

Mark Study
Week 24
Mark 16:9-20

Day One

9 When Jesus rose early on the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had driven seven demons. 10 She went and told those who had been with him and who were mourning and weeping. 11 When they heard that Jesus was alive and that she had seen him, they did not believe it.

v. 9 – As stated in the previous study, early manuscripts do not have the last 12 verses that we will look at in this study. Am I troubled by this? Not at all! There are 778 verses in Mark, so even if a writer other than Mark added these 12 verses, I don't think it represents a major problem. They represent less than 2% of the total book!

Plus, the content is not controversial, nor does it contradict any other portion of this gospel specifically or the Word in general. So I am fine with their inclusion. I don't think I will be preaching from them any time soon, but I am fine with studying them.

Jesus arose on a Sunday, which is the first day of the Jewish week. When you are in Israel, it is unusual to see Sunday as a day of business-as-usual. Children are in school and most businesses are open.

It is interesting that Jesus first appeared to a woman, and one that He had cleansed of seven demons. Mary would have been from Migdala, an area on the north side of the Sea of Galilee. She obviously had followed Jesus from there down to Jerusalem to be with Him. If Jesus had a problem with women, why would He appear to this woman first and not His disciples? My point throughout this study is that Jesus does *not* have a problem with women, and neither should you.

v. 10 – The disciples were huddled together, mourning and weeping. Mary hurried off to give them the good news that Jesus was alive. Recently, I have been confronting, with God's help, how pessimistic I am. I believe negative reports, usually see the worst in things, and don't always believe that things will get better. I suppose I would have been numbered with these disciples who were gathered convinced that Jesus in the grave, not believing what He had told me would happen – that He would be back!

Are you pessimistic, too? Do you believe the best or the worst? Pessimism is a learned behavior, so it can be unlearned. Are you ready to unlearn it? Then you must repent of your negativity! Perhaps some verses that Paul wrote about love will help:

Love is patient, love is kind and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth;

bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things (1 Corinthians 13:4-7).

v. 11 – The disciples did not believe Mary. They wanted to wallow in their mourning, remain stuck in their perspective. When I have been down, at times someone has come along to say, “Trust the Lord. Give that situation to God!” When they do, I want to poke them in the eye! I want them to leave me alone in my lack of faith and refuse to accept their report. **Do you have this tendency as well? Do you believe the good report or the bad one?**

Day Two

12 Afterward Jesus appeared in a different form to two of them while they were walking in the country. 13 These returned and reported it to the rest; but they did not believe them either.

v. 12 – I need to research the term “**different form**”, but I think it’s effect is described in Luke 24 where the disciples on the road to Emmaus did not recognize Jesus until they had broken bread together. It is interesting to note the form that Jesus took when He came back from the dead.

For instance, we know that he had full memory of what had taken place before His death. He bore the scars in His resurrected body of His crucifixion. He could eat, but He could also pass through locked doors to where the disciples were meeting. He could be in one place and then instantly be at another. Here we see that He was with men who knew Him, yet they did not recognize His voice or His person.

Why is this important? Because it gives us some indication of how our resurrected bodies will function. It hardly seems likely that our next state will only express itself as we stand around God’s throne and sing. I think we will have purpose after we are raised with Christ. There will be work to do on the new heaven and the new earth and we will do that work without the limitations of fatigue, space or hunger.

v. 13 – The disciples’ hearts were so hard that they rejected a second testimony that Jesus was alive. Once again, I caution you not to be too hard on them, for in all probability you have done the same thing. **You don’t believe me?** Then ask God to show you where you have hardened your heart to what He can do. **Is there any promise that God has given you to which you have perhaps become calloused or hard?**

I have found in my own life that I sing the words, “nothing is too difficult for You, Lord,” and then act like *everything* is too difficult for Him. **Is there some area in your life where you are stuck and can’t seem to make progress? Is there something that you have said for years that you wanted to do or that God wanted you to do that you haven’t done? Are you truly waiting on the Lord or is your heart hardened to what God can do?**

Day Three

14 Later Jesus appeared to the Eleven as they were eating; he rebuked them for their lack of faith and their stubborn refusal to believe those who had seen him after he had risen.
15 He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation.

v. 14 – The Eleven were still together, but they were in hiding, behind locked doors (as if locked doors could stop the Roman or Temple guards if they wanted to seize them). I am impressed that at least they were hanging in there with one another.

