

Mark 16:9-20

“Responding To The Resurrection”

Before we launch into this last section of the gospel of Mark I should say just so that you know that I'm aware, that these last 12 Vs have come into question by both great and godly evangelical bible scholars. Not everyone agrees that they were originally written by Mark. Some believe they are a part of the original text, others believe they were added later by another author as sort of a “summary” because original text was perhaps lost. Although it's sort of difficult to believe that a part of the inspired word of God could be lost as though God would be unable to preserve His word...

The short of the reason that these Vs come into question is because 2 of the oldest manuscripts we have of Mark's gospel don't contain them and the writing style is different than what Mark has employed throughout his gospel. However having said that we have documents from early church fathers who *predate* those earliest manuscripts and in those documents they quote from this particular section of Mark which obviously speaks to the fact that it was in whatever manuscript they were familiar with.

My personal take on it is that there's no real reason to reject these Vs simply because they're not in any way inconsistent with the rest of the scriptures so it seems reasonable to accept them as historically authentic and just acknowledge and live with whatever “mysteries” that surround them. Plus it would seem to be a rather abrupt ending to have this writing end at Vs 8 (taking for granted that God can preserve His word; after all He created the heavens and the earth I suppose keeping track of His word isn't a real dilemma for god) with the women running away from the tomb saying nothing to anyone... “the end” that just doesn't settle well does it?

So with that we get back to resurrection morning beginning in Vs 9 of the gospel of Mark.

Vs9-11

Now as we piece this puzzle together from the various accounts in the other 3 gospel records we sorta get the idea that perhaps Mary Magdalene must've cut out when she saw the stone rolled back to run and tell Peter and John before the other women looked in the tomb and heard the word from the angel. Because her report to them initially (according to John's record) is that someone had taken the Lord's body. Well it's difficult for us to imagine her hearing the angel say that He was risen then running and reporting that His body had been moved. So evidently (according to John's gospel Ch 20 Vs 1) she left the group in a panic as soon as she saw the stone rolled away and reported that His body had been taken and she didn't know where He had been placed.

Of course that immediately set Peter and John on a dead run for the tomb to investigate the matter themselves. When they got there the other women had left but Peter ran into the tomb

and John came in right behind him and they saw the linen cloths lying there that He had been wrapped in and the handkerchief that had been over His head folded up and lying in another place by itself off to the side. When they left the tomb Mary lingered around and she was there just weeping and mourning over the devastation of (in her mind) losing Him twice...

She lost Him when He died and now she doesn't even know where to go to honor His memory, He's gone from the tomb. She looks in the tomb and sees 2 angels, "Woman, why are you weeping?" "They've taken away my Lord and I don't know where they've laid Him." She turns around and sees a Man standing there who asks her the same thing, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?" Thinking He was the gardener she just says, "Sir if you've taken Him away just tell me where You've laid Him and I'll take care of Him." Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned and said to Him, "Rabboni!" Or "Teacher" when she heard Him call her name she knew it was Him.

People wonder why she didn't recognize Him before, was it because He simply looked different due to the abuse that He'd been through just prior to and concerning the cross? Was she simply not looking for Him to be alive so it wasn't registering? We don't know, but what we do know is that as soon as she realized it was Him she grabbed hold of Him with a "I'm never going to let you go" kind of a grip to which He responded, "Hey, you need to let Me go, I've got to ascend to My Father, but go and tell My brethren.."

This woman who'd been delivered of so much, 7 demons had been cast from her. Do you remember the story that Jesus shared with Simon the Pharisee? Do me a favor leave Mark's gospel and turn to **Luke Ch 7** (Vs36-48)

Here's the deal it's not that some people don't have a lot of sin to forgive it's that some recognize their degree of depravity more so than others. and What Jesus is saying is that to the degree you realize the depth of sin that you've been forgiven, to that same degree you will submit your life *to* Him and be head over heels in love *with* Him.

Mary knew she'd been forgiven much, Jesus had done a radical work in her life and she loved Him with every fiber of her being. Jesus appeared to her 1st, this vessel of His grace and mercy. It seems only appropriate that since it was through the woman that the deception of sin 1st came even so a woman would be the 1st to see the Savior.

Jesus commissions her to go and tell the other disciples and that's exactly what we find her doing in Vs 10 of Mark 16. It's there that we're made aware of the pre-resurrection posture of the disciples, 3 days later they're there weeping and mourning, the word speaks of sobbing convulsively.

