

He Has Been Raised; Mark 16:1-8

Jesus's resurrection is the definitive proof that our resurrection, just as His, will be resurrection unto life.

We are coming now to the very core of our faith, the very heartbeat, the absolute most fundamental aspect of our faith. I'm always intrigued by just how unique Christianity is among all of the world's belief systems. It is unique in so many ways. So many aspects of the Christian faith are like nothing else, no other belief system.

But nothing is more unique about Christianity than its central foundation, its central core, the heartbeat, the epicenter of Christianity. Because Christianity is the only faith system that is not based on teachings. Our faith is not based on Christian teachings. Don't get that wrong. Christian teachings are very important.

That's why we come here every Sunday and midweek to talk about Christian teachings. But our faith is not based upon teachings. Our faith is based upon deeds. Our faith is based upon what God has done, the fact that God became the God man, and He takes upon Himself humanity, and He lives the perfect, righteous life, earning eternal life by virtue of His perfect life.

And then by faith, giving us that virtue, while He takes upon Himself the penalty, the debt of our sin, and pays that penalty on the cross, and then is put into the tomb. All those are what the God man did, and that is what our faith is based upon. No other system of beliefs is based upon what anyone has done.

It's all based on somebody's ideas, or somebody's theories.

Now, of all the things that the God man has done that our faith is based upon, the most important and the most significant is the one that we come to today, which is the resurrection of the God man, the death of Christ, and is absolutely central, indispensable. We cannot be here this morning without the death of the God man.

But even more significant than the death of the God man is the resurrection of the God man. And I fear that me included, all of us within the Christian faith, we talk not enough, and we think not enough about the resurrection. We talk a lot about the death of Christ, and we're right to do that. We talk about His dying on a cross in our place, and we're right to do that.

But should we not think and talk more about the resurrection than we do the death? So that's what we turn to this morning, the resurrection of Jesus Christ. We'll look at this in two pieces this morning. First, we're going to walk through the whole chapter of chapter 16. And we're going to understand just the bits and pieces, the parts, the components, the things that are happening.

And we'll make a few observations as we go. And then at the conclusion of that, we're going to just see some of the big, grand theological significances of the cross over, not the cross, but the resurrection. This should be a surprise probably to none of us, but, but the meaning, the significance of the resurrection has many meanings, but three of those we'll look at this morning and then next week we'll return and we'll walk through this once again.

And we're going to see just a, a unique perspective that Mark is painting for us intentionally. So, and that'll be the focus of our passage next week. So we'll read this morning. We're going to begin from the last verse of chapter 15, verse 47 of chapter 15, and read the entire chapter 16. Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joseph saw where he was laid.

When the Sabbath was passed, Mary Magdalene, mother of Mary, mother, I'm sorry, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Salome brought spices so that they might go and anoint him. And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. And they were saying to one another, Who will roll away the stone for us when, from the entrance of the tomb?

And looking up, they saw that the stone had been rolled back. It was very large. And entering the tomb, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, dressed in a white robe. And they were alarmed and he said to them, do not be alarmed or stop being alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth who was crucified.

He has been raised. He is not here. See the place where they laid him. But go tell his disciples and Peter that he is going before you to Galilee. There you will see him just as he told you. And 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.

Let's pray. Our gracious Father, open the eyes of our hearts. Open our ears. Open our minds to the greatness of an infinite God, who would enter into His creation, and take upon Him the sin of His enemies, and pay the price for that sin, and give to His enemies eternal life, and eternal death. And make them co heirs of his kingdom.

Help us to see the beauty of a Messiah such as this. We pray this in Jesus name. Amen. So the darkest of days was just this past Friday. Literally and metaphorically. The day grew dark. Literally, as darkness covered the land, as Christ hangs on the cross, having been made to be sin, God now comes. In judgment and wrath pours out his wrath upon his son on the cross from the cross, Jesus cries out, Father, forgive them.

They know not what they do. And then after making some other statements close to the end, he will say, My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? To what purpose, to what end, to what result is this forsaking of me? And then he embraces death. He chooses to die. He causes death to come upon himself. And so then crying out with this loud voice, he yields up his spirit and then he is taken down from the tomb, as we looked at last week, and lovingly and caringly placed into the tomb.

His body is washed, he's cleaned, he's anointed with the burial that's fit for a king, 75 pounds of myrrh and aloes and spices, and he's lovingly placed into this new tomb. His humiliation is over and his glorification now begins. But the darkness of that day didn't fade away as perhaps the sun came back out or even the next day, which was the Sabbath began.

