

I. Introduction

A. Quotes

1. "If Jesus rose from the dead, then you have to accept all that He said; if He didn't rise from the dead, then why worry about any of what He said? The issue on which everything hangs is not whether or not you like His teaching but whether or not He rose from the dead."
2. "The Resurrection of Jesus changes the face of death for all His people. Death is no longer a prison, but a passage into God's presence. Easter says you can put truth in a grave, but it won't stay there."
3. "The Resurrection gives my life meaning and direction and the opportunity to start over no matter what my circumstances."
4. The cross is the victory, the Resurrection is the triumph. The Resurrection is the public display of the victory, the triumph of the crucified one."

B. Heist films

1. Love heist films: Italian Job (Ross & Judy), Ocean's movies (Brett as Saul), Fast Five (me), Now You See Me (Kyle), etc. All great rides!
2. Sub genre of crime films, they include the plan, the execution, and the reveal, where likable criminal friends pull off acquiring something of great value with such spectacle it almost borders on the unbelievable.

*In the kingdom of this world, the Resurrection is the transcendent heist story that reveals sin and death to be stripped and powerless with no recourse for those loyal to Jesus.

II. Mark 16:1-8

A. Early in the morning (vs 1-3)

1. Women's expectations: Jesus is dead, confirmed by their intent with burial oils
2. Forgotten/overlooked obstacle: significant stone, not possible to be moved by the three women

B. Surprising development (vs 4-5)

1. No comment on when the stone was rolled away (or when the resurrection happened), just that it happened
2. Young man sitting in the tomb
 - a. Seated: traditional posture for teaching or speaking with authority
 - b. White robe: marked heavenly visitation

*Mark uses human language to describe a heavenly visitor

3. The women's reaction was more than the spooky surroundings; they were consistent with heavenly encounters.

C. Heavenly message (vs 6-7)

1. The announcement of Jesus' Resurrection is not an end in itself, but the basis for action - that life, discipleship, and the Kingdom of God will go on!
2. Mention of Peter: not as supreme leader, but in view of his very public failure

*Just as He told you. Notice this statement, we will return to it

D. Confusion reaction (v 8)

1. Mark ends here, awkwardly
2. We know the story got out, likely from the women
3. If the Resurrection is true, what then?

III. Just as He told you

A. The Resurrection is true, Jesus died, paying for our sins and raised from the dead establishing His reign and rule.

1. Jesus told the disciples throughout the Gospel that He would be killed and then raise from the dead.
2. If that is true, what else did Jesus tell us that is true?

B. Just as He told us

1. Jesus told us that He is the Christ, Savior and King, God in human flesh.
 - a. Mark 1:1, 9-11; 14:61-64

The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. (Mark 1:1)

And Jesus said, "I am, and you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of Heaven." (Mark 14:62)

- b. Jesus is enough to forgive you and me of our sins because He is the one and only Savior.
2. Jesus told us how to follow Him (how to be a disciple)
 - a. *And calling the crowd to Him with His disciples, He said to them, "If anyone would come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me." (Mark 8:34)*
 - 1) "And calling the crowd" - invitation and application to all
 - 2) "If anyone would come after me" - desire/intention to follow
 - 3) Deny self, take up cross, and follow
 - b. What is discipleship?
 - 1) Not behavior modification but internal transformation
 - 2) Not knowledge transfer but applied truth
 - 3) Not spiritual multiplication but spiritual maturity
 - 4) Does not exist without active evangelism

*Discipleship is the absolute exchange of your values (self-denial) for Jesus' values. It is acting upon those values knowing but disregarding the consequences (taking up cross), driven by a persistent pursuit of Jesus as King evidenced by compassionate and active evangelism.

- 5) Not a care group, an accountability group, a Bible experts meeting, a book club, or a church service. These can be good, but they are not discipleship.
3. Jesus told us that the Kingdom of God is in the people of God.
 - a. *Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the Gospel of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the Gospel." (Mark 1:14-15)*
 - 1) King over nature (Mark 4:35-41)
 - 2) King over spiritual beings (Mark 1:13-14; 5)
 - 3) King over sickness and death (Mark 5)

- b. Parables about the nature of the Kingdom (Mark 4:1-34)
- c. Jesus is portrayed as the Messiah sent by God to establish the Kingdom of God, His reign and rule over Earth now through defeating sin and death, and later when He reestablishes that reign and rule over all the Earth at His second coming.

*Jesus came first for sin and He is coming again for judgment. That is the Kingdom message!

