

Love Crucified Arose  
Mark 16:1-8

Christ is risen! (*Christ is risen, indeed!*)  
The Lord is risen! (*The Lord is risen, indeed!*)  
Christ is risen! (*Hallelujah!*)

## **RECOUNTING THE GOSPEL NARRATIVE SO FAR UP TO THE CROSS**

We began our journey with Mark and Jesus with these words,

### ***The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.***

With these words Mark, inspired by the Holy Spirit, introduces us to everything he wanted us to know about Jesus. Every word Mark writes after these supports, affirms, and proves that Jesus is the Savior, the Messiah, the God-appointed, God-anointed, God-sent Deliverer. Jesus is the Son of God, God in human flesh whose goal and purpose is to rescue God's human creation from the threat of death inherent in sin and to establish forever God's personal, glorious rule over every aspect of His creation.

We started at the beginning. Today we are near the end. We have walked with Jesus. We watched Jesus. We've heard Him teach God's with an authority unlike any other. We have seen Him speak with such authority that demons, and storms, and sickness, and even death obey Him. We've watched His tenderness for the vulnerable, His firmness with the hypocrites, His patience with the novices, His grace with the opposition.

We've seen Him in the majestic moments of His glory and we witnessed Him struck and stripped and mocked and paraded like a clown by His enemies while deserted by His friends.

We stood by as they fastened Him to the cross. We heard Him call out in the darkness to His God. We felt the earthquake. We saw Him die. The centurion affirmed Mark's witness. "Truly this man was the Son of God!"

## **THE TERRIBLE QUESTION**

But was He? All that He did, all the good, all the right, all the glory, all the words and wonders died on the cross at the hands of hypocrites and heathens. Is this the best Messiah has to offer? A few days of spectacle and then death in scandal? Is this all it means to be the Son of God, to gain the attention and wrath of the status quo and be aborted like an unwanted child?

If the story of Jesus ended in the tomb, there would be no gospel, no good news. If death were the end then the story of Jesus would be no different than any other story, His efforts no better than any other noble hero out to make a difference in the world. If, in the end, death wins, then we are not delivered, rescued, saved. If the cross is the final word, then Jesus gets what He deserves and so will we.

Both the Old Testament and the New Testament agree. Ezekiel, following on the revelation of God from the very beginning of creation affirms,

**Ezekiel 18:20 (ESV)** <sup>20</sup> *The soul who sins shall die. The son shall not suffer for the iniquity of the father, nor the father suffer for the iniquity of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself.*

Death is the expectation of the sinful soul. The apostle Paul makes the same affirmation,

**Romans 6:23 (ESV)** *For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

Death is the justice of God upon sin. So, if Jesus dies, then justice is applied to sin. But if He stays dead, then justice is applied to His own sin. And if He dies for His own sin, then He cannot be the Savior of others for He will not have even saved Himself. And if He cannot save Himself or others, then He cannot be the Christ, the Son of God.

He died. The centurion marveled. The women watched. Pilate certified. Joseph took the body, wrapped it, sealed it, walked away.

### **THEN CAME THE MORNING**

Then came the morning, very early on the first day of the week. The women who watched from a distance came near for one last ministry to Jesus. They were willing to confront the stench and horror of death and corruption for one final act of love and mercy. They came to place an exclamation point at the end of the sentence of His life. He was dead. They were sure of it. They came to be kind to a dead man.

But what they found was not what they expected. You see, this is not the gospel of Jesus the “Wannabe” Christ. This is not the story of Jesus the delusional “son of god.” This is the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

The women arrived at the tomb. They found the stone rolled away. They saw the young man sitting there dressed in white. They heard his words as he challenged their wrong assumptions and reasonable fear.

**Mark 16:6-7 (ESV)** *“Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has risen; he is not here. See the place where they laid him. But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going before you to Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you.”*

He has risen. He is not here!

Jesus died on the cross, was buried in the tomb, and rose from the dead. Jesus lives! Jesus Christ, the Son of God lived before God a sinless, innocent life in this world, died on the cross, not for

any sin of His own but for our sin. He gave His life to death as a substitute for us, in our place, on our behalf. And how do I know? Because He lives!

If He had died for His own sin, He would remain dead, the just punishment for His sin. But, because God raised Him from the dead God certifies that Jesus is the Christ, the sinless Son of God who not only deserved no death of His own but is able to satisfy God's justice for rest of us by His death.

### **WHY I BELIEVE IN THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST**

When it comes to the resurrection of Jesus Christ, I trust the testimony of the word, the women, and the witnesses.

### **THE TESTIMONY OF THE WORD FOR THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS**

From the moment Peter confessed Jesus as the Christ the Bible tells us,

**Matthew 16:21 (ESV) <sup>21</sup> *From that time Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised.***

I believe in the resurrection of Jesus because He said He would rise, and if he had lied or exaggerated or deceived in any statement about Himself or God or anything, He would still be noting more than a moldering corpse in an ancient hole in the ground. I believe in the resurrection first of all because of the testimony of the word.

**Psalms 16:10 (ESV) *For you will not abandon my soul to Sheol, or let your holy one see corruption.***

Isaiah 53 prepares us for the suffering and death of the Christ. He was despised and rejected by men; a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. He was wounded for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities. The LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all. But within these laments there is hope!

***When his soul makes an offering for guilt; he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days; the will of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied.***

And listen to these words of the prophet Micah:

**Micah 7:8 (ESV) *Rejoice not over me, O my enemy; when I fall, I shall rise; when I sit in darkness, the LORD will be a light to me.***

### **THE TESTIMONY OF THE WOMEN FOR THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS**

I believe in the resurrection first of all because of the testimony of the word, but also because of the testimony of the women. Please understand, in Jesus' day women were not even allowed to testify in court. Their word, their testimony was considered worthless. Realize that when the

chief priests and scribes and elders tried Jesus, knowing they could not condemn Him except on the testimony of two or three credible witnesses, who would all have been men, they could not find two men whose witness against Jesus was credible. But here we have a number of women whose testimony all matches for the resurrection of Jesus. The cultural incongruity points to the legal credibility!

