actually knows a detail and so purposely leaves it out). Matthew wants to underline the miraculous and also explain a rumor that the body of Jesus was stolen. Luke stresses the fulfillment of the words of Jesus and yet the disbelief of the apostles. John, by focusing on a single character and her intimate discussion with Jesus, points out that in the resurrection and ascension of Jesus the promises of John 13–16 are fulfilled. Jesus cannot be held, for it is better for him to go to the one who is not only his Father but is now also our Father. It is when we look at the resurrection through such eyes, informed by the perspective of each Gospel writer, that we see not simply a miracle, nor even the fact of the resurrection, but the message the church has believed that God wanted to

**Question - [Can the various resurrection accounts from the four Gospels be harmonized?](#)**

**Answer:** The events surrounding Jesus' resurrection can be difficult to piece together. We must remember two things: first, the news of Jesus' resurrection produced much excitement in Jerusalem, and in the ensuing chaos many people were going many different directions. Groups were separated, and several different groups paid visits to the tomb, possibly more than once. Second, the writers of the Gospels did not attempt an exhaustive narrative; in other words, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John had no intention of telling us every detail of the resurrection or every event in the order that it happened.

In the battle with skeptics regarding Jesus' resurrection, Christians are in a "no-win" situation. If the resurrection accounts harmonize perfectly, skeptics will claim that the writers of the Gospels conspired together. If the resurrection accounts have some differences, skeptics will claim that the Gospels contradict each other and therefore cannot be trusted. It is our contention that the resurrection accounts can be harmonized and do not contradict each other.

However, even if the resurrection accounts cannot be perfectly harmonized, that does not make them untrustworthy. By any reasonable evaluation, the resurrection accounts from the four Gospels are superbly consistent eyewitness testimonies. The central truths - that Jesus was resurrected from the dead and that the resurrected Jesus appeared to many people - are clearly taught in each of the four Gospels. The apparent inconsistencies are in "side issues." How many angels did they see in the tomb, one or two? (Perhaps one person only saw one angel, while the other person saw two angels.) To how many women did Jesus appear, and to whom did He appear first? (While each Gospel has a slightly different sequence to the appearances, none of them claims to be giving the precise chronological order.) So, while the resurrection accounts may seem to be inconsistent, it cannot be proven that the accounts are contradictory.

Here is a possible harmony of the narratives of the resurrection of Christ and His post-resurrection appearances, in chronological order:

- Jesus is buried, as several women watch (Matthew 27:57-61; Mark 15:42-47; Luke 23:50-56; John 19:38-42).
- The tomb is sealed and a guard is set (Matthew 27:62-66).
- At least 3 women, including Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome, prepare spices to go to the tomb (Matthew 28:1; Mark 16:1).
- An angel descends from heaven, rolls the stone away, and sits on it. There is an earthquake, and the guards faint (Matthew 28:2-4).
- The women arrive at the tomb and find it empty. Mary Magdalene leaves the other women there and runs to tell the disciples (John 20:1-2).
- The women still at the tomb see two angels who tell them that Jesus is risen and who instruct them to tell the disciples to go to Galilee (Matthew 28:5-7; Mark 16:2-8; Luke 24:1-8).
- The women leave to bring the news to the disciples (Matthew 28:8).
- The guards, having roused themselves, report the empty tomb to the authorities, who bribe the guards to say the body was stolen (Matthew 28:11-15).
- Mary the mother of James and the other women, on their way to find the disciples, see Jesus (Matthew 28:9-10).
- The women relate what they have seen and heard to the disciples (Luke 24:9-11).
- Peter and John run to the tomb, see that it is empty, and find the grave clothes (Luke 24:12; John 20:2-10).
- Mary Magdalene returns to the tomb. She sees the angels, and then she sees Jesus (John 20:11-18).
- Later the same day, Jesus appears to Peter (Luke 24:34; 1 Corinthians 15:5).
- Still on the same day, Jesus appears to Cleopas and another disciple on their way to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-32).
- That evening, the two disciples report the event to the Eleven in Jerusalem (Luke 24:32-35).
- Jesus appears to ten disciples—Thomas is missing (Luke 24:36-43; John 20:19-25).
- Jesus appears to all eleven disciples—Thomas included (John 20:26-31).
- Jesus appears to seven disciples by the Sea of Galilee (John 21:1-25).
- Jesus appears to about 500 disciples in Galilee (1 Corinthians 15:6).
- Jesus appears to His half-brother James (1 Corinthians 15:7).
- Jesus commissions His disciples (Matthew 28:16-20).
- Jesus teaches His disciples the Scriptures and promises to send the Holy Spirit (Luke 24:44-49; Acts 1:4-5).
- Jesus ascends into heaven (Luke 24:50-53; Acts 1:6-12).

**Mark 16:8 They went out and fled from the tomb, for trembling and astonishment had gripped them; and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.**

Wuest - And having gone, they fled from the tomb, for there had come upon them trembling and astonishment: And they said not even one thing to anyone. For they were afraid.

- **they went:** Mt 28:8 Lu 24:9-11,22-24
- **trembling:** Mk 16:5,6 Lu 24:37
- **neither:** 2Ki 4:29 Lu 10:4

#### Related Passages:

Matthew 28:8 And they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy and ran to report it to His disciples.

Luke 24:9 and returned from the tomb and reported all these things to the eleven and to all the rest. 10 Now they were Mary Magdalene and Joanna and Mary the mother of James; also the other women with them were telling these things to the apostles. 11 But these words appeared to them as nonsense, and they would not believe them.

**They went out and fled from the tomb, for trembling and astonishment had gripped them** - Notice the women don't remain still to ask more questions or dialogue more with the angelic messenger. They have heard enough news. They have heard the best news. He is risen. He is alive. And so off they flee doubtless fleet of foot! Matthew 28:8 says they "left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy."

**Hiebert** says **had gripped them** "is imperfect tense, "was holding them." It marks their continuing excitement, causing their bodies to tremble. As they gained control of themselves and they began to realize the profound reality that had been declared to them, they felt "great joy" (Matt. 28:8) and astonishment, or "ecstasy," They felt an utter amazement which swept them quite beyond their normal selves." ([The Gospel of Mark: An Expository Commentary](#))

**Trembling** (5156)(**tromos** from **trémo** = tremble, gives us our English word "tremor") quaking with fear or quivering often with the implication of fear and/or consternation. **Trembling** as an involuntary shaking, quivering, or shivering as with fear, cold or weakness. While they may have been fear, they were surely trembling with excitement at this miracle of miracles.

**Astonishment** (1611)(**ekstasis** [English - **ecstasy**] from **existemi** = "be out of one's sense") "strictly being put out of place; hence (1) as an abnormal state of mind distraction, terror, amazement (Mk 5.42); (2) as a partially suspended consciousness ecstasy, trance (Acts 10.10)." (Friberg) **Thomas Page** adds that **ekstasis** "represents a state in which a man, to a greater or less extent, ceases to be under the control of conscious reason and intelligence: he 'passes out of himself' (**existemi**) and needs 'to come to himself' again (cf. Acts 12:11). It may describe the effect of awe and amazement (cf. Acts 3:10, Acts 8:9, 8:11, 8:13), or fear (Mark 16:8), or as here and Acts 22:17 a complete loss of outward consciousness, 'a trance'." (The Acts of the Apostles, 1895) **BDAG** - (1) a state of consternation or profound emotional experience to the point of being beside oneself ('distraction, confusion, perplexity, astonishment' in var. aspects) = amazement/astonishment (2) a state of being in which consciousness is wholly or partially suspended, frequently associated with divine action = trance, ecstasy.

**And they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid** (**phobeo**) - Literally "to no one they said anything." This clearly does not mean they never said anything for in Luke 24:9 we read then "returned from the tomb and reported all these things to the eleven and to all the rest."