C. Go and tell

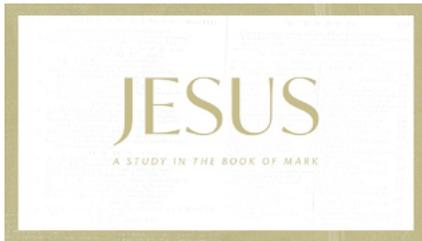
1. During the late 1800's and early 1900's, British evangelist Gypsy Smith held evangelistic campaigns throughout Britain and the U.S. He was asked once, "How do you start a revival?" He responded, "If you want to start a revival, go home, and get a piece of chalk. Go into your closet and draw a circle on the floor. Kneel down in the middle of the circle and ask God to start a revival inside the chalk mark. When He has answered your prayer, the revival has begun."
2. The world, including the church, is addicted to fixing other people while each one of us is full of offense to God and humanity. It is time that we begin with us.

Burying my kingdom

3. Today, on this day we celebrate and remember our risen Savior and King, I want you to go home and after you've buried your kingdom (because God's Kingdom cannot coexist with yours) I want you to take this chalk out on your driveway or sidewalk and draw a circle around you. Pray that God revives your heart, that He awakens your mind, and He captures your passion. That He, your King, directs your thoughts and your actions to prepare this place for His return. This is about you, not your neighbor, not your nation, but you. Not adding Jesus to your dreams or desires, but that you and I, like the disciples dropped their nets, we drop everything and follow Him.

Let us live boldly in the awareness that Christ lives and that He lives in His people.

Invite band then call to Jesus.



MARK 16:1-8

JUST AS HE TOLD YOU

APRIL 4, 2021 | PASTOR MATT WHITEFORD



ACCOUNTABILITY FROM LAST WEEK'S LIVE IT OUT QUESTION

BEFORE YOUR STUDY, ASK THIS QUESTION FROM LAST WEEK'S GROUP:

Last week we asked, "What do you need to bury that is keeping you from Jesus being King in your life?"

Did you do the work of burying what you said you would bury and what did that look like for you? How can we help you keep it buried?

GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER (USE JUST ONE OR ALL OF THESE QUESTIONS TO CONNECT AS YOU START YOUR CONVERSATION)

1 When you were growing up, what was the tradition in your family for celebrating Easter?

2 Can you imagine an experience like this? Can you fathom what it would feel like to have a loved one return from death?

After the death of Jesus on the cross, His disciples were distraught. Hope was lost. The story wasn't supposed to end that way. The darkness that hung in the air had permeated the fledgling group of Christ-followers. However at dawn on Sunday morning, a few attentive women received a message and a command that would change everything. Seeing that the stone had been rolled away, the women learned that Jesus was no longer in the grave - He had risen. Not only had He risen, but He had already gone ahead of them, and they were to share the good news. This is the Gospel message that was to go out to the ends of the Earth. Death had been defeated. Christ had been raised. Indeed, there is no greater hope for a broken world.

QUICK REVIEW (OPPORTUNITY FOR PEOPLE TO SHARE WHAT MOST STOOD OUT FROM SUNDAY'S MESSAGE)

Looking back at your notes from this week's message, was there anything you heard that caught your attention, encouraged, challenged, or confused you?

DIG DEEPER (OBSERVATIONS FROM THE SCRIPTURE OR COMPLEMENTARY SCRIPTURES FROM SUNDAY'S MESSAGE)

1 Someone read **Mark 16:1-4** for the group.

¹ When the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint Him. ² And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. ³ And they were saying to one another, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance of the tomb?" ⁴ And looking up, they saw that the stone had been rolled back - it was very large.

Once the Sabbath had passed, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome gathered spices and went early in the morning to the tomb. They wanted to anoint Jesus' body properly for burial. In the rush of Friday night, His body had not been attended to in the manner which was custom. Though bodies were not embalmed, they were often covered in spices to preserve them for as long as possible. The women may have been unaware that just a few nights before, another woman had anointed Jesus for burial when she lavishly poured an entire

bottle of expensive nard on His head (14:3-9). Even still, they had cared for Jesus up to that point (15:41), and they would continue to even after His death.

What stands out about the fact that the women didn't have a certain plan to move the stone? How was their journey an act of faith?

How might you exhibit faith in the midst of a very difficult circumstance?

This scene offers a picture of our own barriers to Christ. Before we know Christ as our Savior, there remains a barrier between us and God—one that we have no power to remove. In Christ, that stone is rolled away, but not of our doing. Even still, as believers, we often find ways to roll smaller stones in the way once again. Whether it be sinful tendencies or unhealthy habits, in our flesh we find ways to distance ourselves. The hope of Easter, however, is that Christ has already removed the stone and given us full access. He continues to empower us through the Holy Spirit to keep the stones of sin and shame out of the way. Where Christ has removed the stench of death, let us not back into the grave once again - we have been called to life!

