

New Beginnings, Empty Tomb Edition *Mark 16*

Good morning, **He is Risen.**

Merriam-Webster's dictionary defines **beginning** as “*the point at which something starts.*” *New beginnings could be defined as a new start.*”

A *LinkedIn* article said, “*New Beginnings give you the freedom to make choices for yourself and to know your worth once again.*”

While these statements sound good, the only way we can have a new beginning and understand our true worth is by accepting the New Beginning, which happened on Resurrection Morning.

Please open your Bibles to *Mark 16*, as we return to that study.

Last time we learned, at the “*The sixth hour*” (noon) there was total darkness as Jesus hung on the Cross and at “*the ninth hour*” (3:00 PM) **Jesus died**, and creation began to mourn its Creator.

As the sin from all eternity was placed on Jesus on the Cross and the Father turned His back because He could not look upon sin.

John 19:30 when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.

“*It is finished*” is one word in Greek, “*tetelestai*” and it literally means, **paid** in full. Jesus fully paid for sin on the Cross.

With His last breath, Jesus wanted mankind to know that the work of redemption was complete before He gave up His Spirit.

Finally, we read how the King was placed in a rich man's tomb.

The Bible says the Cross was not simply an act of injustice on the part of men, but it was Jesus' substitutionary suffering.

Jesus assumed our place, taking God's judgment for sin, by placing His own body upon the cross. But there is no Tomb on planet Earth fit for our King, so He rose again on the third day!

Today, we will finish *Mark* and learn what happened to Jesus after the Jewish leaders, the Roman leaders, and even His closest followers, thought the story was over after the crucifixion.

I. A Sunday morning new beginning.

Read *Mark 16:1-5*

Notice, the day after the Sabbath, Jesus rose on Sunday. This is why most Evangelical churches meet on Sunday as well.

We know that particular day was the Jewish holiday of Firstfruits, which was a day of thanksgiving for God's provision.

The celebration of Firstfruits happened 50 days before Pentecost and this paints such a wonderful picture of what happened that day in the life of Jesus Christ.

Jesus was the **Firstfruits** offering of God. He was the first of all the people who will rise from the dead.

1 Corinthians 15:20 But now Christ is risen from the dead and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.

1 Corinthians 15:21 For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead.

1 Corinthians 15:22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive. NKJV

Jesus' Resurrection paved the way for our resurrection. Since Jesus is the Firstfruits from God of people who will rise from the dead, we know we will rise again once we die physically.

Jesus died on the Cross, but He rose on the third day. If we accept Him as Lord and Savior, we can experience resurrection, where a spiritually **dead** sinner becomes a child of God.

Jesus' Resurrection demonstrates the difference between the Old Testament Firstfruits' harvest of grain and the New Testament harvest of **souls**.

50 days after Jesus rose from the grave, Pentecost happened, and Peter preached his first sermon.

Acts 2:41 Then those who gladly received his word were baptized, and that day about three thousand souls were added to them. NKJV

Acts 2:41 shows the first harvest of souls in the New Testament Church.

The morning Jesus rose, the two Marys and Salome came to the tomb and the guards were still there, making sure no one could steal the body of Jesus Christ.

These women came with embalming spices to prepare the body of Jesus for a proper burial. The women were full of grief and sadness as they thought about Jesus' final resting place.

The women asked each other, "*Who will roll away the stone for us to access the Tomb?*" But when they got to the Tomb, the stone was already moved from the door.

Matthew 28:1 Now after the Sabbath, as the first day of the week began to dawn, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb.

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

Matthew says there was an earthquake as an angel showed up and in *Mark 16:5*, the women met an angel in human form, and his appearance was so striking that they were ***alarmed***.

Remember, the Creator of the universe was placed in that tomb, but the angel did not roll away the stone to let Jesus out, he rolled away the stone to let humanity see the **empty** tomb.

Not long after this, Jesus appeared while the Disciples were in the Upper Room hiding out. With all the doors shut tightly, Jesus simply walked through the walls and startled the Disciples.

Jesus is the all-powerful God-man. The Tomb outside of Jerusalem was not going to keep Jesus in, with a mere piece of His own creation, blocking the entrance.

II. Peace and assurance.

Read *Mark 16:6-8*

There are several words of hope and encouragement from the angel in these verses. David Guzik said...

- *“When we see the place where they laid Him is now empty, we see that the Father did not forsake Jesus.*
- *When we see the place where they laid Him is now empty, we see that death is conquered.*
- *When we see the place where they laid Him is now empty, we see that we have a living friend in Jesus.”*

Notice the words of hope and encouragement from the angel...