The darkness certainly was something that was palpable and tangible and weighed heavily upon all of those who had called themselves followers of this man, Jesus. So the first words of our text are this. When the Sabbath was passed. And I thought about that this week and I thought, what sort of a Sabbath was that?

We know the Sabbath to be the seventh day of the week, that's what the word means, seventh. And so that would equate with our Saturday, the day in which the Jews all attend synagogue. To do something akin to what we're doing here, to hear the Word proclaimed and read and to pray. So here are all these followers of Jesus, most of them from Galilee.

So, what would the Sabbath have been for them? Would they have gone to synagogue? The only thing that we are told about the activity of Jesus followers on that day is from Luke's Gospel. Luke tells us that being the Sabbath, they rested according to the law. We know nothing else about what any of the ladies or the men did.

Did they go to synagogue? If they did, with what sort of a heart did they go? Were they angry? Were they eaten up with bitterness? God, how could you do this? How could you let such a thing happen? Did they just stay away from His house? In their anger and in their extreme sadness, did they just stay home?

After all, they weren't from Jerusalem. They wouldn't have been going to their normal synagogue. It would have been like being on vacation. And most Christians today, I've found, in my experience, when we're on vacation, we don't tend to go to the house of the Lord on the Lord's Day. Because we're on vacation.

And I guess that vacation includes vacation from the house of the Lord. But would it have been that way for these ladies and these men? Would they have just stayed wherever they were abiding? Would they have just been so stunned and so numb? After what they had seen, heard, the assault on all of their senses that was the afternoon before.

As they saw the ghastly sight of Jesus, mutilated, beaten, crown of thorn, hanging from spikes. Gasping for breath as they heard the sounds the horrible sounds of that day, of course, the sound of metal striking metal as the spikes are driven into not just only Jesus's limbs, but the other crucifixion victims limbs as well as they would listen to that metal upon little metal.

They would hear they would have heard the barking orders of the soldiers as they were going about this and being told to do that. They would have heard the noise of the crowd. They would have heard the screams of the crucifixion victims, the groans and the moans from them as they were hoisted up into the air.

They would have heard the mocking. They would have heard the wailing of women. The smells, well, the smell of death. All these things assaulted them just the day before. And this would have been grotesque and ghastly for anyone. to have witnessed this, but they're witnessing not just anyone, they're witnessing Jesus, the man who has loved them like they have never been loved, who has given himself for them.

So the experience of that day is still fresh, just like a fresh wound in their soul. And now they must, well, rest. Until the first day of the week, what would that have been like with the minutes have been like hours with the seconds have been like hours as time was passing and they were still just trying to cope with what they had just experienced and the feelings, the new feelings that are coming up in their hearts towards God, towards the Romans, towards the Jewish leaders towards anyone.

You know, when the wound is deep enough, you lash out against everyone, don't you? Mhm. So what would that day have been like for them? Well, now, as that day comes to an end, we read that when the Sabbath was passed, Mary Magdalene, married mother of James and Salome, bought spices. So what that means is they would have bought spices after the first appearance of the first star on Saturday, meaning that that would signal that the Sabbath was over and some of the shops could now open for at least a short amount of time.

And the ladies could then go and buy the spices that they would need, the aloes, the, , anointments, the, , aromatic liquids that they would need. So we're told once again, Mary Magdalene, mother, The mother of, , James and Salome bought spices. So, here we see something, and that, as we go through the message this morning, there'll be several things that we notice, I'll point out to us, that will really feed into what we'll talk about next week, because Mark has done something here.

Perhaps it went unnoticed, but let's, let's call our attention to this. Mark has now focused our attention on the ladies. We should ask the question, where did that come from? Because we have heard nothing about lady disciples, female disciples, for 15 chapters. We've heard nothing. Mark has said nothing about female followers of Jesus until the end of chapter 15, when they are at the cross.

And Mark has specifically portrayed them as the only ones there. We know that. They weren't literally the only ones there. We know that the Apostle John was there. And we know that they were there in, , close proximity because there was some conversation that took place between Jesus and those at the cross.

But nevertheless, Mark's literary focus here, his intentional focus is to portray only the ladies. And they're only at a distance. But the last verse of chapter 15 speaks of these ladies. The first verse of chapter 16 speaks of them again. So we have continuity here. Now there's Salome mentioned. Salome would have been the sister of Mary, Jesus mother.

She would have been the wife of Zachariah. And the father, the mother of James and, um, James and John, making her the aunt, Jesus's aunt. And so she's mentioned here as well, Mary's sister, the mother of Jesus. But then once again, Mary is not portrayed as Jesus's biological mother. She's portrayed as the mother of Jesus's half brothers.