2 Someone read **Mark 16:5-6** for the group.

⁵And entering the tomb, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, dressed in a white robe, and they were alarmed. ⁶And he said to them, "Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, Who was crucified. He has risen; He is not here. See the place where they laid Him.

With the barrier removed, the women ventured through the tomb's entrance to carry out the anointing process. They expected to find Jesus' body still wrapped, lying where Joseph had laid Him. Instead, they saw a young man, dressed in white, sitting where Jesus was supposed to be. Understandably caught off guard, the women were frightened.

What are some of the indicators that this was no ordinary man, but a supernatural messenger?

A few things about this scene had a supernatural undertone. As already stated, the very large stone had been moved out of the way. There was only one man inside the tomb, yet the stone would have been too large for a single person to move—probably even for all three women to move. The women were frightened—a common response to encounters with angels. The messenger's first words support this pattern, as he told the women not to be afraid. Mark also noted the young man was wearing a white robe. The indication here is that this was not an ordinary white but a white that lit up the darkness of the tomb.

What is the significance of the messenger's words that Jesus was not there?

3 Someone read **Mark 16:7-8** for the group.

⁷But go, tell His disciples and Peter that He is going before you to Galilee. There you will see Him, just as He told you." ⁸And they went out and fled from the tomb, for trembling and astonishment had seized them, and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

The messenger's declaration didn't stop there. Jesus was alive - indeed, He had risen from the dead. But there was more. Because Jesus had risen, there was news to share. The angel gave the women a command and a word of comfort. He instructed them to go at once to tell the disciples and Peter what they had seen and what he had told them. As if he knew the women would be overwhelmed at the prospect of carrying such a message, he gave them a word of

comfort: Jesus had already gone ahead of them. These words were hopeful for the women in the tomb and for us today. He has gone ahead of you, and He will meet you, if only you will follow after Him. In these simple words, we as believers take heart knowing that Jesus has already walked the journey ahead of us and He has made a way.

Why do you think the angel included “and Peter” in his command to tell the disciples?

What hope does Peter’s specific inclusion offer us?

It seems odd that the angel would specify Peter. After all, he was included in “the disciples.” Yet Mark made sure to include that detail in the messenger’s words. In this detail, we find great encouragement as followers of Jesus. Just two chapters prior, Peter failed Jesus in a remarkable way. While Jesus was praying in the garden of Gethsemane, Peter and the others had fallen asleep multiple times after He had asked them to stay and pray with Him (Mark 14: 32-42). Peter, too, had promised Jesus that He would never betray Him (14:29). And then, before Peter knew it, he had denied Jesus three times - just as Jesus had predicted. All of the disciples failed in Jesus’ greatest hour of need, Peter especially. Here we see the grace of a Savior Who sends His good news even to those Who have failed Him.

LIVE IT OUT (DISCUSS HOW YOU CAN LIVE OUT THE TRUTHS YOU JUST OBSERVED IN SCRIPTURE)

1 If the Resurrection is true, what should that mean for our lives? How does Jesus’ Resurrection form how we follow Jesus as His disciple?

Matt said this on Sunday: “Discipleship is the absolute exchange of your values (self-denial) for Jesus’ values. It is acting upon those values, knowing but disregarding the consequences (taking up your cross), driven by a persistent pursuit of Jesus as King, evidenced by compassionate and active evangelism.”

- **How has the western church typically practiced discipleship?**
- **How does our understanding of discipleship need to change, based on what we know is true about Jesus and Jesus’ own words in Mark 8:34 about how to follow Him?**

CLOSING PRAYER

Close your time in prayer with your group.

NEXT WEEK: NEW SERIES: CITIZEN

This new series will be about Kingdom life and our role as citizens in God’s Kingdom. Take some time before Sunday to pray that God would use these messages and the truth in His word to transform the minds and lives of those who hear it. Pray that God would move you and others in our church to live out what is revealed in His word. Remember to take good notes so you are ready to add to the discussion your home group will have!

PRAISE/PRAYER REQUESTS (TRY TO HAVE ONE OR A FEW PEOPLE PRAY FOR ONE TOPIC AT A TIME)

Use this space or the back of this paper to write the requests and find a way to share those with the group so you can be praying for each other during the week.

TIPS ON GROUP PRAYER

Prayer is an important part of being in a Home Group. Here are some tips to help make group prayer be a life-giving aspect of your group.

PRAY FOR ONE TOPIC AT A TIME: Anyone in the group is free to introduce a prayer request or praise during the prayer time. Once a topic is introduced, the group focuses on that request alone. Once it's covered, the group moves on to the next request or praise.