Mary breaks in, "He's alive! I've seen Jesus, I've touched Him, He spoke with me it was the most amazing thing!" How do they respond? Vs 11, "You're delusional!" They didn't believe her. Check it out, the very 1st skeptics of the resurrection were believers! Don't be surprised when your nonbelieving friends think you've gone coo coo for coco puffs when you start telling them about the fact that you've met the risen Lord...Not even the most dedicated followers of Christ believed it initially; and they had the promise of Jesus who had told them that they would weep for Him, but their sorrow would be turned to joy. That He would be

abused at the hands of the religious leaders and crucified but 3 days later He would rise again. Over and over again He told them that, they had the witness of reliable friends whom they knew and had developed relationships with over a period of yrs! Yet they still didn't believe...

I've told you before about my buddy who knows the Lord now but when I 1st shared the gospel with him and the reality of what the Lord had done in my life he said to me, "What's wrong with you man? Have you lost your mind?" He thought I was off my rocker with this stuff.

These guys went right back to weeping, "You're out of your mind Mary, He's dead ok?" Why? Listen, because of the thief of unbelief; unbelief will rob you of the joy, of the good things that God wants to do *for* you and impart *to* you.

It's true that there are things that will rock us emotionally. Yet the scripture declares to the believer, "...*that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.*" We know that the Lord will *never* leave nor forsake us, He ever lives to make intercession on behalf *of* us; now those things are either true or they are not. We may not understand what takes place initially, or see the benefit in it in the here and now (that is the things that are temporary). However ultimately, eternally we're to believe the word of God that He is work the dilemmas and even the apparent tragedies somehow and in some way to our eternal good, and His eternal glory.

But often times we falter through unbelief, we get ripped off not trusting in the testimony of the word of God.

That's what was happening here. Mary was bringing good news, they refused to receive because of unbelief. Listen, people won't always respond the way that you hope they will when you share with them the reality of Jesus. But don't be discouraged, and don't give up on sharing with your friends, or your family when there comes an opportunity. Because when Jesus shows up they'll change their tune.

Vs12-13

Again we look to Luke for the details (Perhaps you're still there, if not make your way again to **Luke Ch 24** Vs 13-35.

Vs 27

What we wouldn't give for an audio file of that exposition on the scriptures huh? From Genesis to Malachi Jesus spent time *with* them opening the scriptures *to* them showing them how that in the volume of the book it was written of Him. I imagine that He drew their attention to the very 1st sacrifice that God made for the sin of Adam in Genesis Ch 3, took them through the Passover observance in the book of Exodus and showed them the deliverance from death that came to them as by the blood of the Lamb. Spoke to them of the sacrificial system in Leviticus, how that the burnt offering, the grain offering, the peace offering, the sin offering and trespass offering were all but a foreshadow of the fulfillment that would be found in Him. Perhaps He explained the Great day of Atonement and the ritual observance of the scapegoat. How that one goat would be slain and shed its blood, the other would have the sins of the nation confessed over it with the High Priest laying hands on it, then it would be released to basically

be lost in the wilderness. The idea being that blood was being shed for the sins of the people and that their sin was being carried away. Jesus fulfilled the reality of what the ritual spoke of, shed His blood for the remission of our sin and in Him our sins are carried away as far as the east is from the west.

On and on He went opening the scriptures to them showing His death and resurrection to them throughout the books of Moses, the prophets and the Psalms How that God told Ab to take his son, his only son Isaac whom he loved and offer him to the Lord on Mt Moriah.

How that as Ab raised the knife *above* him the angel of the Lord called out *to* him and said, “Do the lad no harm, for now I know that you fear God seeing as how you’ve not with held your son, your only son from Me.” What’s interesting about that is that on the way up the Mt Isaac asked Ab, “We have the wood, we have the instruments, where’s the sacrifice?” Ab said, “The Lord will provide Himself a *lamb* for sacrifice.” But when the angel stopped Ab do you remember what was caught in the thicket? A *ram*, what about the lamb? God would provide *Himself*, the ram would suffice that day because about 2,000 yrs later on that same Mt God provided Himself, the Lamb for the sacrifice for the sin of the world. Remember what J.B. said when he saw Jesus moving through the crowd to which he was preaching? “*Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!*” [John 1:29](#) But as to where God with held Ab from sacrificing *his* only son whom he loved, God didn’t with hold the sacrifice of *His* only Son whom He loved out of His love for you and for me... Oh to have that study recorded, the insight must’ve been overwhelming.