### **THE TESTIMONY OF THE WITNESSES FOR THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS**

And I believe in the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead because of the witnesses, from that moment to this, who testify to the veracity and validity of what they know in their hearts to be true with their faith, their lives, and sometimes their own deaths, If the resurrection were a mere fairy tale, it would never have survived the violence, the opposition, or cruelty thrown against it. The flames of unbelief, the axe of faithlessness, the crosses, the swords, the nooses, the guillotines, faith in the resurrection of Jesus has survived all these and more. Even the enculturation of Christianity through which the world has come to consider the Christian faith of no account; even the hellish effort at neutralization through assimilation has not extinguished the commitment of faith in the resurrection among the true people of God.

Why? Why has the fact of the resurrection of Jesus endured the passage of more than two millennia? Because the gospel is true. God sent His Son, Jesus Christ, into the world to live, to die on a cross in our place on our behalf, and to be raised from the dead so that all those who put their faith may also pass from spiritual death to eternal life. Michael Card tells us the truth! Love, crucified, arose!

### **MOVING ON WITH TWO ASSUMPTIONS**

I could go on this morning and give you all the facts and lay out for you all the evidence for the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, yet, in the end, without faith, you would still not believe. You might be entertained. You might be better informed. But facts without faith leaves you no better off than the demons who tremble in terror at the facts but are forever lost in faithlessness.

So, let me move forward this morning with two assumptions in mind. The first is that you are here because God is giving you faith to pursue His truth. If God were not at work in your heart, you would not care about Him, or His word, or the resurrection of Jesus Christ. If you care about these things this morning, it is proof that God is actively pursuing a relationship with you. And you are, listening, learning, because He is at work drawing you to Himself.

The second assumption I will make is this: What you are really concerned about is not whether or not the resurrection of Jesus is true, you already accept that. What you are concerned about is what impact the resurrection has on the life of faith. You want to know what difference it makes as you consider the claims of God on your life and the commitment He calls you to make to Him. You are not looking for evidence. What you want is application. **What impact does the resurrection of Jesus have on your life right here, right now?**

### **TWO IMPACTS OF THE RESURRECTION ON YOUR LIFE RIGHT NOW**

Let me give you two. The impact of the resurrection on the life of faith is massive. John MacArthur rightly points out that the truth of the resurrection is the foundation of true

Christianity. So, let me point out two out of many and trust that you and the Holy Spirit will discover more on your own as you pursue this question, “What is the impact of the resurrection of Jesus on my life?”

**Number one: The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead proves that the need for salvation is both personal and true and that God’s invitation to be saved is worth considering.**

In Romans four, Paul explains that righteousness is a matter of faith, using Abraham as an example. Abraham believed God’s promise and his faith was “counted to him as righteousness.” Paul makes the point that the example of Abraham’s faith applies to us. He says that righteousness

*will be counted to us who believe in him who raised from the dead Jesus our Lord, <sup>25</sup> who was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification.*

Jesus was delivered up to death for our trespasses and, listen to this, raised for our justification. The death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, was intended by God for our benefit. We are the sinners for whom Christ died. It is our guilt and shame He took to the cross, and it is through His resurrection alone that we have hope of forgiveness and mercy.

Jesus’ death and resurrection affirm the danger of eternal justice every human being faces. It also demonstrates the length to which God will go to deliver His people from the justice they deserve by subjecting His own Son to their punishment.

The resurrection of Jesus proves that sin is real, that divine justice and wrath are real, that our guilt and need of salvation is real, and that God’s offer and invitation of mercy through faith is both real and worthy of your personal consideration.

**Number two: The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead affirms that our future hope is certain for those who put their faith in Christ.**

**John 3:16 (ESV)** *“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.*

**Romans 6:1-5 (ESV)** <sup>1</sup> *What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? <sup>2</sup> By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? <sup>3</sup> Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? <sup>4</sup> We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. <sup>5</sup> For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.*

There is so very much to say here, but, for the sake of time, let me simply say this. The

resurrection of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, opens the door to eternal life and glory for all those who put their faith in Him. That God kept His promise to send a Savior, that God certified the life and death of Christ by raising Him from the dead, guarantees to our finite thinking that God will keep every promise He ever made, including that ***“whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.”***

## **CLOSING**

Believing in the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, as well as the rest of the gospel, will always be more a matter of faith than of intellectual argument. It is more a matter of the heart than of the mind. The mind is not absent. The gospel appeals first to the mind, but it is the Spirit who convinces the heart to believe. It is the Spirit of God who convinces and enables the heart to exert faith that moves the facts of the gospel into saving faith. So Paul will say of the gospel,

**Romans 1:16-18 (ESV)** <sup>16</sup> *For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.* <sup>17</sup> *For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, “The righteous shall live by faith.”*

The resurrection of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, in all its glorious, soul-saving truth, calls for faith. **This good news that Jesus lives reaches out to each of us and begs the question, “Will you believe?”** Will you entrust your life and your future into the far reaches of eternity to the One who lived and died for you, Who has won the victory? Will you live for Him, love Him, honor and obey Him Who lived and died for you; Who loves you and honors you with hope and forgiveness?

What is the principal impact of the resurrection of Jesus Christ? **The resurrection calls us to leave our life of selfishness that leads to death and enter a life of selfless faith that leads to eternal life.** That is your opportunity this morning, in light of the fact that Love, crucified, arose.