

“Faithful Women”
Mark 16:1-8
(Preached at Trinity, October 14, 2015)

I’m supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord’s Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

Disclaimer: These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I’ll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. Last time I introduced this final chapter in the Gospel of Mark. We looked at the matter of textual criticism and the debate regarding the ending of the Gospel. Earlier English translations end it at **Mark 16:20**. This would include the Geneva Bible as well as the KJV – basically every English translation prior to the 20th century. Most newer translations believe it should end at **Verse 8** with a few at **Verse 16**. These translations usually put the verses in question in italics with a foot note like:
Some of the earliest manuscripts do not include verses 9-20.
2. Textual criticism is the work of examining ancient manuscripts in order to have the most accurate text possible. While I hold to the validity of textual criticism, I’m not absolutely convinced that **Verses 9-20** are not a part of the original Biblical text and thus a part of God’s Word. These verses have been received by the church for most of its existence. Our own Confession of faith makes reference to these verses - LBC 7:2 showing us that our Puritan forefathers also trusted in these verses and considered them God’s Word.
3. As I shared last time, because of the status of these verses in church history I plan to preach on Verses 1-20.
Verses 1-14 deal with the glorious event of the Resurrection and of our Lord’s post resurrection appearance to His disciples. If we stop at **Verse 8** we have no post resurrection appearance of Christ.
Verses 15-16 is the Great Commission according to Mark’s Gospel. It is a powerful declaration of the blessings and curses of the Gospel.
Finally, **Verses 17-20** are a powerful reminder of the signs of the Apostolic office.
4. So, as we enter **Chapter 16**, we come to the account of our Lord’s great victory over the grave – the Resurrection. Mark’s account begins not unlike the other Gospels. The Sabbath has ended and the women rush to anoint the body of Jesus.
What I want us to see tonight is the significant role women had in the life and ministry of Christ.
5. This is significant. In the first century women had little place in society, and yet Christ and Christianity elevated them.
 - a. We can see this with the Samaritan woman at the well.
John 4:27 NAU - "At this point His disciples came, and they were amazed that He had been speaking with a woman, yet no one said, "What do You seek?" or, "Why do You speak with her?"

- b. Women were significant in the life of Christ.
Luke 8:1-3 NAU - "He *began* going around from one city and village to another, proclaiming and preaching the kingdom of God. The twelve were with Him, ² and *also* some women who had been healed of evil spirits and sicknesses: Mary who was called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out, ³ and Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others who were contributing to their support out of their private means."
6. Because the leadership in the NT church is limited to men women sometimes feel their role is limited or insignificant. This is far from the truth.
7. The role of women was significant in the early church.
- A. It was at Mary's house that the disciples were gathered praying when Peter was cast into prison.
Acts 12:12 NAU - "he went to the house of Mary, the mother of John who was also called Mark, where many were gathered together and were praying."
- B. We are given examples of the faithful service of women such as Tabitha
Acts 9:36-39 NAU - "Now in Joppa there was a disciple named Tabitha (which translated *in Greek* is called Dorcas); this woman was abounding with deeds of kindness and charity which she continually did. ³⁷ And it happened at that time that she fell sick and died; and when they had washed her body, they laid it in an upper room. ³⁸ Since Lydda was near Joppa, the disciples, having heard that Peter was there, sent two men to him, imploring him, "Do not delay in coming to us." ³⁹ So Peter arose and went with them. When he arrived, they brought him into the upper room; and all the widows stood beside him, weeping and showing all the tunics and garments that Dorcas used to make while she was with them."
- C. Women were of great value to Paul's ministry
Romans 16:1-2 NAU - "I commend to you our sister Phoebe, who is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea; ² that you receive her in the Lord in a manner worthy of the saints, and that you help her in whatever matter she may have need of you; for she herself has also been a helper of many, and of myself as well."
- D. One of the qualifications of pastors and deacons is that their wives be of high character.
1 Timothy 3:11 NAU - "Women *must* likewise *be* dignified, not malicious gossips, but temperate, faithful in all things."
Most translations translate the word γυναῖκή "wives"
1 Timothy 3:11 ESV - "Their wives likewise must be dignified, not slanderers, but sober-minded, faithful in all things."
- E. Paul described the great value of women to the church in teaching the younger women – **Titus 2:3-5**
Titus 2:3-5 NAU - "Older women likewise are to be reverent in their behavior, not malicious gossips nor enslaved to much wine, teaching what is good, ⁴ so that they may encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, ⁵ *to be* sensible, pure, workers at home, kind, being subject to their own husbands, so that the word of God will not be dishonored."