**Hiebert** explains that "It was an awesome message which they did not dare to break to others; only after they had found those to whom they were to give the message did they find themselves able to speak of it." ([The Gospel of Mark: An Expository Commentary](#))

**Sinclair Ferguson** helps us put their fear in perspective: "Should they not have returned home rejoicing in the news they had heard? Is there not something unexpected about this response? That in itself is a mark of its authenticity (if we were to invent the story we would not end it in this way). But it is more. In Mark's Gospel, this fear is always man's response to the breaking in of the power of God. It is the fear the disciples experienced when Jesus stilled the storm; the fear of the Gerasenes when Jesus delivered Legion; the fear of the disciples as they saw Jesus setting his face to Jerusalem to die on the cross. This fear is the response of men and women to Jesus as he shows his power and majesty as the Son of God." (Let's Study Mark)

**MacArthur** - After the women had left, Peter and John arrived at the empty tomb (John 20:3–9; cf. Luke 24:12). Mary Magdalene also returned to the tomb, after Peter and John were gone (John 20:10). This time, she too saw the angels (v. 12) and encountered the risen Lord Himself, initially thinking He was merely the gardener (vv. 14–18). Jesus appeared to the rest of the women also, as they were walking on the road to meet the disciples - "And they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy and ran to report it to His disciples. 9 And behold, Jesus met them and greeted them. And they came up and took hold of His feet and worshiped Him. 10 Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid; go and take word to My brethren to leave for Galilee, and there they will see Me." (Mt 28:8-10) When the women, including Mary Magdalene (cf. John 20:18), found the disciples and reported what had happened, the eleven initially refused to believe their news (Luke 24:10–11). Their lack of faith made them slow to respond to Jesus' command to go to Galilee. It was not until after the risen Christ repeatedly appeared to them in Jerusalem (cf. Luke 24:13–32; John 20:19–31) that they finally were willing to head for Galilee (Matt. 28:7, 16). When Jesus promised to meet His disciples in Galilee (Matt. 28:10), He was not saying that His first post-resurrection appearance would be there but that His supreme appearance (to hundreds of His followers at one time) would take place in Galilee. In Judea, He appeared to Mary Magdalene (John 20:11–18), the other women (Matt. 28:8–10). Peter (Luke 24:34), the two disciples on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:15), ten of the apostles in the upper room (John 20:19), and all eleven including Thomas eight days later (John 20:26). When the apostles arrived in Galilee, Jesus appeared to seven of them on the shore of the lake (John 21:1–25). He later appeared to more than five hundred disciples (1 Cor. 15:6) on a mountain, where He commissioned the apostles to take the gospel to the ends of the earth (cf. Matt. 28:16–17). At some point, Jesus also appeared to His half brother James (1 Cor. 15:7) and then a final time to the eleven apostles on the Mount of Olives, just before His ascension to heaven (Acts 1:4–11). Additional appearances seem indicated in Acts 1:2–3, where Luke says of the apostles, "To these He also presented Himself alive after His suffering, by many convincing proofs, appearing to them over a period of forty days and speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of God." The Old Testament required the testimony of two or three witnesses to substantiate an event (Deut. 19:15). But God ensured that the resurrection would be verified by hundreds of eyewitnesses on many occasions who had personally seen the risen Christ. The reality of the resurrection—affirmed by collective testimony of the empty tomb, the angels, and the eyewitnesses—proves Jesus is who He claimed to be. (See [Mark 9-16 MacArthur New Testament Commentary](#))

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**Norman Geisler - MARK 16:8—[Did the women tell of their experience at the tomb or not?](#)**

**PROBLEM:** Mark says that the women returning from the empty tomb "said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid" (16:8). But Matthew asserts that they "ran to bring His disciples word" (Matt. 28:8; cf. v. 9).

**SOLUTION:** In response, it should be observed that Matthew does not actually say the women told the disciples, but they went back with the intention to tell them. Also, since Mark reveals that they did not speak because "they were afraid," it may be that at first they held their peace (as Mark indicated), and then later spoke up (as Matthew may imply). It is also possible that the women left the tomb in two groups at slightly different times, Mark referring to one and Matthew to the other. (When Critics Ask)

**Mark 16:9 Now after He had risen early on the first day of the week, He first appeared to Mary Magdalene, from whom He had cast out seven demons.**

**Question: [Should Mark 16:9-20 be in the Bible?](#)**

**Answer:** Although the vast majority of later Greek manuscripts contain Mark 16:9-20, the Gospel of Mark ends at verse 8 in two of the oldest and most respected manuscripts, the Codex Sinaiticus and Codex Vaticanus. As the oldest manuscripts are known to be the most accurate because there were fewer generations of copies from the original autographs (i.e., they are much closer in time to the originals), and the oldest manuscripts do not contain vv. 9-20, we can conclude that these verses were added later by scribes. The King James Version of the Bible, as well as the New King James, contains vv. 9-20 because the King James used medieval manuscripts as the basis of its translation. Since 1611, however, older and more accurate manuscripts have been discovered and they affirm that vv. 9-20 were not in the original Gospel of Mark.

In addition, the fourth-century church fathers Eusebius and Jerome noted that almost all Greek manuscripts available to them lacked vv. 9–20, although they doubtless knew those other endings existed. In the second century, Justin Martyr and Tatian knew about other endings. Irenaeus, also, in A.D. 150 to 200, must have known about this long ending because he quotes verse 19 from it. So, the early church fathers knew of the added verses, but even by the fourth century, Eusebius said the Greek manuscripts did not include these endings in the originals.

The internal evidence from this passage also casts doubt on Mark as the author. For one thing, the transition between verses 8 and 9 is abrupt and awkward. The Greek word translated "now" that begins v. 9 should link it to what follows, as the use of the word



“now” does in the other synoptic Gospels. However, what follows doesn’t continue the story of the women referred to in v. 8, describing instead Jesus’ appearing to Mary Magdalene. There’s no transition there, but rather an abrupt and bizarre change, lacking the continuity typical of Mark’s narrative. The author should be continuing the story of the women based on the word “now,” not jumping to the appearance to Mary Magdalene. Further, for Mark to introduce Mary Magdalene here as though for the very first time (v. 9) is odd because she had already been introduced in Mark’s narrative (Mark 15:40, 47, 16:1), another evidence that this section was not written by Mark.

Furthermore, the vocabulary is not consistent with Mark’s Gospel. These last verses don’t read like Mark’s. There are eighteen words here that are never used anywhere by Mark, and the structure is very different from the familiar structure of his writing. The title “Lord Jesus,” used in verse 19, is never used anywhere else by Mark. Also, the reference to signs in vv. 17-18 doesn’t appear in any of the four Gospels. In no account, post-resurrection of Jesus, is there any discussion of signs like picking up serpents, speaking with tongues, casting out demons, drinking poison, or laying hands on the sick. So, both internally and externally, this is foreign to Mark.

While the added ending offers no new information, nor does it contradict previously revealed events and/or doctrine, both the external and internal evidence make it quite certain that Mark did not write it. In reality, ending his Gospel in verse 8 with the description of the amazement of the women at the tomb is entirely consistent with the rest of the narrative. Amazement at the Lord Jesus seems to be a theme with Mark. “They were amazed at his teaching” (Mark 1:22); “They were all amazed, so that they debated among themselves” (Mark 1:27); “He healed the paralytic, and they were all amazed and were glorifying God saying, ‘We’ve never seen anything like this!’” (Mark 2:12). Astonishment at the work of Jesus is revealed throughout Mark’s narrative (Mark 4:41; 5:15, 33, 42; 6:51; 9:6, 15, 32; 10:24, 32; 11:18; 12:17; 16:5). Some, or even one, of the early scribes, however, apparently missed the thematic evidence and felt the need to add a more conventional ending. ([GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org))

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**Norman Geisler** - MARK 16:9–20—Why is this passage of Scripture omitted in some Bibles?

**PROBLEM:** Most modern Bibles contain this ending of the Gospel of Mark, including the KJV, ASV, NASB, and the NKJV. However, both the RSV and the NIV set it off from the rest of the text. A note in the NIV says, “Most reliable early manuscripts and other ancient witnesses do not have Mark 16:9–20.” Were these verses in the original Gospel of Mark?