So here's this Mary once again, Jesus's mother. We know her to be Jesus's mother, but she's not described that way. Mary Magdalene? We read elsewhere in Luke's gospel that she's the one that Jesus cast seven demons out of her. And now we also have this other lady, Salome. So here's these three ladies that have been absent from the entire story.

Except for when Jesus's biological mother in chapter 3 tried to interfere and forcibly stop his ministry. Other than that, now all of a sudden, these ladies are front and center of the story. So we have these three ladies once again, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Salome, and they bought spices.

The word there is aromatized, literally the word that we get our word. Aromaic or not Aromaic, Aromatic, Aromaic would be the language, right? Aromatic or Aroma is literally the word that we get that from. So it would be these very aromatic spices and oils and liquids. It probably would not have been as expensive as the myrrh.

that Joseph and Nicodemus brought, but it would have been costly and it would have been very, very fragrant. So they buy these spices so that they might go and anoint him. So this anointing that they seek to do is a, an act of devotion. We should be clear and we should understand this is not an act of faith because they are going to anoint his body with absolutely zero expectation of a resurrection.

Why else would they anoint his body? They're going to do what you do for dead bodies in that culture. There is zero expectation that the story has anything left to be told. Instead, this 100 percent expectation that the story is now over, we're going to go and we're going to anoint the body. So this is this act of devotion and love.

So to go and anoint the body, what that means is that they're going to go, and first of all, we notice That it, the, the, just the absolute Christian reality, the Christian aspect of the, the goodness of going to the graveside. Going to the graveside to honor the person, to honor the body that's been put into the grave, to go and give that honor.

to the body that has been buried. We do not believe that the body is just a shell. We do not believe that the body is just an exterior that's thrown away at the end of this life. We believe that the Bible teaches us from the very beginning that when God creates us, He doesn't create us and then give us a body.

He creates us as a body and soul, and that's who we are. And so the body that's put into the ground, it's not an empty shell. It's us. It's part of us. It's not all of us, but it's part of us. And so the honoring of that body as they go to do this, that's a very godly and Christian thing to do that they're going to do.

But they're going to show this devotion. So the devotion was to anoint the body. with the spices, with the aromatic spices, that if we recall, we did not get the chance to do that before the burial because the burial was so hasty. Remember Mary, the sister of Lazarus, did that in advance, but that was several days ago.

So now they want to anoint the body with these fragrant spices, and what that's all about is this. That allows mourners and griever to come and grieve the passing of a loved one without the offensive odor of decaying flesh. So if you can just imagine, we're not trying to be crass or just overly graphic here, but as the body is placed into the tomb, this is now at least part of three days has passed.

So at least a day and a half has passed. And if you remember from the story of Lazarus, four days had passed, that Jesus says, open up the stone, and they say, wait a minute, let's think about this because there's going to be a foul odor. So that was four days. This is now part of three days. And so the idea here is that the stone that's been rolled on top of the opening of the, of the tomb, that's not airtight.

It's not like a, a mason jar that's been sealed off. There will be fragrances and odors that will emanate from the grave. And so to go and remember one who has passed, while experiencing the foulness of the odor of decaying flesh, Certainly would not have filled one with pleasant thoughts of the one who has just passed.

So in order to do this, they're going to just try to disguise the odor, cover up the odor, because the Jews didn't embalm or mummify or anything of that nature. It was just the body in the tomb. And so they need to disguise this and place an odor stronger than the odor of decaying flesh. So that the mourners might come and pay respect and honor the one who has passed instead of obviously struggling with the smell of rotting flesh, which we all can imagine to be a hideous smell, especially when you think about that.

It's coming from someone you know and you love. So the idea was to disguise the smell with a stronger, sweeter one. And I want to just draw attention to a parallel that I see here that to me is very striking. This is a parallel to the fig leaves. If you remember the story of the fig leaves in Genesis chapter 3, the man and the woman have sinned, sin has now entered into them and because sin has entered into the world, the man and the woman who were naked and not ashamed before are now ashamed, and so they seek to cover their shame with the fig leaves.

God comes and says that won't work. Let me do this for you. So there's a parallel here. The manifestation of sin was the shame that they felt and the need to cover that they felt. Another manifestation, in fact, a clearer manifestation of sin is the decay that results from death because death is a result of sin.

And so here we have this manifestation of sin. Both of them are offensive. The shame of being naked and exposed and the smell of decaying flesh. Both are the, the offensive manifestations of sin and in both instances they're trying to cover over them with something that people can do. The difference is in the first occasion, God shows up and says, that won't work, let me do this for you.