Now I have a question? How did Jesus know that they had not believed the report of Mary and the two disciples? There is only one way He could have known: He was and is God and knows all things. While Jesus seldom claimed to be God, He certainly acted like it!

Jesus rebuked them not just for their refusal to believe but also for their stubborn refusal. They were set in their unbelief and they weren't about to change for anyone! This is why it's so important to have and listen to the testimonies of others, so that they build up our faith. **When you hear someone's testimony, do you think, "Well, that's their story. But mine is different and God would never do that for me," or "Hey, that's great! If God did something for them, then He can and will do something for me"?**

v. 15 – Whoever wrote these verses, they certainly didn't provide much detail or background, which is at least consistent with the rest of this gospel account. Jesus rebuked them for their unbelief and then ordered them to preach the gospel to all creation – that's it! This almost seems to be an attempt to include something similar to what is at the end of Matthew.

Of course, the disciples struggled with the whole concept of going out to the world. They were a part of their culture and the Jewish culture was neither open to outsiders nor was it geared to outreach. We see later that it required the persecution after Stephen's death for Jewish believers to go to the surrounding regions as a witness to the truth.

How geared for outreach are you?

Day Four

16 Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned. 17 And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues;

v. 16 – Well, that verse is pretty straightforward! You believe, baptized and then are saved, otherwise you are condemned! Yet, Jesus addressed the issue of condemnation as reported in John's gospel:

For God did not send his Son into the world to *condemn* the world, but to save the world through him (John 3:17)

There is a judge for the one who rejects me and does not accept my words; that very word which I spoke will *condemn* him at the last day (John 12:48).

I had read one time that God loves man so much that He will allow him to go to hell if that is what man wants. I'm not sure about that statement, but God does not wish anyone to perish.

This is good, and pleases God our Savior, who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus (1 Timothy 2:3-5).

I think it would be similar to a drowning man who was thrown a life preserver, but who in turn threw it back because he did not like the color! **Whose fault would the drowning be?**

v. 17 -- This is the only place where Jesus supposedly said that His followers will speak in other tongues. I am not sure that there has been a more controversial doctrine than tongues in the modern church. Do you agree? No matter how controversial, I always look to what Paul wrote about tongues in his own life:

I thank God that I speak in tongues more than all of you. But in the church I would rather speak five intelligible words to instruct others than ten thousand words in a tongue (1 Corinthians 14:18-19).

If Paul spoke in tongues, then I would think that it is important for all believers to do so. **And, where did the dumb concept come from that tongues died with the last apostle, along with the other gifts? Why would the church need spiritual gifts less today than yesterday?** I would think we need them just as much, if not more!

Do you speak in tongues? If you do, do you employ your prayer language as often as possible?

Day Five

18 they will pick up snakes with their hands; and when they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them at all; they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well." 19 After the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, he was taken up into heaven and he sat at the right hand of God. 20 Then the disciples went out and preached everywhere, and the Lord worked with them and confirmed his word by the signs that accompanied it.

v. 18 – This insight seems out of place and out of character for something that Jesus would say. Yet, we know that this is true, for a snake bit Paul in Acts 28, yet he shook it off and continued with his work:

Paul gathered a pile of brushwood and, as he put it on the fire, a viper, driven out by the heat, fastened itself on his hand. When the islanders saw the snake hanging from his hand, they said to each other, "This man must be a murderer; for though he escaped from the sea, Justice has not allowed him to live." But Paul shook the snake off into the fire and suffered no ill effects. The people expected him to swell up or suddenly fall dead, but after waiting a long time and seeing nothing unusual happen to him, they changed their minds and said he was a god (Acts 28:3-6).

There are people in the States who actually handle snakes in their church services as proof of God's protective power. Some of them have been bitten and died. This is ridiculous. You don't ever build a doctrine on something that appears once in the Bible! The verse doesn't say to go out and purposely encounter venomous snakes and deadly poisons. The verse promises that if you do, they will not harm you.

I refuse to get hung up on this one phrase, because an important characteristic of believes immediately follows: believers will lay hands on the sick and they will get well.

In my thinking, this is a critical aspect of Christianity. We should not lay hands on the sick to help them cope with their illness. We should lay hands on them so they get well! Does it say that every sick person will get well? No. Does it say that no sick people will ever get well? No. Praying for the sick and healing should be part of every church and the part of the experience of every believer.

When's the last time you prayed for a sick person and they got well? Why doesn't this happen more in your life, do you think?

Day Six

Since we have run out of verses to complete the last two days of this study, I thought we could look at some of the verses in Paul's writings that have to do with the resurrection of Jesus. Study these verses and then determine what they say to you about the resurrection and how it applies to your faith and future.

