

Commentary on Mark chapter 16, by Chuck Smith 5.15.22

Pastor John Donovan, cell phone 508-380-0471

Pastor Terry Gerlarneau, cell phone 603-455-4399

Web site todbc.org email us at opendoorbiblechurch@todbc.org

May memory verse Romans 6:14 (NKJV)

¹⁴ For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace.

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And when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome [so we get these two Marys, who was, of course, standing afar off watching the crucifixion with them] had bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint him. And very early in the morning, the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun. And they said among themselves, Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre? And when they looked, they saw that the stone was rolled away: for it was very great. And entering into the sepulchre, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, [and he was] clothed in a long white garment; and they were affrighted [frightened]. And he saith unto them, Be not affrighted [Don't be frightened]: ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: he is risen; he is not here: behold [this is] the place where they laid him. But go your way, tell his disciples and Peter that he goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see him, as he said unto you ([Mar 16:1-7](#)).

So, here we find that first Easter morning the women coming to the sepulchre. As we go back to the previous chapter and they rolled the stone unto the door of the sepulchre, we realize that behind that sepulchre there did lie a dead concept of God. For Jesus came to reveal the Father unto man. Man had lost sight of God. Man had so many false concepts of God. Even those who studied the scriptures had developed false concepts of God, and Jesus came to reveal the truth of God to man. "No man has seen the Father at any time but the only begotten Son that is in the bosom of the Father, He hath demonstrated, or declared Him, made Him known." To Philip, He said, "Have I been so long a time with you, Philip? Haven't you seen Me? If you've seen Me, you've seen the Father." He came to reveal the Father and He revealed a God of love, a God of compassion, a God who is sensitive and cared about the needs of man. For you see, Jesus said, "If you've seen Me, you've seen the Father." And if you think of Jesus, you see how He went about doing good, how He went about helping those that were oppressed, opening the eyes of the blind, giving strength to those that were lame, giving life

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to those who were dead. "If you've seen Me, you've seen the Father." You've seen the desires of God for man. But man had rejected that concept of God. They rejected that concept of a God of love, and with cruel hatred, they crucified Jesus and placed His body in the sepulchre and rolled the stone over the door of the sepulchre. And behind the stone, that dead concept of God.

Also behind that stone there lay a dead religion. For Jesus had brought to man a new religion that was different from all other religions. For man's religions all had man reaching out to God. But Jesus declared that God was actually reaching out to man. "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son." All of the religions had the specified works whereby man might become worthy of God. Jesus said, "The work that God is interested in is that you just believe on Him who He has sent." And rather than specifying the works whereby you might be approved of God, He told of the work that God had done for man. And that man's salvation rested not on his works, but upon God's work and man's faith in God's work. But they rejected that religion, a religion that taught of redemption. The Greek said redemption was impossible; once a man went bad, there was no hope of redeeming him. It is interesting that our penal system is beginning to recognize this fact. A tremendous volume... two volumes have been written by psychologists who have been in a study for fifteen years on the rehabilitation program of our correctional institutions. They used to be called penal institutions; now they're correctional institutions after the sociologists got into the game. And you know, "man's problem is only his environment, and all you have to do is give him the right environment and he'll do right." And so, these two sociologists or psychologists studied for fifteen years the case history of over 1,000 inmates back in Illinois, and made detailed studies of the whole process of their incarceration and all. And of those over 1,000 men that were studied in this particular study that was made, only one man was rehabilitated through the modern correctional institutions. Only one man! And when he was released, he was very sick and died shortly afterwards. The only successful case. This book is shaking up the whole judicial, police and penal institutions. I mean, it's damning evidence against the philosophies and the concepts. In fact, it almost agrees with the Greek philosophy that redemption is impossible: "Once a man has gone bad, there's no hope."

But Jesus said there was hope. He said, "I've come to redeem. I've come to seek and to save that which was lost." And He brought really a hope to man, but they rejected that and they crucified Him. And behind the stone there was a dead hope of redemption. But they came early the first day of the week. And what did they find? The stone was rolled away. Why? To let Jesus out? Nope! They didn't have to roll the stone away to let Him out; He could have passed right through. He was in His new body. Later on He passed right through the walls into the

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house where they were visiting. So obviously, the stone wasn't rolled away to let Him out. It was rolled away to let them in, so they could see what God had done.

