

Jesus Is Risen! (Mark 16)

The last thing Mary Magdalene expected to see was an empty tomb. As she stood gazing on in disbelief, the words of the angel seemed almost too good to be true: “*You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He is risen! He is not here.*” What wonderful news! As we come to the final chapter of Mark, we come to the climax of the gospel. Although Mark 16 is the shortest chapter in the entire book, it nevertheless contains the most important news of all: Jesus is alive!

POINTS TO PONDER:

A. JESUS RISES FROM THE DEAD ON THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK (V1-8)

- Christ’s resurrection is recorded in all four gospels. Each account differs in some respects. But that doesn’t mean they contradict each another. Together, they fit like the pieces of a puzzle.
- The tomb was cut out of rock (Matt. 27:60), and a large stone was placed over the door.
- The young man clothed in a white robe (v5) is identified as an angel in Matthew’s gospel.

B. JESUS PRESENTS HIMSELF ALIVE TO HIS FOLLOWERS (V9-14)

- The first person to see Jesus alive was Mary Magdalene (v9).
- On four separate occasions Jesus told His disciples that He would rise again. However, they did not believe when Mary told them the news!
- After His resurrection, Jesus appeared to His disciples, and to more than five hundred believers (1Co. 15:6).

C. JESUS COMMISSIONS HIS FOLLOWERS TO PREACH THE GOSPEL IN ALL THE WORLD (V15-20)

- The gospel contains both a promise and a warning:
 - *PROMISE: He who believes and is baptized will be saved (v16a).*
 - *WARNING: He who does not believe will be condemned (v16b).*
- *They will take up serpents...* (v18). These verses make us realize that serving the Lord can get us into challenging situations! (See Acts 28:3).

CHALLENGE TO CHANGE:

On four separate occasions Jesus told His disciples that He would rise again from the dead. Yet, when the women brought the news of Christ’s resurrection, they did not believe! In Mark 16:14 we read that Jesus “rebuked their unbelief and hardness of heart.” And in Luke 24:25, He said to them, “O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken!” Today, consider the condition of your own heart. Do you ever suffer from “hardness of heart” like the disciples? Are you ever “slow of heart to believe”? In prayer, ask God to soften your heart to His word.