1. *Do not be alarmed.*

Before Jesus was crucified, He had told His followers He was going to be crucified and He told them not to fear this world.

John 16:33 These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.” NKJV

Everyone has trials in this life, but if you are a child of God this morning, do not be alarmed, Jesus has overcome the world.

2. *Seek Jesus.*

The angel communicated what Jesus was, but also what He is, as the angel said, *“Look to the empty tomb where they laid Him.”*

Jesus was crucified, dead, and buried but He is risen and alive!

We, like those women, have proof beyond doubt, Jesus is alive.

Our peace and assurance are in the fact that Jesus is risen, and that He bodily ascended into heaven, where He continues to reign as fully man and fully God, today.

3. *And Peter.*

The angel told the women to "***Go, tell His disciples and Peter.***"

The ***Gospel of Mark*** was written by Mark as a scribe for Peter. I imagine Peter was completely ruined as his denial of Jesus continued to haunt him, because Jesus was hung on the Cross.

Peter denied Jesus three times. The last denial included a curse! I am sure Peter thought Jesus would have never forgiven him.

But when he heard "***and Peter***" from the angel, after remembering his denials of Jesus, it must have lifted a heavy burden off of him.

The access to Jesus is not closed to us, because of our failures. Because of the Cross and Resurrection, we have forgiveness, understanding, compassion, and love, even if we have denied Jesus sometime during our life.

"He is going before you into Galilee, there you shall see Him".

The main object was for Jesus to reveal Himself to His people.

In ***verse 8***, the angel told the women to ***go to the disciples and to Peter, and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.***

Mark 16:8 seems to contradict the other places in scripture where we read that the women went and told the Disciples about the Resurrection.

“They said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid”, means that as they left the scene of the empty tomb, they were so **shocked** that they did not discuss it among themselves.

It isn't that they had to get their stories straight on the way to tell the others.

For the remainder of *Mark 16*, there is an age-old controversy that I want to touch on without spending too much time on it. Some of the earliest manuscripts do not include *Mark 16:9–20*.

Your Bible may have *verses 9-20* in brackets because this portion is often referred to as the “*Longer Ending of Mark*.”

Some ancient manuscripts of *Mark's Gospel* contain these verses and others do not. This is a puzzle for some scholars who have studied the history of biblical manuscripts.

However, we must know that the longer ending of *Mark (verses 9-20)* is theologically sound and consistent with the rest of the Gospels and Scripture. So, we will study this portion of *Mark*.

III. During their fear, Jesus appeared.

Read *Mark 16:9-13*

I love that even though the women left in fear Jesus doesn't chastise them, but He cares enough to show Himself to them.

These women were so shocked because they were not expecting the Lord to do anything, even though Jesus had previously told them that He would rise on the third day.

Jesus' followers were so full of grief they had **forgotten** the promises of God. When we are filled with grief, we need to remember the Lord is able to keep His promises, as well.

How about you this morning, did you come to church this morning expecting God to show up?

In ***John 20***, Jesus showed Himself to Mary Magdelene, but she thought He was a gardener, until He spoke to her.

Then Mary Magdelene went and found the other followers, who were still sad Jesus was crucified. The other followers of Christ did not believe Mary Magdelene when she said Jesus was alive.

How about you this morning, do you believe Jesus is alive?

Paul, who at first didn't believe in Jesus said in ***Romans 1:1***, he was ***called to be an apostle, separated to the gospel of God,***

Romans 1:2 which He promised before through His prophets in the Holy Scriptures,

Romans 1:3 concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh,

Romans 1:4 (Jesus) declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead. NKJV

Guzik, “*The resurrection means we have assurance of our own resurrection. God has an eternal plan for these bodies of ours.*”

1 Thessalonians 4:14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus. NKJV

The Resurrection demonstrates that Christianity is unique and completely different than world religions.

Every world religion tells people to do things to try and **appease** their God. But the God of heaven became a man, took the Cross to pay for sin, and then rose on the third day to prove who He is.

The death of Jesus on the Cross was the payment for sin but the Resurrection was the proof of who Jesus is, demonstrating that the payment for sin was perfect in the sight of God the Father.

IV. Go and tell.

Read *Mark 16:14-20*

Matthew 28:18 Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.

Matthew 28:19 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

Matthew 28:20 teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." NKJV

Let's break down the Great commission from *Matthew 28:18-20*

- *All authority has been given to Me.*

We can only fulfill our God given mission, with His authority and power!

Zechariah 4:6 'Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,' says the LORD of hosts. NKJV

The Lord does not call us to serve Him in our own strength or with our own natural abilities. Rather, when the Lord calls us to do something, He empowers us to do it as well.