Vs28-35

What was the response of the remaining disciples who hadn’t seen Him? Vs 13 of Mark Ch 10 tells us, “They did not believe them either...” They *still* didn’t believe; what’s happening here? They’re learning what it’s like to try and take in the testimony of eye witnesses aren’t they? Jesus is giving them the opportunity to grow in faith, they’ll be preaching this same message not too many days from this point and they’re learning that people won’t always just automatically jump for joy; they might greet the message with skepticism and unbelief... However unbelief will not nullify the facts will it? Relativism is a non-reality (Well if that’s what true for you great, it’s not what I believe therefore it’s not true for me). Listen, it doesn’t matter if I *believe* something or not, that’s not what constitutes the truth. Gravity is a truth whether we choose to believe it or not, my believing in it doesn’t make it true. Now there are benefits to believing it, I won’t step off the top of a building because I believe it. However if I didn’t believe it that wouldn’t change the reality of it if I stepped off the top of a building; believing in the resurrected Jesus will definitely benefit you. However not believing in Him will not change His reality *or* the ramifications of choosing *not* to believe in Him. It’s the truth whether we receive it or we reject it; our belief won’t affect the truth, it affects us, both presently and eternally.

Vs 14

We do well to remember that He was speaking to “believers” here; His *disciples*. Yet having heard the word again and again they were still resolved in unbelief due to hardness of

heart. Nothing changed *in* them, there was nothing different *about* them having heard the news; quite frankly they didn't really believe it.

I wonder how often we come into this place whereby we hear the good news of the word of God declared week, after month, after year yet nothing really changes *in* us, there's nothing really different *about* us because quite frankly we really don't believe it... Oh we'd never *say* that, but it's undeniable that our lives *display* that... The question is when we come in here is it with a heart that's been turned and tilled and is ready to receive the water of the word of God, we're ready and wanting to soak it up and be quenched of our thirst.

Or is our heart more like a stone that even though water is poured out *on* it there's no way it can really penetrate it, it just splashes off and evaporates *from* it with nothing having changed about it? Jesus rebukes our unbelief and hardness of heart, we're to receive with readiness and openness of heart, the word of God.

We can understand certain skepticism regarding the word of man; the bible is clear that all men are liars. Now that doesn't mean that men/people are always lying but that there are times when man will lead you astray, however equally clear is the bible that God is not a man that He should lie. So when we refuse to believe *God's* word, well that's insulting to God. Doesn't it insult you when people don't believe you, it places your integrity in check doesn't it? How much more when we refuse to believe the word of God as though He's a liar... Jesus rebuked their unbelief and hardness of heart.

Vs15-18

We've noted periodically throughout our study in the book of Mark that Mark is the gospel on the go. Now Jesus tells His disciples to get going. "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." What *we* need to understand is that this wasn't a command just for *those* disciples on *that* day, the same command (and it is a command by the way, it's not simply a suggestion) goes for you and for me today.

To many Christians see Mark 16:15 as merely an "elective" in this "college of Christianity" that we've all enrolled in. We can take an interest in administrations, helps, or perhaps evangelism and missions... We tend to view this like an elective, take it or leave it it's up to you. What Jesus is saying is that it's a required course, one that we're all required to Major in. Oh you can have a double major if you like, but we all have to major in these, evangelism and missions.

There's no *place* that's exempt, there's no *people* that are exempt, we're to go *to* them and share the gospel *with them*. Now, don't think that this is calling everyone to the remote jungles and far reaches of the earth. We could understand Jesus to be saying, "As you continue on your way, preach the gospel to every creature." The idea is this; wherever you are, whatever you're doing, as you continue on your way, be equipped, poised and prepared to share the gospel.

You see don't be thrown off by the word, "preach" thinking that alleviates your responsibility because that's what the preacher gets paid for right? Wrong, the word "preach" does not mean, "Delivering a 40 minute message on Sunday Morning." It may be *I way* to

fulfill it, but it's only 1 of perhaps dozens of ways (or more). The word "preach" simply means "to proclaim." When you tell somebody something about Jesus, or the word of God, when you tell them something of what God has done in your life, you're preaching. When you give someone a gospel tract, you're preaching. When you take a cd of a message you've heard at church and give it to someone so that they can hear the word of God, that's preaching. When you grab someone up and bring them here so that they can hear God's word, you're doing the work of an evangelist, getting the gospel to them and that...is preaching. See you *can* proclaim, and you need to be proclaiming. God has put so many people in your life that I could *never* reach, He put them in *your* life, not mine, share the good news with them. That's what the word "gospel" means.