Now, now God shows up and says, this has been done. The problem has now been removed altogether. You came to cover up the distasteful manifestations of sin. Well, I'm here to tell you that because that tomb is empty, the manifestations of sin are now dealt with. They, they're now defeated altogether. Death is now swallowed up in this victory.

So there's an interesting parallel that I see there, this parallel between the covering up of the distasteful manifestations of sin as the ladies come to anoint him. But as they come to anoint him, they find that God has actually anointed them with a greater anointing and he's already done it before they showed up.

So now verse two, and very early on the first day of the week, very early. So this is in the morning. In your notes here, we won't go through these, but in your notes, I put some instances, particularly in the Psalms, in which we find that it's a common theme in the scripture that God comes to the brokenhearted in the morning, it shows up enough times in our Bibles for us to make note of the fact that it seems like that God just seems to like to do that binding up work in the morning that he binds up the hearts of the brokenhearted and he does it early in the morning.

So here we see very early in the morning. If we were to look to, to John's gospel, we're told that that they actually left while it was still dark. So very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. If you remember from last week, we noticed from Matthew's Gospel that the tomb was located very close to the cross.

Remember that? So that made me speculate, in going to the tomb, did they have to pass the place where the cross was? I don't know if the cross is still up. Maybe the Romans have taken it down. Or

maybe it's still up. But either way There's certainly some bloodstains on the ground. There's certainly some splatterings of blood on some rocks laying around.

And to go to the tomb, did the ladies have to pass that? I don't know. Maybe there's a back way. Maybe they could come around a different way. Or maybe they couldn't. Maybe there was one path that they had to walk. And in going to the tomb, they had to go past that hideous place. That will forever just be emblazoned into their minds that that was the place where this thing happened.

I don't know Maybe they go right past it. Maybe they just go close enough to where their thoughts cannot be kept from it. But in going to the, to the empty tomb, they certainly are at least reminded of the place where they were yesterday. The place of execution. But they're drawn to this tomb. They go and they're brought to the tomb.

Kind of like Peter who's drawn to the courtyard on the night of Jesus arrest. In verse 3. And they were saying to one another. So you notice the imperfect there. This is an ongoing conversation. They were saying, it wasn't just one statement. They're having a conversation as they go. And the conversation is, Who will roll away the stone from us from the entrance of the tomb?

Did that just occur to them? I don't know. Did it just occur on the way to the tomb? Oh, yeah. I remember there was a massive stone put in place that we can't move. Or maybe they knew it all along and they just didn't know what else to do. Maybe they were hoping that there would be some soldiers there who could maybe kindly roll the stone back and let them anoint the body and put the stone back in place.

I don't know. But you notice who's absent. The male disciples who could have rolled the stone back for them. So the ladies are here going, they're having this conversation. Who's going to roll the stone back? And I don't think it would be all of that, , well, let's say difficult to imagine that it did just occur to them.

Even though they saw the stone put in place, let's not forget just what a traumatic three days it's been for them. Just what an incredibly emotionally numbing time it has been for them. I would not be at all surprised If these ladies spent the entire Sabbath just staring, staring maybe out the window, staring at the floor, staring at their plate of food that they can't eat because they just cannot yet come to terms with this.

And so yes, it's not outside of the imagination that as they're sort of mechanically going to the tomb to anoint the body, Oh yeah, there was this great big stone. What are we going to do about that? So they're having this conversation. Who will roll the stone away from us? What a question to ask. Who will roll the stone away from the entrance of the tomb?

Verse 4. And looking up, they saw that the stone had been rolled back. So let me just draw our attention to, from this point, the next few verses, at all of the verbs that have to do with God's manifesting to their physical senses. Looking up, they saw that the stone had been rolled back. And entering the tomb, they saw a young man sitting on the right side.

And they see how he's dressed, dressed in a white robe. And he said to them, now they're ears, he said to them, Don't be alarmed, you seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified, he has been raised.

He is not here, see where the place where they laid him. But go and tell his disciples and Peter that he's going before you to Galilee.

There you will see him as he once again told you. You hear all the verbs there that have to do with the senses. Sight and hearing. It is going to be crucially, crucially important that these initial disciples and the apostles have the visual and audible. Because their testimony is what the church's faith is going to be based upon.

The testimony of the disciples that they see, they hear, they experience firsthand the emptiness of the tomb. This evidence is incredibly crucial. Look down at the bottom of the page. The visual evidence from 1 John 1, verse 1. That which was from the beginning, which we have. Heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we looked upon and have touched with our hands.

