

MARK 16

THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS

The conduct of the women who made their way to Jesus' tomb early in the morning of the first day of the week teaches us a great lesson, for it shows us what love will do. They stood by Jesus when He hung in agony upon the cross; and they were also the first to visit His grave, in the eagerness of their desire to show respect to His Body. We must be quite sure that they deeply felt this debt of gratitude to Him; for from Him, they had obtained that which is of more value than life itself – namely, the pardon of sin, and assurance of peace with God. All who have obtained the pardon of their sins through Christ's redemption will never think anything too much to do or suffer, in order to prove their grateful love to Him. These holy women were up by the dawning of the day; and at sunrise, they went to the grave where their Savior had been laid. In what better way could they have spent the early hours of the Sabbath morning? God has mercifully set apart one-seventh of our time for the special business of preparing for another world; the concerns of this life are to be set aside as much as possible on that day, so that we may read and pray and prepare for heaven. Those who love their Savior for rising triumphant from the grave, and for opening a way into that holy and happy place, will feel that the Lord's Day is not a day whose sacred hours may be wasted away. Certainly we can never hope to pass through the grave of death into the light of our glorious resurrection, unless we now believe and rejoice in Him Who died and rose again so that we might not perish, but have everlasting life!

As the women were coming to the grave of Jesus with the spices for embalming His body, they were wondering how they would be able to remove the heavy stone which closed it up. But their fears were turned into a very different channel when they saw that the stone had been rolled away; and inside the tomb, there sat a young man clothed in white. In Matthew's Gospel, this young man is spoken of as an angel; and to our weak and sinful natures, the sight of anything strange and unearthly produces terror. So these poor women were frightened; and even the assurance given them by the angel, that there was no need for them to fear, could not entirely reassure them. They fled from the tomb, trembling and amazed. And yet they had heard good news – such good news that they ought to have been filled with the greatest joy! For they were told that Jesus had arisen from the grave. There was indeed no cause of fear for these holy women, because they sought Jesus; and if we ourselves ever hope to stand undismayed in the presence of God and His holy angels, we also must seek Jesus. His

Outline of the chapter:

- ❖ *The women find Jesus' tomb empty and are told that He had risen – verses 1-8*
- ❖ *The disciples do not believe the accounts of those to whom the risen Christ showed Himself, until He appeared in their presence – verses 9-14*
- ❖ *Jesus' parting words to His disciples before His Ascension – verses 15-20*



blood cleanses us from all sin, and gives us grace to live an altered life. Therefore, there will be no terror for the humble and repentant Christian in the day of the Lord's return; for then we shall no longer inhabit this sin-corrupted earthly tabernacle! On that day, our vile bodies will be fashioned like Christ's glorious body. O how happy will that hour be for all who are now sincerely and earnestly seeking Jesus!

Mary Magdalene, at one period of her life, had been fearfully taken captive by Satan; but the Lord Jesus, in love and mercy, had delivered her from that terrible bondage. And now she was the first to be allowed to see our Savior after His resurrection. She had boldly professed her faith in Him, she had shown her love to Him by being among the last to leave Him when He had died upon the cross, and she was one of the first to visit His grave. Thus it always comes to pass that those to whom much is forgiven will love much, and those who love much will be shown much love. How is it with us? Have we ever seen our sins in a strong light and earnestly begged Jesus for deliverance from their guilt and power? We may best answer these questions by asking whether Christ now reigns in our hearts by faith, which is shown forth by a life of devoted love and service.

Mary Magdalene went immediately to bring the glad tidings that she had seen her Lord to those who still mourned and wept. And is this not a lesson for us? Yes, if we have seen Christ by faith, and if we know Him to be the Resurrection and the Life; then we must go forth into a sad and sinful world and make known to others the glad tidings of salvation, as far as it is in our power. And we must not be surprised or discouraged if our labor seems to be all in vain. The unbelief and hardness of heart which our Lord rebuked in His disciples (verse 14), we may well expect to meet with in the world around us; for every-one who has ever tried to do good, and to lead perishing sinners to the only Savior, has found that the spirit of unbelief is very hard to be overcome. But with patience and perseverance, we must labor on; and if we are blessed with the privilege of being instrumental in saving even one lost soul, we shall be well repaid!

The last words of Jesus – just before the Ascension of His physical body out of this world – convey a very important command: “Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature!” (verse 15) Have we endeavored, in any way, to do this? It is true that not every Christian is called to personally be a missionary on the front lines among the unreached tribes around the globe. But have we offered up our prayers of intercession for those who are engaged in this selfless labor? And have we taken care that our loved ones at home have been brought into Christ's fold? Have we endeavored to teach the knowledge of the blessed Gospel to all those who are around us here in our own homeland – whether it be our family members, friends, neighbors, or co-workers?

Lord, help us to not merely assent to the truth that Jesus died to save sinners; help us to personally believe the good news, rejoice in it, and share it with others! Amen.