- F. There are many untapped opportunities for service in our own church for women
1. Welcoming committee for sending cards to ladies who visit
 2. Hospital ministry – get well cards or flower arrangements
 3. Shut-in ministry – nursing homes etc.
 4. Prayer chains
 5. Endless works of service. One of our ladies designed and created our visitor's packets (we need more!). One comes to the office to help prepare the bulletin & newsletter. Another does the bookkeeping. We've had several who have devoted long hours at the church during the renovation.
7. What I want us to notice in this passage is the faithful love these women had for Christ.
- I. Notice the time they came to the tomb
- A. It was the earliest possible hour – the break of dawn.
- Mark 16:2 NAU** - "when the sun had risen."
Luke 24:1 NAU - "at early dawn"
John 20:1 NAS - "while it was still dark"
1. Once again we find the dedication of these women.
 2. You can imagine they laid awake waiting for morning. Their faith was not a casual thing. Their love for Christ dominated their life.
 - a. We saw this earlier at the house of Simon the Leper with the woman's display of extravagant love
Mark 14:3 NAS - "And while He was in Bethany at the home of Simon the leper, and reclining *at the table*, there came a woman with an alabaster vial of very costly perfume of pure nard; *and she broke the vial and poured it over His head.*"
 - b. Too often today we find a tepid affection for Christ
 Few will be inconvenienced - everything about their Christian life is void of zeal or passion—attendance and service to the church, their prayer life, their lack of passion for God's Word
- B. We can only imagine the state of mind of these dear ladies. They were still in shock, in great grief over what they had witnessed. While most of our Lord's disciples had fled these ladies stayed to witness the entire ordeal. The suffering of the One they loved was overwhelming and yet they did not turn away.
1. Their purpose in coming was to properly prepare the body of Jesus for His burial. There had been no time on Friday evening.
Mark 16:1 NAU - "When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the *mother* of James, and Salome, bought spices, so that they might come and anoint Him."
 2. Nicodemus had already applied 100 lbs of dried spices and carefully wrapped the body of Jesus
John 19:39-40 NAS - "And Nicodemus came also, who had first come to Him by night; bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds *weight*.⁴⁰ And so they took the body of Jesus, and bound it in linen wrappings with the spices, as is the burial custom of the Jews."
 3. These ladies were not to be denied giving the body of Jesus a proper anointing

- II. And notice they were not deterred by obstacles or danger
- A. Mark draws our attention to the stone
Mark 16:3 NAU - "They were saying to one another, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance of the tomb?"
1. Surely, they must have pondered this before their journey to the tomb. How would they move the stone?
 2. Lesser women might have given up the idea of going. As they went along the way to the tomb they voiced concern among themselves how they would manage to move the stone away from the entrance to the tomb but they did not turn back.
- B. And there were other obstacles
1. Matthew records there was another great rumbling of the earth. This must have caused them to fear. It was the second time in three days this had occurred.
Matthew 28:2 - "And behold, a severe earthquake had occurred"
 2. And we can't forget the guards. How would they get past the guards? None of these things would keep them from their service to Christ. They trusted the kind Providence of God and He did not disappoint them.
Matthew Henry: "Note, They who are carried by a holy zeal, to seek Christ diligently, will find the difficulties that lie in their way strangely to vanish, and themselves helped over them beyond their expectation."
 3. These dear ladies were bold in their love for Christ
 - a. While most of the disciples fled, they were not far away during our Lord's entire ordeal.
Mark 15:40 NAU - "There were also *some* women looking on from a distance, among whom *were* Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the Less and Joses, and Salome."
 - b. John reports that at least for a while these ladies were at the very foot of the cross.
John 19:25 NAU - "But standing by the cross of Jesus were His mother, and His mother's sister, Mary the *wife* of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene."

Conclusion:

1. We find on this Resurrection morning the great love and faithfulness of these women. They demonstrate to us what it means to be Christ centered.
2. As they made their way to the tomb they had one thing on their mind. CHRIST. No obstacle would draw their heart and mind from Him.
3. The question that you must set upon your mind and conscience. Is your life truly Christ centered? One of the distinctive of our church is "Christ Centered." But our Church will only be Christ centered if all of our members are Christ centered.
4. Is your life truly centered upon Him. Has your life been captivated by Christ? In every area in which we find deficiency in our life the solution is Christ. Seek Him, love Him, pray, worship, adore Him. Trust Him! Serve Him! Live for Him!