**SOLUTION:** Scholars are divided over the authenticity of these verses. Those who follow the received text tradition point to the fact that this text is found in the majority of biblical manuscripts down through the centuries. Thus, they believe it was in the original manuscript of Mark.

On the other hand, those who follow the critical text tradition insist that we should not add evidence, but weigh it. Truth is not determined, they say, by majority vote, but by the most qualified witnesses. They point to the following arguments for rejecting these verses: (1) These verses are lacking in many of the oldest and most reliable Greek manuscripts, as well as in important Old Latin, Syriac, Armenian, and Ethiopic manuscripts. (2) Many of the ancient church fathers reveal no knowledge of these verses, including Clement, Origen, and Eusebius. Jerome admitted that almost all Greek copies do not have it. (3) Many manuscripts that do have this section place a mark by it indicating it is a spurious addition to the text. (4) There is another (shorter) ending to Mark that is found in some manuscripts. (5) Others point to the fact that the style and vocabulary are not the same as the rest of the Gospel of Mark.

Whether or not this piece of text belongs in the original, the truth it contains certainly accords with it. So, the bottom line is that it does not make any difference, since if it does belong here there is nothing in it contrary to the rest of Scripture. And if it does not belong, there is no truth missing in the Bible, since everything taught here is found elsewhere in Scripture. This includes tongues (see Acts 2:1ff), baptism (Acts 2:38), and God’s 1st century supernatural protection of His messengers unwittingly bitten by poisonous snakes (cf. Acts 28:3–5). So, in the final analysis, it is simply a debate about whether this particular text belongs in the Bible, not over whether any truth is missing. (When Critics Ask)

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**I personally agree completely with Dr John MacArthur’s critique** - ([See his sermon](#) on this subject below) The result in Mark 16:9–20 is a concise patchwork drawn from various New Testament texts (especially from the other gospels and Acts). As demonstrated above, the content of the longer ending generally reflects biblical truths, with the notable exceptions of snake handling and drinking poison (v. 18), which have no scriptural precedent. It should also be noted that verse 16 does not teach the necessity of baptism for salvation, since the second half of the verse clarifies that condemnation is for unbelief, not a lack of being baptized. **Beyond those points of clarification, an exposition of these verses is not warranted, since they are not original to Mark’s inspired account. Though they reflect traditions from early church history, they are not part of the inerrant and authoritative Word of God.**

**Ryrie** - These verses do not appear in two of the most trustworthy mss. of the NT, though they are part of many other mss. and versions. If they are not a part of the genuine text of Mark, the abrupt ending at verse 8 is probably because the original closing



verses were lost. The doubtful genuineness of verses 9-20 makes it unwise to build a doctrine or base an experience on them (esp. vv. 16-18).

There will be no attempt to do a detailed analysis of Mark 16:9-20. While most of the passages have parallels with authoritative portions of Scripture, one is better served by focusing on the authoritative, inspired, inerrant Scriptures.

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### Passages Related to Mark 16:9-10

- John 20:1 - no on site commentary currently available
- See commentary on Luke 8:2 -
- John 20:17-18 - no on site commentary currently available

## Confidence in God's Word, as It Is Written

### Mark 16:9-20

John MacArthur

- [Click here if you want to listen to the message.](#)

I was handed today a copy of a book that in some measure came out of a message I gave to launch the conference a few years ago, I gave a now somewhat familiar message on why every self-respecting Calvinist should be a Pre-millennialist. Some of you will remember that. Well that has ended up in a book with some of my friends and faculty at the seminary and Dr. Mayhue. And the interesting part about this is, if you're going to argue against the biblical position on eschatology, we want you to actually argue against the biblical position, and not against some caricature of it from the past, so this is what you'll have to answer if you want to retain your amillennial status. You have to be able to handle what the arguments are in Christ's prophetic plan. And there are some available around here for you today. But that's the past and we're not going there again. We've solved that problem, on to other things.

I am, as you are as a pastor, moving rapidly through the years of ministry and even through the year since last Shepherds Conference. And, like you, I've preached every Sunday morning and night, for me, on different subjects and different texts and it goes very fast and very rapidly by. And then I stop to think about what am I going to do to minister to the men who come to the Shepherds Conference and because I'm surrounded by such wonderful friends and gifted guys that serve alongside me, I turn to them and uniformly I was compelled, if I want to have a future here, to speak to you on the subject that I am this morning. And so we'll have to lay it at the feet of those around me who have been with us through all the ministry for many years here at Grace Church and felt like this might be an encouragement in a way to you. And so, what I'm going to do this morning is speak on a passage that is in your Bible, but shouldn't be there. Please turn to Mark 16. So you can say that you were there when John MacArthur did an exposition of a spurious passage in Scripture.

Just a little bit of background on this, and I think if you stay with the process, you may enjoy the end. On Sunday June 5, last June 5<sup>th</sup>, the end came to an effort that began here in February of 1969. From the time that I arrived at Grace Community Church on that February 9<sup>th</sup>, in 1969, my desire was to teach through the New Testament. I had prepared to do that. I took a Greek Minor in college and then New Testament emphasis in seminary cause I really wanted to spend my ministry in the New Testament.

I wanted to go through verse by verse with a reasonable measure of depth, not taking every rabbit trail, every possible avenue away from a text, but find to at least be fair to all that a text contains. And so the years have gone by since 1969 and it was June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2011 that I finished the New Testament. In the gospels I averaged...in the gospels I averaged 5.5 verses per message and that's pretty good for me, and in the epistles 4 verses per message because they're a little more dense than narrative passages.

I suppose it needs to be said that I believed when I started what I believe now that I have held in my hand the actual living Word of God, and that every message that I have preached from it is the Word of God, as best as I could interpret it and understand it.

I suppose I could have begun the 43-year effort with a long defense of Scripture's authenticity, or Scripture's authority, or Scripture's inspiration, or Scripture's inerrancy, and accuracy, and sufficiency and while through the years I talked about those things when the Scripture talked about them, I didn't do that. I have believed that the Scripture is its own defense. I have believed that the Scripture examined and the Scripture understood will make its own case for its authority and inerrancy. I am a pre suppositionalist in that sense. God doesn't try to prove the Bible to be true, He simply declares the truth. I have never tried to prove to the congregation of Grace Church that what we are reading and what we are hearing is God's Word. I haven't needed to do that because Scripture is its

own peerless advocate. Its accuracy and its truthfulness, its clarity, its power are obvious as its content accumulates. And the weight of it increases and increases and increases. And correspondingly doubt diminishes and disappears.

For those not exposed regularly, consistently to the truth and power of Scripture, some rational defenses may help them, can help them. But for those who are constantly, regularly, systematically brought into the depths of Holy Scripture, it builds its own case. And eventually what you have is concrete reinforced with rebar that you can stand on, a foundation that does not move.

So I started an exposition of the New Testament and it lasted for 43 years. I only had one objective, it wasn't homiletical, I don't think I ever spent more than 15 minutes on an outline. It wasn't practical. I don't spend a lot of time trying to think up practical ways to apply something since everybody's different. It wasn't cultural. I don't think I spent ten minutes on a sermon trying to figure out how I could make it say what I thought people might like to think it says because it fits their cultural perspectives. I never thought about relevance. I never thought about how can I move their emotions. Never thought about how can I motivate them. All I thought about was how can I explain what this means.

So if you were to characterize these years of preaching, they would be explanatory...they would be explanatory. And it shows up in the commentaries. You won't find any dead German heresies in the commentaries because I don't really care what dead Germans think, I just care what God thinks. That's reflective of the nation of the ministry. Somebody else can take care of the dead German.