Or look how on the next page, how he puts it in his gospel. Chapter 20. Now, on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been rolled away and stooping to look in. She saw the linen cloth lying there, but didn't go in. Simon Peter came following him, following the Apostle John.

He goes into the tomb. He, meaning John, saw the linen cloths lying there, the face cloths which had been Jesus head, not lying on the linen cloths, but folded up into place. Then the other disciple who had reached the tomb first also went in, and he saw and he believed. So this seeing testimony, this experiential testimony is going to be crucial for us because it's their testimony that we rely upon.

We can no longer have the visual and audio, audio testimony of this. We can no longer see the empty tomb. Oh, you can pay many thousands of dollars and go to the Holy Land and you can take tours. And I think that there are at least three or four tombs that you can be shown, which are all empty. And you can be told this is the tomb in which Jesus was laid.

I hope that we're all astute enough to know. that it's highly unlikely that any of them are the tomb that he was laid in. And even if one of them was the tomb that he was actually laid in, you understand that it is meaningless that that tomb is empty. It is meaningless because 2,000 years have passed.

In fact, the empty tomb would have been largely meaningless later on this day. It's important right now. It's important in this moment that these witnesses see that it's empty now. Because even the next day or the next week, an empty tomb will mean nothing. That'll just, that will just beef up the story that the disciples took the body and, and is pretending that he is raised.

Right now is when we need to hear this testimony. And this is why this is so crucial. So all these verbs about seeing and experiencing. So looking up, they saw that the stone had been rolled back. And it was very large. That's a forceful way to put it. It is literally, Mark says, it is mega in the extreme.

It's extremely large. It's extremely great. An incredibly heavy stone. So Mark doesn't tell us how the stone was moved. In fact, As we're going to see here, we've already seen this, but we'll see this even more. Mark's account of the resurrection is the sparsest of all. He gives us, by far, the fewest details, because, as we'll see next week, he has a different purpose in mind.

So he doesn't give us any details about how the stone had been moved, but if we turn to Matthew's Gospel, chapter 28, in your notes on the first page, we'll see that Matthew tells us how the stone was moved. An angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone and sat on it.

That's an image for you right there. The stone was large enough for the angel to sit on. We don't know how large the angel is. But it's large enough for him to sit on and the angel is sitting on the stone to me. That's like this image of sitting on a defeated enemy you know just the image that you get from the stories the Old Testament stories of Joshua and and other stories of the Kings when they would fight this battle and they would bring the defeated Kings and Joshua to make all of his commanders put their foot on the enemies, on the king's neck as this sign of victory over this defeated enemy.

So to me, this is like a sign of a defeated enemy. The enemy that's defeated is death. The angel is sitting on the stone, on the death stone. I wonder what sort of look the angel had on his angelic face. We don't know. But he's sitting on the stone. His appearance was like lightning and his clothing white as snow.

So notice, that Matthew tells us it's the angel that rolled it away. Now, all three synoptic Gospels use the same verb to describe the removal of the stone. It's the verb that's rightly translated to roll it away. But if we look to John's Gospel, John chapter 20 in verse 1, John specifically uses a different verb.

Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early while it was still dark and saw that the stone had been So the word that John uses there is a word that specifically means not just to take something away and sort of move it over here, but to take it and move it far away to take it completely away. Look at how the same word is used elsewhere in Matthew.

Matthew's gospel, chapter 24. And they were unaware until the flood came and swept them all the way. The same word there, swept them all away. Or look how Mark uses it in Mark chapter 2. This is a parable of Jesus. No one sews a piece of unshrunk cloth onto an old garment. If he does, the patch tears away from the new one.

So it's this idea of not just Relocating it a little bit, just enough to get past it. It's the idea that the stone was completely moved away. So, we talked last week about how the, the wealthy graves that have been found by archaeologists would have this stone that sort of fit into this channel. It could be rolled up and rolled down.

So we would take this to mean that the stone is completely moved out of the channel. It's, it's separate from the tomb altogether. It's been moved far away. So, entering the tomb, they saw I'm sorry, verse four, and they're looking up. They saw that the stone had been rolled back. It was very large. It was huge.

Verse five, and entering the tomb, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, dressed in a white robe. And they were alarmed. Literally, they were stupefied. They were dumbfounded. So this young man we know to be an angelic being, we know that because all four gospel accounts speak of angelic beings here at the resurrection.

And so we know this young man, as Mark describes him, as a young man to be this angelic being, which really is just an occasion for me to just make note of how amazing it is that we have come up with our visual pictures of angels that we have. Because the visual pictures that we have of angelic beings always will have the what?

