

Resurrection Sunday 2025
Mark's Resurrection Story is a Little Unique
Mark 16:1-8
April 20, 2025

I. A PASSAGE that defies EXPECTATIONS. (v.1-8)

- A. A SITUATION the women don't EXPECT. (v.1-8)**
- B. A person WAITING that they don't EXPECT.. (v.5-6)**
- C. An ENDING that WE don't expect. (v.7-8)**

Out of the four gospels, Mark is the one who leaves us scratching our heads when it comes to that first Easter morning. This story (at least if you stop at verse 8, which is where Mark did) doesn't seem to do justice to the event that just happened. This is not the ending we were expecting.

1. Kid's Question: What do you think it would have been like to see an angel at the tomb saying "He is Risen"? How would you have reacted?
2. How does Mark's retelling of the resurrection (at least up through verse 8) challenge your own thinking? How has Jesus challenged your expectations in the past?

II. At some POINT a conclusion was ADDED. (v.9-20)

- A. We know there is MORE to the STORY. (v.9-20; Jn 20:16-18)**
- B. "MARK, why END it all like THIS? (v.8)**
- C. Is this another "SANDWICH" in MARK? (1:44-45; 16:8; 8:29)**
- D. Can you MEET Jesus and stay QUIET? (1:45; v.9-10,13,20)**

Mark 16:9-20 is a later ending that was added to Mark's gospel by someone. It's not in the earliest and most reliable manuscripts that we have. It also doesn't flow very well as v.9 seems to introduce Mary Magdalene who Mark has mentioned 3 times just prior. The Greek used is very different from Mark, and this last section includes 27 Greek words that are never used anywhere else in the whole book. All the events in this section are found in other gospels and in Acts, but it appears that someone added this summary to smooth out Mark's abrupt ending. That's why most Bibles footnote it or set it apart in some way.

3. Do things like this footnote about verses 9-20 unsettle you about trusting the Bible? Do you understand how we got the text of the books we have in the Bible today?
4. Why do you think Mark would end the story with the women fleeing in fear?
5. What about this Mark Sandwich Idea that Jeff presented? Does it make sense to you? Does this type of Bible reading and interpreting make the Bible seem more accessible or more confusing?

III. The GIFT of an abrupt ENDING. (Mark 1:1)

- A. RESURRECTION is not just a FACT to be PROVEN. (1 Jn 1:1)
- B. It's an INVITATION to a relational ENCOUNTER. (v.9-20; Jn 5:39-40)
- C. A LIVING God can leave us UNSETTLED. (v.8; Rev. 1:17-18)
- D. How will you REACT to the empty TOMB? (Jn 11:45,48,53)

My theory is that Mark ending his story of Jesus just exactly how he wanted to. There was a purpose in his abrupt and unsettling end, and if we believe this to be the word of God to us, then we need to receive it and let the Spirit speak through it. As usual with Mark, his terse and rapid writing style pushes us to the point of a question as well as giving us a few things to think about.

- 6. Would you say that your view of the resurrection is more as a fact or an invitation to relationship? How can you know?
- 7. In what ways has God and the way He chooses to do things left you feeling unsettled or afraid in the past? How did you respond?
- 8. When God does things that aren't expected (like rise from the dead) do you react cautiously and try to control, or do you jump in and share the amazing news? Are you happy with how you react in those situations?