"Good news." It's the good news that Jesus has come to this earth, led a sinless life, yet willingly took upon Himself the sin of the world that He might die the death we deserve and 3 days later He rose again from the dead. He died on the cross to pay the penalty of our sin and rose again 3 days later that we might stand justified before God through simple faith in Him. Paul put it like this in the book of Romans; in speaking of our righteousness before God he said, *"It shall be imputed to us who believe in Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised because of our justification."* Rom 4:24-25

Vs16

Now I've already spent time developing the fallacy of the position of baptismal regeneration in a previous study a couple weeks ago so I'm not going to do that again today. Jesus didn't say here that baptism is necessary for salvation or else He'd have emphasized it when He spoke of one's condemnation. But we note what condemns a person, did you see it there? Is it not being baptized? No, it's not *believing*. For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son so that whosoever *believes* on Him shall not perish but have everlasting life. Jesus goes on to tell us in John Ch 3 *"He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."* John 3:18

Believing on the Lord Jesus Christ is the necessary prerequisite for forgiveness of sin, and not believing in an, "Sure I believe there was a man named Jesus who died, and even rose again" kind of way. But in a, "Jesus I trust you, I'm placing my full assurance for my salvation in you and apart from you I can't be saved, take my life, forgive my sin, change me and have your way in me" kind of way.

Now as we teach about belief being necessary, baptism not being necessary there can be a danger of taking the command to be baptized as though it's irrelevant. I want to make it clear that it's not irrelevant, it's a critical aspect of our obedience to Jesus. He told us to do it we need to do it, so if you haven't been baptized and you're thinking it's no big deal do yourself a favor have a change of heart, it's a big deal. Not because your salvation is predicated upon it, but because you want to be obedient to your Lord, you want to testify *of* and identify *with* His death

and resurrection publicly through the waters of baptism. You have every reason to be baptized as a believer and no real reason (scripturally) not to, so take care of it.

Now before we finish up I want to approach the idea of repentance, because belief is mentioned, repentance is not. What's up with that? Here's what you need to understand, repentance is inherent with in the command to believe. You can't believe on Jesus Christ *with out* repenting from your sin. If you're told to go to St. Louis do you really have to be told to leave Joplin? No, it's inherent with in the command, you can't be in 2 locations at once you have to leave 1 in order to be in the other. So to with believing on Christ, if going to St Louis is believing on Christ than leaving Joplin is repenting of your sin, it's a simultaneous action, as you go *toward* St Louis you turn *away* from Joplin. As you believe *in* Jesus you turn your back *on and turn away from* your sin.

To the one who does not believe Jesus is very clear, they will be condemned. Have you found that the bible doesn't really mix words? It doesn't use ambiguous terms, God's word deals with us directly.

God wants to make sure that you understand that which is necessary for your salvation and for your sanctification. Here's the deal, you can believe and be saved or you can choose not to believe and be condemned. John said, "*He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.*" **John 3:36** That's pretty clear, as you sit here either salvation has visited you or condemnation abides upon you, there's no other way about it. It's God's desire for you to be saved; He's done the work, as for having it imputed to you, well that's up to you. How is that done? Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved.

Vs 17-18

Time obviously forbids us to speak on these things in any in depth kind of manner. Here's what you need to know, all of these things we see happening in the book of Acts with the exception of someone being given something deadly to drink. However Jesus was not saying that each believer will do these things. Nor was He suggesting that you go pick up a rattlesnake or drink poison to prove your faith, God is not obligated to grant us immunity when we're acting in foolishness or trying to prove our faith. When Satan sought to get Jesus to prove His faith He rebuked the devil and told Him it is written you shall not tempt the Lord your God.

It's true that God cares for His children and when we're in His will but in a dangerous place or something unforeseen takes place He's well able to preserve us, we believe in the gifts of the Spirit, they're not weird or eccentric, but we're to *trust* the Lord, not *tempt* Him with foolish experiments.

Vs19-20

Notice they didn't follow after signs, signs followed and confirmed the word. Here's the deal, the Lord worked *in* them, He worked *through* them, and He worked *with* them. That's exactly what He wants to do with you and me. Think about it, there's a reason the Lord didn't just take them to heaven as soon as they believed. Why? Was it because they needed to get some things worked out and as soon as they did they could go to heaven? No, when you believe

on Jesus you're as righteous as you're ever going to get. Oh, things will change in your life *practically*, but *positionally* you don't improve upon Christ's righteousness. God didn't take them because He had a plan *for* them. When He was through with them He took them, until then He kept them here. Guess what? There's a reason you're still here and God hasn't taken you, He's not finished with you, He wants to work with you, He wants to flow through you that others might come to know Him through the work He's doing *in* you.

Jesus is alive, how will you respond? Will your life reflect the fact that you've rejected the truth, or that you've received it?

Prayer Points:

Lord we want this testimony to be our own. That we go out from this place, proclaiming everywhere the hope that we have in You, that You might work with us, empower us and flow through us to the glory of Your name accomplishing Your plan and Your will by us, that we'd be submitted and surrendered to You.

If you've not submitted to the Lord, you've never given your heart to the Lord, don't harden your heart in unbelief today. Don't be unbelieving but believing, receive the Lord Jesus Christ believe in Him and He'll forgive your sin and change your life.