The two wings. Do you know that nowhere in scripture, nowhere in scripture are angels ever described as having two wings. There is one place in all of Scripture in which angels are even said to have wings at all, and that's a specific angel known as the Seraphim that comes in Isaiah 6 and verse 2. And they're described as having six wings.

Nowhere else in all of Scripture do angels have any wings whatsoever. In fact, There's some in your notes, there's more that we could look at if we want to really make a big subject out of that. But you could chase down these references and you would see just a consistent theme. And that theme is how human like angels are often portrayed in their visual appearance.

They're always portrayed as male. And they're always, or nearly always, portrayed as something like a human that is Great in some way. Great enough to spring, to spark fear, to bring fear and trembling into one's heart. But the appearance is the appearance more or less like a human. So with that side note, we just make a note here that they saw the young man sitting on the right side, dressed in a white robe.

And they were absolutely blown out of their minds. That's what the Word is saying here. They were absolutely dumbfounded. Mark's theme of misunderstanding, of non comprehension, he continues all the way to the very end. From the very beginning to the very end is the same theme, and that's the theme. These disciples just don't get it.

They just, they're shown this, they're told this, but they fail to grasp it. So now, Verse 6, And he, meaning the angelic being, he said to them, Do not be alarmed, or stop being stupefied, stop being dumbfounded. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. And here we have the three words, He has risen.

Nowhere in our Bible does it say He has risen. The three gospel accounts all speak of the angels news to the people coming to the grave to tell them that He is resurrected. But in all three accounts, the same verb is used, and it's always used in the passive, which would be properly, properly translated.

He has been raised, so I'm not sure where we've got the phrase he has risen. That's not what the scriptures say. You might say, well, we're kind of splitting hairs here. That's what the text says. The text says. He has been raised all three times. It says he has been raised the difference there being When you have been raised it means Another has acted upon you to raise you instead of you have risen yourself So the gospel writers are clear to say that Jesus is resurrected by the power of one Without him outside of him God, the Father, the Heavenly Father has raised him because who is the one in the tomb?

The one in the tomb is the human Jesus who is dead. Now who in this inexplicable and not understandable hypostatic union is now one with the Son of God. We don't understand that. We know that God didn't die in the tomb, but we do know that he and the man Jesus are one and Jesus is now dead. And so for Jesus to be raised, the Father, Raises him.

So he has been raised. He's not here. See the place where they laid him. So here we see the ultimate bookend of Mark. We've talked over and over about Mark's bookending and how he likes to do this. Here we see the bookend of the whole book because the book starts with a messenger from God who has a message about the way.

In the beginning, in chapter 1, beginning from verse 3, the messenger is John the baptizer. John the baptizer has a message. Make straight the way of the Lord, for He's coming. He's right on my heels. Here at the end of the book, we have another messenger from God. In fact, that's literally what the word means.

Messenger from God. He too has a message for God's people. His message is, God has made the way. So make straight the way, for He's coming. And at the end, He has made the way. And interestingly, both messengers were told a lot of information about how to dress. John the Baptizer, we're told a lot of information about his clothes, camel's hair, , this odd way he dresses.

Here we're told information about how the angel is dressed with this robe of white. So at the beginning and the end, messengers from God prepare the way, the other messenger, the way has been made. So now, he said to them, do not be alarmed, stop being stupefied, stop being dumbfounded, you seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified.

He has been raised. He's not here. In other words, you're at the right tomb. You didn't go to the wrong tomb. This isn't a case of mistaken geography. You're at the right place. See the place where they laid him. Verse 7, But go, tell his disciples, and Peter, we mentioned previously, the fact that Peter is mentioned specifically, we'll skip over that for now.

Tell his disciples and Peter that he is going before you. So here we see once again the theme of Jesus the shepherd who goes before his people. Do you remember back from chapter , 14? When we read these words from Jesus, Jesus said to them, You will all fall away, for it's written, I will strike the shepherd.

And the sheep will be scattered, but after I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee. So there, the context is specifically Jesus is portraying himself as shepherd. That's what the passage that he's quoting is about. He is the shepherd. He will be struck. The people will scatter. But after that, he will be raised and he will go before his people to, to Galilee.

So that word that's translated, go before them. It's also an interesting word that carries. It carries a weight of not just walking in front of others, but the idea of leading, of guiding, of showing the way. The word is used in Matthew chapter 2 verse 9 to describe the star that went before the wise men who were coming from the east.