What does Scripture mean by what it says? And I believe that the Holy Spirit then moves with power where He wills and in whom He wills based upon a true understanding of Holy Scripture. Thousands of passages, thousands of sermons, for some years I preached four sermons a Sunday and then for many, many years, three sermons a Sunday, two in the morning, one at night, two different books and my struggle was always the same, it never changed. "What does this mean? What does this mean? And capturing the meaning in that text and then broadening the meaning from that text to the *analogious scriptura*, everywhere else in the Bible that reinforces this great truth. And out of the truth of the Scripture, which is alive and powerful, out of the truth of the Scripture comes strong, compelling, divine, life-changing implications. I'm far more interested in implications than application. The Holy Spirit can do the application. I want people to feel the burden of the implication. And I confess that over 43 years I found myself always caught up in the joy of this exercise, never a drudgery. Work, discipline—yes, but never anything but joy even in the midst of self-examination that threatened my sense of well-being, even in the face of fresh discovery of things that needed to be dealt with in my own heart, the joy was always there. And with that joy came an increasing passion that comes from loving God and therefore delighting in everything He has ever said. And I wanted my people to know that joy and that love and I wanted my people to get the implications of this because the implication of every truth is that it leads either to blessing or judgment. And I want for my people blessing.

So while my desire to explain the meaning of Scripture, I couldn't keep the passion out of it as I can't now, because the passion is the fire of my own heart and the passion is also the desire for the people of God to see the implications of this step into the realm of obedience and no blessing.

So, from February 1969 until June of 2011, that's how it went. I never planned the order. I didn't go from the first chapter of Matthew to the last chapter of Revelation. The order was, in all honesty, random. People have asked me, "How did you choose what book next?" And it was just...just random. I thought, "I'd like to know this book, I'd like to do this book, I'd like to do that. Did God have a part in that? Of course, behind the scenes His providence is working in all of that, but I had no particular plan. It was a matter of the impulses of the moment, the interest of the moment, and so I jumped and bounced all over the New Testament, threw in a few Old Testament books, threw in the book of Daniel which was a great exercise, book of Zechariah, marched my way through the first eleven chapters of Genesis, preached on all kinds of other things, but basically just randomly picking New Testament books.

And guess what? I realized as I was coming to the end of a Luke a few years ago, that the only thing I had left was Mark. And I thought, "These people have been ten years in Luke." And when I announced to them, "We're going to do Mark and start all over again, and go back to the thing again, the life of our Lord, they're going to be upset." Ten years of Luke, and now what's he going to do? Another ten years in Mark? We know all this stuff. I miscalculated their response. When I told them that I was going to do Mark, there was joy all across this church...all across this church. And that joy lasted through Mark when I finished, June 5. For many preachers, Mark is where you might begin, right? Because it's a newspaper version of the life of Christ. You know, the elements and the characteristics of the book of Mark, short, to the point, very few didactic sections. It's the story and it's quick and it's fast. The most common word is immediately, immediately, immediately, immediately. And that's a great place to start, but it's where I ended. And really, in one sense, it could have died because that's the only thing I ever really planned to do was the New Testament, not thinking I'd ever finish it or that I'd stay in one church which would force me to keep moving through the New Testament. But here I was at the end.

And so, I arrived at the end of 43 years of exposition of Scripture, and where did I land? At [Mark 16:9](#) through 20. And now after 43 years I have to tell them that something in their Bible doesn't belong there. Oops!

As Mark ends this powerful history of our Lord Jesus, he does what the other writers do, he ends at the resurrection, essentially. I

mean, that's the last great event. And then, of course, Matthew, Luke and John give us some of the appearances of Christ after the resurrection, but they all sort of end up at this great monumental event of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and Mark is there. In chapter 16 verses 1 to 5, there's the testimony of the empty tomb. That's testimony that Jesus is alive. And then in verses 5 through 7, there's the testimony of the angels who affirm that He's alive. And then in verse 8 there is an eyewitness testimony from the women going off to the Apostles. So you have Mark ending with this eyewitness account, which again sort of fits his newspaper approach to everything. You have testimony of an empty tomb, testimony of heavenly angels, testimony of eyewitnesses, and it stops. And verse 8 ends, "They went out and fled from the tomb for trembling and astonishment had gripped them and they said nothing to anyone for they were afraid."

That is a passive form of a verb that is the verb *phobeo* that is used, for example, in Homer to speak of fleeing, or being put to flight. And maybe we ought to handle it that way so that we don't think it means they were scared. There was a reason why they fled and we know the reason because the rest of the writers tell us, they fled to the disciples to tell them Jesus was alive.

So Mark ends so abruptly, trembling, astonishment, awe...I mean, look at the verbs in verse 8, trembling, astonishment, flight, or fear, if you will, the evidence has overwhelmed them. They're stunned...they're stunned into silence and so is Mark and he drops his quill.

Now I've written a few books through the years and as a writer, I would probably get a note back from a publisher if I had sent that kind of an ending, "This is too abrupt, you need more here." And so, guess what? We get more. There it is with a little bracket, do you see it in verse 9 all the way down to verse 20? And then you even get a bonus at the bottom, you get a few more suggestions.

So here I am after 43 years of teaching the Word of God, and we end up in a very strange and confusing place. Is there after the end of Mark's gospel a section in my Bible that doesn't belong in it? And how many other sections are like that? Was my last message to be from a text that isn't supposed to be here? And does this, after 43 years of careful learning from the precious truths of the New Testament, all of a sudden undermine our confidence in Scripture. What am I going to tell the congregation? Does this pose at the very end for me the question that some thought I should have answered at the very beginning? What is the question that it poses? Is my Bible accurate? That's the question. Is my Bible accurate? Is the Bible you hold in your hand trustworthy? And what about this strange ending? Why if it doesn't belong here is it here?

The question of confidence in Scripture then comes right to the surface here, doesn't it? Right to the surface. I assumed it for decades. My people assumed it. They loved the Word of God; they never questioned its veracity until the end of 43 years. I don't think I can remember in 43 years anybody ever coming to me and saying, "I'm not sure the Bible's true. I have some questions about the authenticity or the manuscripts that are the basis of our text. I don't think I've ever had that kind of conversation. And the reason is because every text has carried in itself the burden of authenticity and carried it well. Does this change anything? How do you handle this kind of text? And is the Bible, in fact, true?"

Well all those questions led me to do a postscript message on this passage which after all the messages in the 43 years were finished, I added as an addendum on a Sunday night, having finished the section on the resurrection through verse 8 Sunday morning, I said, "Come back tonight and I'll explain this final postscript."

And what I found and what our people found, and I think this is why they wanted me to maybe encourage you with this, is that this section at the end provides a rich opportunity for Bible students to be strengthened in their confidence in the Bible they hold in their hands being the original Word of God. It does the opposite of what you might think it does. This section gives the Bible reader the opportunity to go behind and below the cherished English translation—first of all, into the history of ancient texts on which all modern texts are based. I'm going to be a little bit like a professor now for a while, but it's necessary. Stay with me.

Beneath the surface of your cherished Bible is a long history of careful preservation of the original text. We don't have the first autographs, the actual ones written by the first and only authors of Scripture, we don't have those. But we have carefully preserved copies of those going all the way back to the time of Origen. This particular text of Scripture then gives us the opportunity to take a look at the careful way in which the Word of God has been preserved so that what you read in your Bible is a trustworthy and accurate translation of the original—in the case of the New Testament—preserved over two thousand years. Now this is the first element in understanding God's holy revelation. This is the first element. I don't live in this world, but thankfully there are people who have and they have been our benefactors. They live in the world of manuscripts.

The first question to ask is what did God actually write? What did the Holy Spirit actually inspire? Then I come along at some time later, after the manuscript people and the translator people, I take the text that's been given to me and explain what it means. But all translations of Scripture in languages are based on the same ancient sources discovered and studied for their accuracy by very careful scholars through the centuries. And I can say to you that the Bible you hold in your hands is a translation from the most accurate of these manuscripts. It is trustworthy. Thousands of people through the centuries, and even into the modern times, pour over these elements of manuscript so that what we have has vast affirmation. In fact, I would say there is massive evidence that the

Holy Spirit not only inspired the Scripture but preserved it in its purity through all history. Ancient copyists knew they were writing down, copying the very words of God. And since the printing press doesn't show up till 1440, you've got hand copies of Scripture being made again and again for centuries and centuries. There's some wonderful stories about scribes who would write one letter and take a bath, then write another letter, take a bath, write another letter because of the sense that they were handling the Holy Word of God, fearful of making a mistake.