1. And who through the Spirit of holiness was declared with power to be the Son of God by his **resurrection** from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord (Romans 1:4).
2. If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his **resurrection** (Romans 6:5).
3. But if it is preached that Christ has been **raised** from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no **resurrection** of the dead? (1 Corinthians 15:12).
4. If there is no **resurrection** of the dead, then not even Christ has been **raised** (1 Corinthians 15:13).

5. For since death came through a man, the **resurrection** of the dead comes also through a man (1 Corinthians 15:21).
6. I want to know Christ and the power of his **resurrection** and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, (Philippians 3:10).
7. Who have wandered away from the truth. They say that the **resurrection** has already taken place, and they destroy the faith of some (2 Timothy 2:18).

Day Seven

There is no more important tenet of Christianity than the fact that Jesus was raised from the dead. Because He was raised, we will be raised as well! You will live forever with Christ if you have put your faith in Him. Here are some more verses from Paul's writings that focus on the word "raised." See what you can learn from these verses.

1. But also for us, to whom God will credit righteousness—for us who believe in him who **raised** Jesus our Lord from the dead. He was delivered over to death for our sins and was **raised** to life for our justification (Romans 4:24-25).
2. We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was **raised** from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life (Romans 6:4).
3. For we know that since Christ was **raised** from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him (Romans 6:9).
4. So, my brothers, you also died to the law through the body of Christ, that you might belong to another, to him who was **raised** from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit to God (Romans 7:4).
5. And if the Spirit of him who **raised** Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who **raised** Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you (Romans 8:11).
6. Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died—more than that, who was **raised** to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us (Romans 8:34).
7. That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God **raised** him from the dead, you will be saved (Romans 10:9).
8. By his power God **raised** the Lord from the dead, and he will **raise** us also (1 Corinthians 6:14).

9. But if it is preached that Christ has been *raised* from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no *resurrection* of the dead? (1 Corinthians 15:12).
10. If there is no *resurrection* of the dead, then not even Christ has been *raised* (1 Corinthians 15:13).
11. And if Christ has not been *raised*, our preaching is useless and so is your faith (1 Corinthians 15:14).
12. More than that, we are then found to be false witnesses about God, for we have testified about God that he *raised* Christ from the dead. But he did not *raise* him if in fact the dead are not *raised* (1 Corinthians 15:15).
13. For if the dead are not *raised*, then Christ has not been *raised* either (1 Corinthians 15:16).
14. And if Christ has not been *raised*, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins (1 Corinthians 15:17).
15. But Christ has indeed been *raised* from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep (1 Corinthians 15:20).
16. If I fought wild beasts in Ephesus for merely human reasons, what have I gained? If the dead are not *raised*, "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die" (1 Corinthians 15:32).
17. But someone may ask, "How are the dead *raised*? With what kind of body will they come?" (1 Corinthians 15:35).
18. So will it be with the *resurrection* of the dead. The body that is sown is perishable, it is *raised* imperishable (1 Corinthians 15:42).
19. it is sown in dishonor, it is *raised* in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is *raised* in power (1 Corinthians 15:43).
20. It is sown a natural body, it is *raised* a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body (1 Corinthians 15:44).
21. In a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be *raised* imperishable, and we will be changed (1 Corinthians 15:52).
22. Because we know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus from the dead will also *raise* us with Jesus and present us with you in his presence (2 Corinthians 4:14).

23. And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was ***raised*** again (2 Corinthians 5:15).
24. Which he exerted in Christ when he ***raised*** him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms (Ephesians 1:20).
25. And God ***raised*** us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus (Ephesians 2:6).
26. Having been buried with him in baptism and ***raised*** with him through your faith in the power of God, who ***raised*** him from the dead (Colossians 2:12).
27. Since, then, you have been ***raised*** with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God (Colossians 3:1).
28. And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he ***raised*** from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath (1 Thessalonians 1:10).
29. Remember Jesus Christ, ***raised*** from the dead, descended from David. This is my gospel (2 Timothy 2:8).

So this concludes our study of Mark's gospel, which we began at the first of the year. I hope you have enjoyed it and learned more about Jesus and His life, death and resurrection. The gospels were written with one end in mind and that was to glorify Jesus and establish His divinity, humanity and God's great love for His creation. I hope that I have been able to communicate those concepts through these weekly studies. May the Lord bless the reading and study of His word now and forevermore!