If you want any lasting results from your endeavors for the Lord, it has to be done in His authority, and empowered by His Spirit.

And because the Father has given Jesus all the authority in heaven and on earth; He can empower us to....

- *Go therefore* and **fulfill** His commission.

We are not to be timid while fulfilling things for the Lord, but His authority sends us, guides us, and empowers us. His work and message continued to the world through His Disciples.

The word “*go*” in *Matthew 28:19* is actually a verb that means to follow a lead from someone and to **continue** on one's journey.

“*Go*” is not a onetime order either, but it literally means to be going, be teaching, and be baptizing.

- *Make Disciples.*

We are not to make supporters of a certain cause, or to develop fans of a theology. We are to make Disciples of Jesus Christ; students willing to follow and obey the Lord.

Kyle Idleman said in *Gods at War*, “*Being a devoted disciple means they must acknowledge their own helplessness and their ultimate need — the need for rescue.*”

- ***Baptizing.***

Romans 6:3 Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?

Romans 6:4 Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. NKJV

First, we are baptized into Christ when we accept Him as Lord and Savior and then we are to be baptized by water to publicly demonstrate the heart change that has taken within us.

R. T. France said, “*In the name is literally ‘into the name’, implying entrance into an allegiance.*”

Christianity is not simply a cleansing from sin, it is also a commitment to become a follower of Christ.

- ***Teaching them to observe.***

Disciples are those who have committed to following Jesus as they learn how to follow, by learning what Jesus taught.

Of course this happens as we study His Word, the Bible.

What should be taught is the Word of God, not man's opinion or feel-good thoughts or motivational talks.

As followers of Christ, we should be learners and students of His teaching found within His Word, the Bible.

- ***“I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”***

Jesus does not leave us as orphans, trying to navigate this life alone. He empowers us to go, to follow, and then He promises that there will not be one single moment He will leave us alone.

When Peter and John were arrested for speaking the name of Jesus, Peter addressed the religious leaders, and we are told in:

Acts 4:13 Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated and untrained men, they marveled. And they realized that they had been with Jesus. NKJV

When we have been with Jesus, we will gain boldness and want to share His good news with others.

V. Practical Application.

When we think about Jesus' Resurrection, we have a marvelous story to share. When we think about the empty tomb, we realize the Father did not forsake Jesus so, He will not forsake us either.

When we think about the empty tomb, we also realize death is conquered, and we have the Promise of Eternal Life.

When we think about the empty tomb, we realize we have a living friend in Jesus, who will never leave us alone.

Our relationship to the Lord is the very reason we were created. Our Worship is supposed to be for the Lord God alone.

And so, first we should come and see who Jesus is and all that He has done for us, and then we go and tell all who need to hear!

The *LinkedIn* article said, “*New Beginnings give you the freedom to make choices for yourself and to know your worth once again. Choices that will drift you for good.*”

While these statements sound good, the only way we can have a new beginning and understand our true worth is by accepting the New Beginning, which happened on Resurrection Morning.

A New Life in Christ will reveal to you, how much Jesus thought you were worth, so much so, He died in your place.

Every person who hears the Gospel message needs to respond, and the Lord tells us to *come and see and then go and tell.*

Everyone who has heard the radical claims of the Resurrection must respond. In essence, there are three ways to respond.

1. A person can choose to reject the teachings of Christ and the Bible. Jesus and His Word answer life’s greatest question, “*Why am I here on planet Earth?*”

Besides having no purpose without Christ, the problem with rejecting His offer of salvation is there is a penalty for our sin.

Someone has to pay the penalty for sin. You can pay the price for your sin, or you can accept Jesus' gift.

2. A person can choose to roll the dice and put off the decision of making Jesus Lord of their life as they hope there is enough time to make that decision before, they die.

This will be the biggest decision/regret in your life because the consequence of this decision is terrible if you get it wrong.

3. A person can choose to believe and receive Jesus as Lord and Savior and receive forgiveness and a changed life.

We were created to worship God and enjoy Him forever.

Receiving eternal life happens when we place Jesus on the throne of our life, and then allow Him to lead us as we obtain abundant life. That is how He becomes both Lord and Savior.

If you truly surrender to the Lord, He will radically change you.

Some people accept a status quo life that is not fulfilling while, the Lord Jesus wants to give you an abundant, fulfilling life.

Don't leave here this morning without knowing for sure that you are saved by the Lord. God is in the Resurrection Business, and He is working behind the scenes when we don't even realize it.

Resurrection morning was a huge surprise for Jesus' followers who believed their hopes and dreams ended with the Cross.

But Jesus walking out of the Tomb was proof He is alive, and He loves us enough to save us from our sin.