Because of the uniqueness of Scripture, because of the importance of Scripture, because of the necessity of Scripture, it has been copied and translated far more than any other literature. For example, all manuscripts in Greek and other ancient translations bring the total number of New Testament manuscripts to 25,000. There are twenty-five thousand ancient manuscripts of the New Testament. Such an abundance preserved by the Holy Spirit through faithful men in the church makes it possible to reconstruct the original books with virtually complete accuracy. Nothing in ancient literature even comes close to this, to the availability of manuscripts and translations. Nothing in ancient literature even gets near this in terms of demonstrating uniform consistency of translation across centuries.

There are about five thousand six hundred Greek manuscripts containing some or all of the New Testament, and they begin in the second century. That's when they begin. That's very early. You have papyrus 52 which has parts of John from the year 100 to 150. You have the Bodmer Papyri which is John and Luke from 175 to 225. And then you have the Chester Beatty Papyri, some of you are familiar with that, the gospels and Acts in the 200's. You go way back, right up against when they were written in that first century that any manuscript survived from that era is remarkable because it was a time of intense persecution of Christians and destruction of Scripture. So we're grateful that things survived because believers and their Scriptures were being destroyed.

When you have the Council of Nicea in 325 and Christianity becomes established as the religion of the Roman Empire, the persecution ends and starting then you have the proliferation of manuscripts. They all survived because no one is banning them or destroying them. The earliest and most important of the biblical texts that have been discovered would be what's called Codex Sinaiticus for where it was discovered on Mount Sinai. This would be about 350 and it is the whole New Testament. About 325 Codex Vaticanus, that is both the New Testament and the Old Testament, that's very ancient manuscript. And by the way, both of them end Mark at verse 8, both of them.

Let me just kind of expand your knowledge a little more on this. There are eight-thousand copies of Jerome's Vulgate, Bible translation from 382 to about 405, a Vulgate means Common in Latin. It was a common translation. It was the common translation of the Roman Catholic Church for a long time. So you have eight-thousand copies going back to the fourth century.

There are three hundred and fifty-plus copies of the Syriac Bible. Syriac is a dialect of Aramaic and it would have been very close to the language that Jesus spoke. It was spoken in places...modern places would be identified as Syria and Turkey and Iraq. There are 350 copies that go back to the 200's, very ancient manuscripts. And when you compare all of these manuscripts, they're all saying exactly the same thing. The early church fathers, and I find this fascinating, the early church fathers below 325 called the Pre-Nicene fathers, the Anti-Nicene fathers, those fathers who were doing so much writing have so much Scripture in their writings that there are 32 thousand existing references and quotes from the New Testament among the Anti-Nicene fathers before 325. In fact, there are so many quotes, 32 thousand of them, that you can virtually put the entire New Testament together from the quotes of the fathers and it matches perfectly all other manuscript sources.

The writings of the early church fathers also confirmed the accuracy of the gospels. There are over 19 thousand quotations of just the gospels in their writings, and they read the gospel text the very same way you read them in your Bible today. All this provides an abundant evidence for the original text of Scripture being preserved and protected as it was passed down. And we wouldn't question that because why would the Holy Spirit go to the trouble of inspiring it and then not providentially protect it? There's no form of ancient literature which even comes close. Second to the New Testament's 25 thousand manuscripts would be Homer's Iliad. That would be second in a number of manuscripts and there are 643 of them. Homer's Iliad was written in the eighth century B.C., the oldest manuscript we have is in the thirteenth century A.D., two thousand years later. We don't have anything between the thirteenth century and the eighth century B.C. of Homer's Iliad. But the New Testament goes back to the second century, butts up against the century in which it was written. Caesar's Gaelic Wars has ten extant manuscripts; the oldest is a thousand years after the original in first century B.C. Herodotus History of The Persian Kings, fifth century B.C., only eight manuscripts remain and the earliest is thirteen hundred years after the original. We don't know what happened from the original to the manuscript 1300 years later.

Tecites History of the Peloponessian War, eight manuscripts and the earliest again is thirteen hundred years later. And as I said, in case of Homer's Iliad with the most manuscripts, two thousand years after they were written. And look at the Bible; we have so many accurate, consistent manuscripts that we know without hesitation that what we hold in our hands is an English translation of the original with no loss. No less a scholar than A.T. Robertson, said this, "The vast array of manuscripts has enabled textual scholars to accurately reconstruct the original text with more than 99.9 percent accuracy. I don't know about you, but I'm glad for that.

There are variations in ancient manuscripts because they were all hand-written. There were errors here and there, the good news is, we know where they are because of the comparative manuscript study. Errors come from errors, or inadvertent omissions, or once in a while an attempted clarification. They are minor, they are inconsequential, they are known and where they appear you will usually find in a modern translation an alternate reading in the margin because we know they're there and we know there's an alternate reading and the scholars tell us the most likely accurate reading is, of course, the one included in the text and the alternate one in the margin. And I say that because I want you to know that never in the history of modern Bible scholarship has anybody tried to hide the variance. We don't hide those cause it's better to know what they are and you can look at them and see that they're not formidable. And in most all cases, the better variant is the one included in the text.

Now why am I doing all this? Because there here at the end of Mark is this long textual variant that we know doesn't appear in the original autograph written by Mark, it is in brackets, we know it's not there, it's uniformly agreed that it is not...it does not belong there. It is followed by another short variant in italics in my Bible at the bottom of the page.

Why is it here? Well it's here for the obvious reason that this just seems too abrupt—it seems too abrupt. What drove the addition is the very, very brief almost shocking, stunning end of Mark's carefully crafted history of the Lord Jesus Christ. The language is frankly dramatic, very dramatic, trembling, astonishment, speechlessness, fear, or awe. The women are in some kind of a state of terrified bewilderment, gripped by the wondrous reality of the resurrection. They know He's alive, they were there, the tomb is empty, the angels declared it. They are speechless and frankly so is Mark.

I think at this point I need to say it's fitting that the end is so dramatic and so powerful that neither the women could speak, nor could Mark write. And by the way, what needed to be said anyway, the evidence was in...the evidence was in, point proven. Jesus is who Mark said He was when He started. [Mark 1:1](#), "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God," this proves it, case closed.

Now some have suggested, this is where reading commentators gets to be kind of novel, because people are trying to suggest why something isn't there. And you'll find these humorous. Let me give you...this is the range of commentaries.

Some have suggested that Mark would have interacted with Luke since both were in Rome together at the same time and Luke's gospel already penned before Mark's had been very extensive in laying out post-resurrection history, about the appearances and the ascension and the Great Commission, and because Luke did all of that, Mark decided not to.

Really. Do you know what he was thinking? Anybody here know what Mark was thinking? Absolutely not. You have no idea what he was thinking.

Others suggest, and they can go on and on with this, that Peter was Mark's source and that's very likely true from the testimony of Papius(?) So Mark ended because Peter was no longer available because he was executed. And once Peter was executed, Mark had nothing else to say.

Here's another one. Matthew and Luke, and Luke with the book of Acts, already wrote all about the post-resurrection detail so Mark didn't need to and like John who omitted all the pre-baptism history of Jesus, Mark eliminates all the post-resurrection history of Jesus.

Or you could take another approach. Mark started not at the beginning, he skipped the whole birth narrative so it's kind of like him to be brief and skip a whole lot at the front and maybe skip a whole lot at the back. And this is maybe what he was thinking.

Or, Mark likes to use a few words and so this was enough words and he decided to stop. Some say Mark...Mark intended to leave an open ending, a sort of rhetorical ending so that the reader would write the end of the story.

Here's my favorite. There's a lost ending.

