

Refuge City Church — November 22, 2020
“The Gospel of Mark” (Mark 16:12-20)

Scripture Reading (Mark 16:12-20)

12 After these things he appeared in another form to two of them, as they were walking into the country. **13** And they went back and told the rest, but they did not believe them. **14** Afterward he appeared to the eleven themselves as they were reclining at table, and he rebuked them for their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they had not believed those who saw him after he had risen. **15** And he said to them, “Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation. **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 cast out demons; they will speak in new tongues; **18** they will pick up serpents with their hands; and if they drink any deadly poison, it will not hurt them; they will lay their hands on the sick, and they will recover.” **19** So then the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken to them, was taken up into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God. **20** And they went out and preached everywhere, while the Lord worked with them and confirmed the message by accompanying signs.

Verses 12-13 [Luke 24:13-31]

12 After these things he appeared in another form to two of them, as they were walking into the country. **13** And they went back and told the rest, but they did not believe them.

- On the day of the resurrection, two disciples **[not of the eleven; one named Cleopas]** were heading out of Jerusalem towards a town called Emmaus.
- Jesus had met them, in the flesh, they were kept from recognizing Him.
 - They go on to explain to Jesus everything that happened to Him, and even how the women saw the empty tomb. Yet they were discouraged.
 - **Luke 24:25-26**, “And he said to them, “O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?”
- So, to reveal Himself to these disciples, Jesus takes them on an incredible journey through Scripture, explaining all the ways in which it pointed to Himself, His suffering, and His glory.
- Eventually clamoring for more, they invite Jesus in to sit down and eat with them, and as Jesus breaks bread, their eyes are opened and the disciples recognize Him!
 - **Luke 24:32**, “Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?”
 - **Romans 10:17**, “So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.”
 - **Revelation 3:20**, “Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me.”
- For those disciples 2,000 years ago, and for us today, the key to recognizing Jesus for who He is, comes through the illumination of Himself through the Word of God.

Verse 14

14 Afterward he appeared to the eleven themselves as they were reclining at table, and he rebuked them for their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they had not believed those who saw him after he had risen.

- Jesus appears to His disciples and rebukes them for their unbelief.
 - A harsh word at the first sight of their risen Lord... but one they most desperately needed.
 - How appropriate it is for them to experience unbelief when they share the gospel with others in the near future, on simply their own eye-witness account.
 - They didn't believe the woman's account, why would others believe theirs? **[or ours?]**
 - **John 20:25-29**, "So the other disciples told **[Thomas]**, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see in his hands the mark of the nails, and place my finger into the mark of the nails, and place my hand into his side, I will never believe." Eight days later, his disciples were inside again, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side. Do not disbelieve, but believe." Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."
- Other post-resurrection appearances
 - **Matthew 28**
 - Jesus meets the women as they return from the tomb
 - Meets the 11 disciples in Galilee.
 - **Mark 16**
 - Meets 2 disciples on the road.
 - Appears to 11 disciples.
 - **Luke 24**
 - Meets 2 disciples on the road to Emmaus
 - Multiple disciples in house, ate with them, and took them out to Bethany.
 - **John 20-21**
 - Meets with the disciples in the house.
 - Again, meets the disciples in a house, this time with Thomas present.
 - Appears to 7 disciples while fishing; the restoration of Peter.
 - **1 Corinthians 15:3-8**, "For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas **[Peter]**, then to the twelve. Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me."

Verses 15-16 [Matthew 28:19-20]

15 And he said to them, “Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation.

16 Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.

- The Great Commission is our great responsibility!
 - **QUOTE:** “Interest in missions is not an elective in God’s university of grace. It is something in which every disciple is expected to major.” [Harry Ironside]
 1. Go!
 2. Everywhere [**“as you are going”**]
 - **Acts 1:8**, “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”
 3. Proclaim the gospel [**Good News**]
 - **1 Corinthians 9:16**, “Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel!”
 4. Everyone [**Mark 13:10; “And the gospel must first be proclaimed to all nations.”**]
 - “Making disciples” vs. “Making converts”; Disciple = learner; pupil
 - “The mission is not to fill buildings with people, but to fill people with Jesus.”
 5. Baptism
 - Not a condition for salvation, but rather obedience to God’s Word.
- Salvation is by faith/belief alone!
 - **Ephesians 2:8-9**, “For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.”
 - **Romans 3:21-25 NLT**, “But now God has shown us a way to be made right with him without keeping the requirements of the law, as was promised in the writings of Moses and the prophets long ago. We are made right with God by placing our faith in Jesus Christ. And this is true for everyone who believes, no matter who we are. For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God’s glorious standard. Yet God, in his grace, freely makes us right in his sight. He did this through Christ Jesus when he freed us from the penalty for our sins. For God presented Jesus as the sacrifice for sin. People are made right with God when they believe that Jesus sacrificed his life, shedding his blood.”
- Ultimately, this is why we are Refuge City Church... We exist to share the gospel and make disciples. [**Wisdom, Justice, Love, Humility**]

Verses 17-18

17 And these signs will accompany those who believe: in my name they will cast out demons; they will speak in new tongues; **18** they will pick up serpents with their hands; and if they drink any deadly poison, it will not hurt them; they will lay their hands on the sick, and they will recover.”

- It can be a very dangerous thing to assume we all have to the gift of miraculous works because we have faith.
 - The true measure of our faith rests in obedience to God. Not in tempting God to prove our faith or Himself by signs and wonders.
 1. The disciples had already cast our demons [**Mark 6:13**]
 2. The Holy Spirit will soon fall on them and give them the gift of tongues [**languages**].

- **Acts 2:4-8**, “And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven. And at this sound the multitude came together, and they were bewildered, because each one was hearing them speak in his own language. And they were amazed and astonished, saying, “Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each of us in his own native language?”
3. Paul bit by a viper, but is unharmed.
 - **Acts 28:3-5**, “When Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks and put them on the fire, a viper came out because of the heat and fastened on his hand. When the native people saw the creature hanging from his hand, they said to one another, “No doubt this man is a murderer. Though he has escaped from the sea, Justice has not allowed him to live.” He, however, shook off the creature into the fire and suffered no harm.”
 - Notice he did not grab it on purpose to perform a miracle or show off his faith.
 - But no further account of anyone using snakes and poison to bring salvation to others.
 4. Multiple instances of miraculous healing.

Verses 19-20 [The Ascension]

19 So then the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken to them, was taken up into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God. **20** And they went out and preached everywhere, while the Lord worked with them and confirmed the message by accompanying signs.

- Jesus ascended in to the clouds and now sits at the right hand of His Father.
 - His ministry continues through His disciples; including you and me!

Response/Conclusion

- So ends the Gospel of Mark
 - However, we could very well end it the way it began.
 - **Mark 1:1**, “The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.”
 - When the gospel is preached, and someone believes, so begins the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God!
 - As the Gospel opened with John the Baptist calling others to repent, believe, and be baptized, so Mark’s gospel account end with our commission to do the same!
 - AMEN 🙏