It's also used in Mark chapter 10. And they were on the road going up to Jerusalem and Jesus was walking ahead of them. So it has the idea of not just physically being in front. But like a shepherd leading and guiding the sheep, like we know Middle Eastern shepherds to do. So tell the disciples and Peter that he is going before you to Galilee.

As we talked about before, Galilee is the place where he first called them, where he first manifested himself to them, where he first appeared to them. So go back to where he first appeared to you. There you will see him just as he told you. And they went out and fled, fled from the tomb. Let that sink in.

We will come back to that next week. But just let that be a point of pondering for now, for the intervening days. They fled. What do you flee from? You flee from something that's terrifying to you. So they fled from the tomb. For trembling and astonishment had seized them. That's the same word that is used to describe the man who is possessed of legion.

It's the same word used to accuse Jesus that he is possessed of Beelzebul. Fear, literally, It possesses them, it grabs them, it holds them, they flee. And they said nothing to anyone for they were afraid. So now is a monumental shift. Throughout the entire gospel, silence has been commanded and disobedience would be speaking.

Now it's a shift. The shift is Speaking is commanded, and silence is disobedience. And in both cases, the people disobey. They disobey the command to remain silent, and now Mark portrays them as disobeying the command to speak, to tell others. Now Mark doesn't mean that the ladies never told anyone. Clearly they did, because Mark knows the story, and the church knows the story.

Clearly, Peter's not saying to us that these women never talked about this. What he means is they didn't say anything to anyone on the way to the disciples. So you get the picture here. It's the first day of the week. Hustle bustle. It's the week after Passover. There's still a huge crowd of people in Jerusalem.

And they're running. They are terrified. They are fleeing to the disciples. And on the way they're passing all kinds of people. And instead of stopping and saying, guess what? . The tomb is empty. He's not there. They say nothing. Maybe they pass people. They know Mary, Mary, what? What, what? Wait, wait, wait. Where are you going?

And they say Nothing. So take that. As they say, put it in your pipe and smoke it. We'll come back to that next week. This idea that, and fear. They flee and they say nothing. Now we want to end our time with just a couple of observations. Three, to be precise, three observations about. What this means, what the resurrection, because this is what Mark has just narrated to us.

This event is the absolute most important single event in all of redemption history. The resurrection of Christ. Upon this event, all of our faith, indeed all of our eternal destinies, hang upon this event that he just narrated to us. Mark does not tell us the theological significance of this. He leaves that to the epistle writers who will tell us more about the meaning of the resurrection and how we're to think about this rightly and properly.

But nevertheless, as we just finish up our time this morning, it's never right, I think, for us to talk about the Resurrection without recognizing what it means. So let's just do that for just a few moments. There's more than three, but there's at least three reasons why the Resurrection of Jesus Christ is so monumentally important for us.

Number one, it absolutely, definitively secures His identity as the Son of God. As the Messiah, as the anointed one, the blessed one of God, sent to redeem his people. Look in your notes at Matthew chapter 12 and verse 38 through 40. The context of this is the context of Jesus being harassed and questioned by the Pharisees.

Who are you? Who are you? What, what are you, where'd you come from? What authority do you have to do this? In that context, we read this. Some of the scribes and the Pharisees answered him,

saying, Teacher, we wish to see a sign from you. But he answered them, An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign, but no sign will be given it.

Now, did they receive no signs?

What do you think? They received signs all over the place. In fact, that's specifically what Peter says in Acts chapter 2 in the Pentecost sermon. He says that God validated or confirmed who Jesus was by all these signs and wonders that he was doing. So they received signs all over the place. So Jesus is not saying no sign whatsoever is given.

What he's saying is you're asking for a sign and I'm not going to give you the sign that you're asking for. I'm not going to make the moon turn blue. I'm not going to make Trees do a somersault. I'm not gonna do one of these crazy sort of what you want to see. So no sign will be given except the sign of the prophet Jonah for just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish.

So the son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth from the words of Jesus. He says, the definitive sign that I am the son of God, the definitive sign that the son of man has come and he has been sent from God is. This is the sign of the resurrection. So the sign of the resurrection is the, from his own mouth, that's the sign above all signs to declare definitively his identity.

Look again at John chapter 2. So the Jew said to him, what sign do you show us for doing these things? Jesus answered him. This is right after the cleansing of the temple. Jesus answered them, destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up. The Jews then said it has taken 46 years to build a temple and you're gonna raise it in three days.

But he was speaking about the temple of his body when therefore, he was raised from the dead. His disciples remembered that he had said this, and they believed the scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken. So at least twice from Jesus' own mouth, the definitive sign is the resurrection from the dead.