Look, there are people who would go on for three and four pages on a lost ending. If it's lost, may I ask a simple question? Why are you writing about it? You're writing about a lost ending? How do you...if you don't know there was an ending then how do you know it's lost? And if it's lost? Why speculate. All of that in one sense to simply say, look, that's all speculation. We don't know anything about his motives, we don't know anything about his circumstances, we don't know anything about what we don't know anything about like a lost ending. All we've got is Mark and his words. That's all we have. And what it says is, verse 8, "They went out, they fled from the tomb, why? Because they were trembling, they were astonished, they were silent and they literally fled in this bewildered amazement, trembling, *tramos* the word trauma, astonishment, *ekstasis*, a kind of out-of-body experience, that kind of ecstasy and effabunte(?) the idea of this being put to flight out of sheer rapturous bewilderment. That's how it ends. And he stops. It's abrupt, it's shocking, but you wouldn't say it's incomplete and you wouldn't say it's inadequate.

But apparently people in the early church thought it was. Somewhere along the line they started piling up optional endings. If you go down to the bottom of the page in your Bible, you'll see a little ending down there, maybe identify the brackets. This has been

universally rejected as having no connection to Mark.

Then you have the long ending from verses 9 through verse 20. This has been included in some translations, King James translations and those that didn't have the benefit of the later discoveries of manuscripts and they're still based on the textus receptus. This has been considered as legitimate but not, as I said, based on the oldest manuscripts and now in all the modern translations, it is put in brackets to indicate it was not a part of the original. It wasn't a part of the original.

Let me help you understand. Our translation is based on ancient Greek manuscripts. The originals, the autographs, the original autographs themselves do not exist, the very early copies do. When you get to those early copies, this isn't there...this isn't there. It doesn't appear in the oldest manuscripts, Sinaiticus, and Vaticanus, other of the oldest do not have it. Fourth century, Eusebius and Jerome wrote that almost Greek manuscripts, almost all in the fourth century ended with verse 8. Second century, Justin Martyr and Tatian, however, show knowledge of other endings. And even Irenaeus shows knowledge of other endings starting to float around. Irenaeus quotes 16:19 which is in this spurious section.

So this ending came into existence very early, although there was anything but uniform acceptance of it, it starts to show up. In fact, several such endings start to show up as people try to help Mark a little bit with his abrupt ending. There are medieval manuscripts that included it and such were the manuscripts from the medieval period used by English translators before earlier manuscripts were found and that's why you find it in some of the translations in English and other languages.

Now, let's look at it in its own self. There's enough external evidence to exclude it, I've given you some of that. But what about internal evidence, what about what it says? There's just a number of things that we could call to your attention, I don't want to beg the issue here but I think it is helpful to us. The transition is awkward and strange, verse 9, "Now after He had risen early in the first day of the week, He first appeared to Mary Magdalene."

"Now" can basically necessitate continuity with the preceding verse. However, what follows in verse 9 doesn't continue the story of verse 8. Verse 8, the women went out, fled from the tomb, trembling, astonishment grips them. They said nothing. They were afraid. Now after He...who's He? You have a pronoun without an antecedent in the prior section. The masculine pronoun in verse 9 expects he as its antecedent but the subject of verse 8 is the women. It is a very awkward transition. And why would Mark then say He first appeared to Mary Magdalene from whom He had cast out seven demons. He here is introducing us to Mary Magdalene and that's kind of strange because she has already appeared three times in the story...three times, chapter 15 verse 40 and 47, chapter 16 verse 1. We really don't need an introduction to her.

Furthermore, the angels spoke to Jesus back in...spoke to Peter rather of Jesus appearing in verse 7, it says, in Galilee, yet the appearances described in 9 to 20 are all in Jerusalem. Verses 9 to 20 have vocabulary not used anywhere else by Mark. There are at least 18 terms used here that never appear in Mark's gospel. The structure of this added section is different from Mark's normal way. The term, the title, "Lord Jesus" appears here but nowhere else in Mark. References made to Peter in verse 7, going to Galilee and seeing Jesus, Peter is the source of Mark's history but there's nothing about Peter in the whole ending. The idea of not believing which is repeated three times in that section, never appears anywhere else in Mark. And the subject of signs with snakes and poison and all of that, is nowhere in any gospel, not in any gospel. Where this ending came from, we don't know. ..we don't know. Except for this, verse 9 is a summary of [Luke 8:1](#) to 3. Verse 10 is borrowed from John 20 verse 18. Verse 12 comes from Luke 24, verse 13 from Luke 25, verse 14 from Luke 24, verse 15 from [Matthew 28:19](#) and [Acts 1:8](#), verse 16 from John 20-23 and verses 17 and 18 is kind of a strange combination of some of the promises of miraculous power our Lord made to the disciples in Matthew 10, Mark 6, Luke 10, and then some of the phenomenon had occurred in the book of Acts and in the letter of Paul we call 1 Corinthians.

So this is obviously some kind of a summary package put together to bring an ending that made more sense to the gospel of Mark. What is the solution to this? Why does Mark end where he ends?

Can I help you with that? Let's go back to chapter 1. Chapter 1, Jesus going along by the sea, verse 16, saw Simon and Andrew. You know the story. And He gathers them around Him. They went in to Capernaum, verse 21, "Immediately on the Sabbath. He entered the synagogue and began to teach." What does verse 22 say? They were—what?—amazed, amazed at His teaching. Verse 25, Jesus rebukes a demon. Says, "Be quiet, come out of him," throwing him into convulsions. The unclean spirit cried out with a loud voice, came out of him, verse 27 says—what?—they were all amazed. Chapter 2, you know the story, the healing of the paralytic, Jesus forgives his sins, it says in verse 11, "Pick up your pallet, your bed, and go home. He got up immediately, picked up the pallet and went out in the sight of everyone so that they were all—what?—amazed. They were glorifying God saying, "We've never seen anything like this before.

In chapter 4, Jesus is in a storm, verse 37, there's a fierce gale, waves are breaking up over the boat. The boat was filling up with water. Jesus was so weary, He was in the stern asleep. They woke Him and said, "Teacher, do You not care that we're perishing?" He got up and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, "Hush, be still," the wind died down and it became perfectly calm. "And He said to them, 'Why are you afraid? How is it that you have faith?' They became very much afraid. Said to one another, 'Who then is this



that even the wind and the sea obey Him?”

In chapter 5 verse 14, the story of the demoniac, the people see this amazing healing and in verse 15 they came to Jesus and observed a man who had been demon-possessed sitting down, clothed, you know, he came running out of the tombs naked. Now he's sitting down, clothed, delivered from his demon, or demons that filled up a whole herd of pigs. In his right mind, the man who had the legion, and they became frightened, "...amazement, fear, awe.

Chapter 5 and verse 33, you know this wonderful story of the woman who touched His garment, the woman, verse 33, "Fearing and trembling, aware of what had happened to her, came and fell down before Him and told Him the whole truth." At the end of the chapter, He takes the hand of the little girl, you remember, and says, "*Talitha kum*" which means, "Little girl, I say to you, get up." This was the girl who had died, daughter of an important man. "Immediately the girl got up, began to walk, she was 12 years old and immediately they were completely astounded."

Chapter 6, another time on the water, this time He walks on the water, 6:51, "He got into the boat with them, the wind stopped and they were utterly astonished." Chapter 9 at the transfiguration of Jesus, verse 6 says, "They became terrified."

Chapter 9 and verse 15, the large crowd, scribes arguing with Him and when the entire crowd saw Him, they were amazed and began running to greet Him. Are you starting to get a picture here?

Chapter 9 verse 32, when Jesus was teaching that the Son of Man is to be delivered into the hands of men, they will kill Him and when He's been killed, He will rise three days later. They didn't understand this statement and they were afraid to ask Him. Fear and awe and amazement.

Chapter 10 verse 24, "The disciples were amazed at His words." Chapter 10 verse 32, "They were on the road going to Jerusalem, Jesus was walking on ahead of them. And they were amazed and those who followed were fearful. Chapter 11 verse 18, "The chief priests and the scribes heard this and began seeking how to destroy Him. They were afraid of Him for the whole crowd was astonished at His teaching. And it's mounting, chapter 12 verse 17, when He said, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's, they were amazed at Him."

And one of the most amazing things of all was His encounter with Pilate, chapter 15. Pilate, verse 4, questioning Him, Jesus makes no further answer. Pilate was amazed.