PRAY MORE THAN ONCE: If your group is focusing on one topic at a time, each person is encouraged to pray several times during the prayer time for those topics they feel most led to pray about. No one should be required to pray.

KEEP PRAYERS SHORT AND SIMPLE: Group prayer goes better when members keep their prayers short and to the point. When someone prays for a long time, it's hard for the other members to stay focused and long prayers tend to intimidate those who are just learning to pray out loud in a group. No one should be required to pray out loud.

How to Use this Discussion Guide

This guide is meant to serve you and your group as you intentionally create a healthy environment for Gospel community, growing in friendship, and becoming like Jesus together. Use the guide as a tool to help your unique group.

With that in mind, please review the guide before your group meets to see if some content or questions might resonate more or less with your group. Don't feel the need to ask every question during your group discussion. This guide is not meant to be something you power through for the sake of completing. Pick the content from the guide you feel will help your group grow in Gospel community. In addition, spend some time praying for your group each week, preparing your heart, and asking God for wisdom and guidance as you lead. We are praying for you too!

Visit cmodesto.org/groupleaders to download the sermon discussion guide every week. Not in a Home Group, but want to be in one? Visit cmodesto.org/homegroups and use the Home Group Finder!

COMMENTARY

MARK 16:1-8

16:1. The Sabbath was over around 6 pm Saturday evening. The same three women who were mentioned at the Crucifixion (15:40) wanted to anoint Jesus' body. Even though they were adamant followers of Christ, they did not expect to see Him alive; hence their desire to anoint His body. This anointing was not for the purpose of embalming the body, since this was not a practice of the Jews. It was more an act of love and devotion. Anointing with spices was necessary to reduce the smell of a decomposing body in such a hot climate as Palestine's.

16:2. The phrase, just after sunrise, they were on their way to the tomb, indicates that the women waited until Sunday morning since it would have been too dark right after the Sabbath ended. The Sabbath ended at 6 pm, and it would have been getting dark.

16:3. The question on their mind was, "Who will roll the stone away from the entrance of the tomb?" (cf. 15:46-47). Matthew tells us that guards had been posted and the tomb had been sealed (Matt. 27:62-66). The women would not have known these events had taken place. The stone would have been very difficult to move because of its enormous weight and size (v. 4). The stone would have to be rolled back up the incline or lifted out of the grooved slot it was in before they could enter the tomb.

16:4-5. Upon arriving at the tomb, the women were greeted with a surprise: The stone had been moved back. Mark does not tell us who moved the stone. Yet, we do know that it had to be a supernatural act to remove such a large stone. The women entered the tomb and were greeted by two angels (see Luke 24:4). Mark focuses on one angel and describes him as a young man dressed in a white robe sitting on the right side.

The angels were witnesses of the resurrection of Christ and the behind-the-scenes work Jesus was doing during those three days in the tomb. Even if we do not see God at work, this does not mean He is not working. God is often working on our behalf in ways we cannot fathom. The women were alarmed. This was a total surprise to them. It is not every day that a person has a conversation with an angel about someone rising from the dead. This truly would be a frightening experience.

16:6. The angel attempted to calm the women's fears by saying, "Don't be alarmed." The angel knew they were looking for Jesus the Nazarene. He was letting them know that they had not come to the wrong grave by accident. In fact, the one they were seeking - He has risen! He is not here. The angel then invited them to see that the tomb was empty. The angel's explanation made it clear that the bodily Resurrection of Jesus Christ had taken place. Good news!

16:7. The angel told the women, go, tell his disciples and Peter. This shows the great concern Jesus had for His disciples—especially Peter, who had denied Him. These men needed reassurance and encouragement during these dark times, especially Peter. Peter needed to know he had been forgiven and restored. John's Gospel describes how Jesus did just that (John 21).

It is also interesting that it is Mark, who received his material from Peter, who puts this phrase in his Gospel. Peter, it seems, wanted us to know that no matter what we have done, God's gracious hand of forgiveness can bring us back. Even in our darkest moments of despair, Jesus is there. Jesus said his disciples would gather in Galilee after His Resurrection (14:28). The angel reminded them to go there and meet Him. Why Galilee? This is where Jesus would meet with the disciples as well as the larger community of His followers. Here He would give them last-minute instructions before His ascension back to Heaven.

16:8. Mark records that the women, trembling and bewildered ... went out and fled from the tomb. Wouldn't you? They needed time to process this experience and collect their thoughts, so they said nothing. Also, they were afraid. Who would believe them? Jewish law, which was very male dominated, discounted the witness of women. Yet, good news cannot be contained. After they had composed themselves, they did a lot of talking (Matt. 28:8; Luke 24:9).