Now, Jesus was not the only person to be raised from the dead, was he? Jesus himself raised, of course, Lazarus, the widow's son. Paul raised from the dead. Peter raised from the dead. Elijah raised from the dead. So others have been raised from the dead. Why is this not a sign for them? Well, for one thing, and perhaps this is the most important, none of them predicted it.

None of them prophesied it. This was not prophesied over Lazarus, or the widow's son, or Eutychus, who fell out of the window and landed on his head. When Paul was preaching, , too long. But Jesus is the only one who beforehand was said, If this person is killed and put into the grave and on the third day he rises, you know that he's the Son of God.

And sure enough, he is. So this is the definitive sign. Oftentimes critics will say, particularly of Mark's gospel, they will say that Jesus never claimed to be God. And we have shown definitively. Since chapter one, Jesus claimed to be God all over the place in Mark's gospel. He claimed it in many ways. By the miracles he did.

By the way that he chose to do miracles in such a way that was clear to the Jews what he was doing. By the words that he chose to describe himself. By the description of himself. By the

teachings that he would give. Teachings that, that any Jew would say this is blasphemous unless God is saying this. And so here we have the most definitive of all.

Jesus says. If you want one sign to be absolutely certain about who I am, I will rise on the third day. So Jesus' resurrection, is that definitive proof. Number two, it is the definitive assurance of our eternal life. The resurrection from the dead of Jesus Christ is the event that tells us we too will be raised.

We'll talk about that in just a moment, but we too will be raised back to life. Now, will we be the only ones raised? Now, the scriptures teach us that all will be raised. John chapter 5 speaks of a resurrection on the last day in which all will be raised back to life. Those who are apart from Christ, not in Christ, will be raised to judgment.

So all will be raised, but there is a different sense of resurrection here. Resurrection unto life, not resurrection unto eternal death. You know that that's what hell is. Hell is an eternal dying. It's an eternal death. Those in Christ are raised Not to eternal dying or even eternal suffering or struggle.

But those in Christ are raised to eternal glory, to eternal bliss, to eternal life. And Jesus resurrection is the definitive proof that our resurrection, just as His, will be resurrection unto life. Think about Jesus resurrection. Jesus is raised. And what does Jesus do after He's raised? He goes to the Father.

And so that's what we will do. We will be raised to go to the Father. Look at 1 Corinthians 15 and verse 20. But in fact, Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. So here we have the Old Testament concept of firstfruits. Firstfruits were really important to Old Testament people because when the harvest began to come in, the very firstfruits, or firstfruits, Vegetables or whatever the crop was.

The very first of those that was harvested, they were given as offering and it was called the first fruits offering. We flipped it on its head and we often will give God the end or the tail or what's left over after we've done the other things, but, but in the Old Testament, it was the first fruits. Now something significant about the first fruits is this, the first fruit offering was an offering of faith to say, here we give you the first.

And in faith, we believe that you'll continue to give us what we need after that, but the more significant thing about the first fruit offering was it was the same as everything else. The first fruit offering wasn't different from the harvest or the rest of the crop. It would be a portion of the same thing that came behind it.

If it was wheat, it would be a portion of wheat. If it was. dates. It would be a portion of dates. It wouldn't be an offering of dates for a harvest of wheat. And so the idea that when Paul calls Jesus the first fruit of our resurrection, he means His resurrection is like ours. His resurrection will be just like ours in that sense.

He is raised to life and goes to the Father. He's raised to life. And goes to be with the father, just like us. So his resurrection is absolute assurance of ours to come. In fact, he's called the head. The head has been raised to life, while the body, meaning us, are still either in the tomb, or we have yet to go to the tomb, but we will be going to the tomb.

So the head has been raised. And none of us would say that the head is going to be raised and the body is going to be left in the tomb. If the head has been raised, meaning Christ, then the body will also be raised. And so, he is the first fruits. We're not going to look at 1 Thessalonians chapter 4, but you can look at that on your own.

That is clearly another affirmation that because Christ has been raised, in fact verse 14, for since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, And even so, through Jesus, God will bring with those. So a fuller explanation of 1 Thessalonians 4 means that there were some Thessalonians that were worried about their eternal security, their eternal life.

And Paul's answer to them is, the greatest assurance of your eternal life is Jesus resurrection. He says so specifically, since we believe that Jesus died and Rose again, therefore, we have utter assurance of our own eternal life. First Corinthians 15 in verse 54, when the perishable puts on the imperishable and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written, death is swallowed up in victory, completely swallowed.

Death has been not just defeated, it's been swallowed up in Jesus's victory.