And then you come to chapter 16, the women arrive at the tomb. Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, Salome, they come and in verse 4, "Looking up they saw the stone had been rolled away although it was extremely large. Entering the tomb they saw a young man sitting at the right, wearing a white robe and they were amazed."

In ten of those passages the same verb was used, *phobeo*, they were amazed. In five of them, a cognate of that verb was used and elsewhere synonyms were used. And then you come to 16:8 and they went out and fled, for trembling and astonishment had gripped them and they were silent and they were afraid.

I can't think of a better ending, can you? The amazing Jesus. It ends as it began, with amazement over the Lord Jesus Christ. And when you stop where you should stop in Mark, you step back in awe of the amazing Jesus. Every lesson, every miracle, every stunning answer that He gave, every insight, every righteous word, every righteous act fill you with stunning amazement. Amazing, you should be speechless, like Mark, like the woman at the amazing Jesus.

And I think that's how it was for us when we ended Mark. And it didn't take long for the people to say to me, "Okay, now what? Now what?" We've been studying Jesus for 43 years, historically in the gospels, 25 years in the gospels, four of them, theologically in the epistles and eschatologically in Revelation. There's no greater subject. What are we going to do? You want to go back? People said to me and said, "Let's do John...let's do John." John? We did John. No, let's do John, please do John. They can't get enough of the amazing Jesus.

**Mark 16:10 She went and reported to those who had been with Him, while they were mourning and weeping.**

- See above on Mark 6:9

**Mark 16:11 When they heard that He was alive and had been seen by her, they refused to believe it.**

- See commentary on Luke 24:10-11



**Mark 16:12 After that, He appeared in a different form to two of them while they were walking along on their way to the country.**

- See commentary on Luke 24:13-32

**Mark 16:13 They went away and reported it to the others, but they did not believe them either.**

- See commentary on Luke 24:13-32

**Mark 16:14 Afterward He appeared to the eleven themselves as they were reclining at the table; and He reproached them for their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they had not believed those who had seen Him after He had risen.**

- See commentary on Luke 24:36–40

**Mark 16:15 And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation.**

- See commentary on Matthew 28:19-20

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While speaking to the Radio Bible Class staff at a chapel service, John De Vries of Bibles For India told what might have happened when Jesus entered heaven immediately following His ascension.

The angels, rejoicing that Christ's mission on earth had been completed, gathered to welcome Him home. They were eager to know who would have the privilege of proclaiming to the world the good news that Christ had been born, had lived, had died, and had risen from the dead to provide salvation from sin. In fact, the angels were hoping they themselves would be given the honor. So they were greatly disappointed and amazed when Jesus looked down to earth and pointed to the tiny group of followers He had just left behind. "Those are the ones I want to be My witnesses," Jesus announced. "I have given to them the commission to go into all the world and preach the gospel. They have experienced the thrill and reality of redemption from sin; they are to be My messengers!"

The torch of the gospel, handed to those early followers of Christ, has been passed down through the generations until today it is in our hands. The responsibility of proclaiming that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners is ours to fulfill.

Angels might long for the privilege of telling the world about Christ, but they have not experienced the joy of forgiveness and the hope of glory. That's why the task has been entrusted to us. —R. W. De Haan. Our Daily Bread.

**Our only real excuse for living in this world is to be witnesses for Jesus Christ.**

—Sweeting

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**Mark 16:15, Luke 16:27,28, Acts 16:9 - Cry From Above and Beneath and Without**

Some years ago, a very good friend of mine, Dr. E. Myers Harrison, gave a missionary message that I cannot forget. It was to a small group of people, but I will never forget the sermon. Dr. Harrison is now at home with the Lord, but he was a great servant of God and a great missionary statesman. He said that each of us as Christians must hear what God has to say. There is the command from above: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature? (Mark 16:15). Have you heard that? I've heard people say, "But God wants our church to be different. We're not supposed to have a missionary program.? I don't believe that. I believe the command from above is given to every Christian and to every assembly that God has raised up.

Then there is the cry from beneath. Remember the rich man who died and woke up in hell and begged for someone to go and tell his brothers? (see Luke 16). "I pray thee, therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house (for I have five brethren), that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment? (Lk 16:27,28). There is the cry from beneath. If you and I could hear the cries of people in a lost eternity right now, we'd realize how important it is to get the Gospel out. There's the command from **above**. Have you heard it? There's the cry from **beneath**. Have you heard it?

Then, according to Dr. Harrison, there is the call from **without**. Acts 16:9 says, "Come over into Macedonia, and help us.? People

around us are saying, "Please come to help us!" So much money, time and energy is being spent on routine church matters in America when there is a whole world to reach for Christ! We face so many open doors!

[Something Happens When Churches Pray](#), Warren Wiersbe, pp. 102-3 (1984)

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### **Everyone's Job - James Scudder**

And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. Mark 16:15

I know of a mission board that, in their regular review of candidates for the field, asks the applying individuals how many people they have won to Christ. I asked them why they have this practice and the answer I received was very profound. The head of the group told me, "I want to know if these men are truly missionaries. If they are not willing to share their faith on their home soil, then they will not be willing to share their faith overseas." I was struck by the truth of that statement.

Often, we leave the job of sharing the Gospel to those who have been ordained or appointed to do the task full-time, such as evangelists, pastors, or missionaries. However, in reading the Great Commission, I never find those specifications for the job. Never are those vocations singled out for witnessing.

Every Christian is appointed by God to share his faith. The layman should have just as much of a burden as the pastor. In fact, God has put people in the layman's world that the pastor or missionary could never reach. Adoniram Judson, the great missionary to Burma, spoke this thought about sharing the Gospel, "The motto of every missionary, whether preacher, printer, or schoolmaster, ought to be 'Devoted for Life'."

Are you fulfilling your responsibility to share your faith? Are you reaching the people God has put in your world? Don't leave it up to the missionary. It is your job, too.

Every Christian is a missionary if only to the supermarket.

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### **A Passion for Souls - James Scudder**

And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. Mark 16:15

The last spoken words that Christ uttered before He ascended to Heaven were a command to spread the gospel to the entire world. Often this is called the Great Commission. Truly dedicated Christians will heed that call and endeavor to share the good news of salvation with everyone they meet.

God wants every believer to have an evangelistic spirit. We need to have a burden for the neighbor across the street or the missionary work across the world.

The vehicle for evangelism is the local church. Whether it is participating in missions programs, broadcast ministries, youth programs, or other outreaches, it is our duty to support God's work.

I read recently about the generosity of one particular girl who, at the young age of six, had a passion for souls. She heard a radio program about Christians in China who were in need of Bibles and told her mother she wanted to help smuggle 85 Bibles into this Communist country. With only \$5 in savings, the girl encouraged her kindergarten class to give of their allowances. The kids eagerly did odd chores around the community and even asked some grownups to help with their idea. Soon, they raised \$509.00, enough to send nearly 130 Bibles to China.

This young girl's desire to reach the lost should be an inspiration to those of us who have fallen behind in our service. If one little kindergarten student can impact 100 souls, what kind of impact can a dedicated servant of God have?

Obedience to God's command is not always convenient, but it is always profitable.

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### **Heeding the Call- James Scudder**

And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. Mark 16:15

As a conservative Christian, it is easy to grow cynical about our society. As each day passes, we are witnessing the hostile takeover of ungodly values, replacing the traditional biblical beliefs that once characterized America. I wonder how much longer America can be called a "nation under God" when we continue to slaughter the innocent unborn, idolize wicked men and women, and condone immoral activity on the part of our government leaders.

It is easy to get caught up in trying to reform America through political means, tying our hopes to a political movement. I can

understand the concern of many Christians who try to do their part by protesting, running for office, and organizing fellow believers to take action.

But, reforming America is not our real mission. I'm not saying we should withdrawal from the political process entirely. I think there is nothing worse than a Christian who refuses to take part in electing god-fearing leaders to office.

Our hope, however, is not in politics. Our hope is in God. And His will for Christians is not to restore values to the nation, but to change lives by sharing the good news of the Gospel. In fact, that is the greatest path to reformation.

It does no good to bring back Judeo-Christian values, if people are still dying and spending eternity in Hell. We need to stop concerning ourselves with people's way of life and start concerning ourselves with the condition of their souls. That is the real problem that needs repair.

This generation of saints is going to answer for this generation of sinners.

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### **The Greatest Assignment - James Scudder**

And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every Mark 16:15

Once a young man determined from boyhood that God had called him to the ministry. He had all of the qualities. He was a natural leader, he was intelligent, and was good with people.

The vice-president of a large company with offices in the boy's home town had watched this boy grow up to be a fine young man. During Bible College, the boy was offered a high-salaried position with the gentleman's company after graduation. The young man respectfully declined. But, the vice-president didn't give in. He raised the salary several times, even throwing in ownership shares. Still, the young man insisted on becoming a minister.

Finally, the president of the company went to him. "Isn't the salary big enough?" he asked.

"Yes," the young man replied thoughtfully, "the salary is big enough, but the job isn't."

There is no job with greater importance than that of preaching the Gospel. In fact, it is so important God commanded everyone to do it. But, many Christians feel that God only expects preachers to share the message. They are content to comfortably live their lives while their preacher does all of the work in the church.

God expects every Christian to participate. Every member of the church from the laymen, to the songleader should be active in the church. Whether it is passing out Gospel tracts, sharing with your co-worker, or giving towards a foreign mission, we are all commanded to spread the Gospel.

Get involved in spreading the Gospel. It is our greatest assignment.

Every Christian is a missionary-if only to the supermarket.

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### **Another Far Country - Go ye into all the world (Mark 16:15).**

Every Christian is a missionary, for all the world is a mission field. Do not think of missionaries as meaning only those witnesses abroad who have returned from Africa or Asia with pictures to show to sleepy church members. If you cannot cross the sea in person you can project yourself by prayer and provision. You can pray laborers into the harvest and you can provide for them while they are in the harvest. The smallest country church may have a worldwide ministry and the lowliest Christian may touch earth's uttermost corner.

1. "After he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavored to go" (Acts 16:10).

2. The vision, the vista, the venture. The "Lo" must be followed by the "Go."

3. Isaiah saw the King. He saw the country, "a people of unclean lips." He heard the call, "Whom shall I send?" He answered it: "Here am I, send me."

The far country of the heavenlies has its counterpart in the far country of the earthlies. The mystery must be made known amidst the misery!

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Go into all the world and preach the gospel to the whole creation. Mark 16:15

In a cemetery at Yale University is the grave of a remarkable missionary named Hiram Bingham. As a young man, he felt impressed that the "Go" in Mark 16:15 was meant for him, and it resonated like this: "Go to the Sandwich Islands [modern Hawaii] and preach the gospel to every creature there." Arriving there in 1819, Bingham found the inhabitants with no written language. They were

hardened gamblers, thieves, and alcoholics who practiced raw immorality and human sacrifice. Children were routinely killed, torture was widespread, and disease was rampant. Bingham studied the language, reduced it to writing, translated the New Testament, established schools, and taught hygiene to the people. After four years, the first native convert was baptized. A revival swept over the islands that resembled the Pentecostal days of Acts. On February 10, 1822, after preaching to huge crowds from Mark 16:15, Bingham wrote, "I discoursed on the great commission given by Christ to His disciples to proclaim His gospel in all the world, as the grand reason of our coming to them and of their attending to the message of His ambassadors." It's the Grand Reason for our lives too.

PS: Hiram's son, Hiram Bingham II, also became a missionary in Hawaii. His grandson, Hiram Bingham III, was an explorer who became a U.S. Senator and the governor of Connecticut. His great-grandson, Hiram Bingham IV, became American vice-consul in Marseille, France, during World War II, and rescued Jews from the Holocaust. ([My All in All - Robert J Morgan](#))

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And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. . . ." After the Lord had spoken to them, He was received up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God ([Mark 16:15, 19](#)).

**MISSIONS** - "Is it true Dr. Grenfell that you are a missionary?" a woman asked Wilfred Grenfell, a medical missionary to Labrador. Grenfell re-plied, "Is it true, madam, that you are not?" With his question, Grenfell made sure the woman understood God's top assignment.

With "mission impossible" completed, Jesus left this earth, but not before giving an assignment to His agents. He had a job for them to do, but it was no secret mission. He spoke publicly about the task and never called His people private agents.

He told them to clearly report what they had seen and heard to everyone everywhere. This should have been no surprise to His Jewish operatives; God told Israel in the Old Testament to tell the surrounding nations of His mighty acts.

Judas, the double agent, defected early, but over five-hundred agency personnel got Christ's memo about a new mission. Peter, one of His top men, openly carried out his duties. Not fearing political intrigue, he even briefed a soldier named Cornelius about the mission ([Acts 10:38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43](#)).

Some have distorted the Director's words with secret codes and clandestine acts, but those who read the original document have no trouble understanding the mission. The only problem is the short supply of agents. Our Daily Bread

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**LET THE WHOLE WORLD HEAR!** - Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature - Mark 16:15

[Fritz Kreisler](#) (1875-1962), the world-famous violinist, earned a fortune with his concerts and compositions, but he generously gave most of it away. So, when he discovered an exquisite violin on one of his trips, he wasn't able to buy it.

Later, having raised enough money to meet the asking price, he returned to the seller, hoping to purchase that beautiful instrument. But to his great dismay it had been sold to a collector. Kreisler made his way to the new owner's home and offered to buy the violin. The collector said it had become his prized possession and he would not sell it. Keenly disappointed, Kreisler was about to leave when he had an idea. "Could I play the instrument once more before it is consigned to silence?" he asked. Permission was granted, and the great virtuoso filled the room with such heart-moving music that the collector's emotions were deeply stirred. "I have no right to keep that to myself," he exclaimed. "It's yours, Mr. Kreisler. Take it into the world, and let people hear it."

To sinners saved by grace, the gospel is like the rapturous harmonies of heaven. We have no right to keep it to ourselves. Jesus tells us to take it out into the world and let it be heard. - V C Grounds. Our Daily Bread. ([Bible.org](#))

I'll tell the world how Jesus saved me  
And how He gave me a life brand-new;  
And I know that if you trust Him  
That all He gave me He'll give to you.  
-Fox

**Someone told you about Christ.  
Have you told anyone lately?**

**Mark 16:16 "He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned.**

- See commentary on John 3:18

- [Does Mark 16:16 teach that baptism is necessary for salvation? | GotQuestions.org](#)

**He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved** - This sounds like it saying one must be baptized (assuming water baptism) to be saved. While this is not inspired Scripture, people who believe baptism is necessary for salvation will appeal to this non-inspired passage. While we could simply tell them this text is not accepted by almost all writers as the inspired, inerrant Word of God, there is something else we can do. We can challenge them to read the text in context.

**but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned** -What does this passage teach us in context? It clearly unhinges belief from baptism and states that if one does not believe they will be condemned. The implication clearly is that they are not saved. What is clear is that it does not say one who has disbelieved and not been baptized will be condemned. So even though this text is not inspired, an honest reading in context clearly refutes the false teaching that one needs to be baptized (assuming water baptism) to be saved.

**Mark 16:17 "These signs will accompany those who have believed: in My name they will cast out demons, they will speak with new tongues;**

- See commentary on Acts 2:43 (Cf Acts 4:30; 5:12; 2 Cor. 12:12)
- See commentary on Acts 16:18
- See commentary on Acts 2:4

**Mark 16:18 they will pick up serpents, and if they drink any deadly poison, it will not hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover."**

- See commentary on Acts 28:3-4
- [What does the Bible say about snake handling? Should we be handling snakes in church? | GotQuestions.org](#)

**Mark 16:19 So then, when the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, He was received up into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God.**

- See commentary on Luke 24:51-53
- See commentary on Hebrews 1:3
- See commentary on Hebrew 2:3-4

**Mark 16:20 And they went out and preached everywhere, while the Lord worked with them, and confirmed the word by the signs that followed. And they promptly reported all these instructions to Peter and his companions.**

- See commentaries on Mark 16:19