Interesting to me, that as they were on their way, they were worried among themselves as to who would roll away the stone. So typical of worry, because in reality, they were worried about something that they never needed to worry about. And so much of your worry is about things you don't need to worry about. Because by the time you arrive at that scene, God has already preceded you there and taken care of it. And that's what they discovered. Who's going to roll away the stone? They were worried about how they were going to get the stone away. But by the time they got there, God had preceded them and had already rolled it away. Those stones that you're worried about this week, how you're going to roll them away, don't worry about them. God's going to precede you there and by the time you get there, He's going to have the whole thing all covered, taken care of. Worry is a needless expenditure of time and energy. The Lord surely doesn't want us to worry.

So, the good news!

And they went out quickly, and fled from the sepulchre; for they trembled and were amazed: neither said they any thing to any man; for they were afraid ([Mar 16:8](#)).

Now the angel that was there said, "Go tell the disciples and Peter." Where was Peter the last time we saw him? In the depths of despair because of his failure. The last time Jesus looked at Peter was when the rooster had crowed and Peter had fulfilled the prophecy of Jesus and had denied Him three times. "And when the cock crowed, Jesus looked at Peter and Peter went out and he just wept bitterly." He had so miserably failed. Jesus said, "All of you are going to be offended tonight because of Me." Peter said, "Lord, if they are all offended, I'll never be offended." Jesus said, "Oh, Peter, before the cock crows you will have denied Me three times." "I'll never deny You! Though they kill me, I wouldn't deny You." And the little girl came up and said, "Aren't you with Him?" "No, I don't know Him, don't know what you're talking about." "Surely you're one of them. I've seen you." "Oh, no, not me." And those that were around began to say, "Why, you must be! You're a Galilean. You've got the accent of a Galilean." He began to curse and swear and say, "I don't know the Man." And the rooster crowed, and Jesus looked at Peter. "Failure! Failure! I've failed You, Lord! I've failed You, God! Oh, Lord, I'm a failure!" "And he went out and was weeping bitterly." That's the last time we saw him.

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Now as the first message of the resurrected Lord, there was a special little addendum, "Tell Peter." "You know, I'm not through with you, Peter. Sure, you failed, but hey! I'm risen, Peter. It's going to be a new game, a new life...Go tell the disciples and Peter." The Lord's special interest in Peter, and following it, it's interesting, the special way by which Peter was restored by Jesus.

And it might be noted that there are those certain scholars that say that this part of the gospel of Mark should not be in the record, from verse nine to the end. That this was added by some other writer later on and was not a part of the original, but was added by someone who was copying the scriptures at a later date. Their authority for this is that this particular portion of Mark's gospel is not found in two of the ancient manuscripts: the Siniaticus and the Vatican, which are two of the oldest manuscripts that are in existence today. And because from verse nine to the end of the sixteenth chapter of Mark are not in these particular two manuscripts, it's declared to be spurious. The Kodus Siniaticus dates back to about the year 400 and it is one of the oldest manuscripts that we do have, full type of manuscripts. Now there are little koduses and all which predate this, but it's one of the oldest fuller type manuscripts that we have. It was found on Mount Sinai there in the St. Catherine's monastery by Tichendorf. And it is true that this is not in that particular manuscript. However, in the vast of majority of manuscripts it does exist. Manuscripts that, admittedly, are written later. However, two church fathers, Iraneous and Hipolatus, both quote from this particular part of Mark's gospel. The interesting thing is, both Iraneous and Hipolatus lived between the years 200 and 300. So they were quoting from older manuscripts, no doubt than the Siniaticus. Because they died before the Siniaticus was ever copied or made. So the strong evidence is that this does belong in the gospel of Mark, that it was deleted for whatever reason from the Siniaticus and from those manuscripts, the Vaticanus, that originated in Alexandria Egypt. But all of the manuscripts that come out of the area of Antioch, the Syriac, the Eastern and all...all have this last portion of the gospel of Mark. So, there are hundreds of manuscripts with the last portion of the gospel of Mark, omitted from two, but yet quoted by church fathers who predate the manuscript of the Siniaticus. So, they've got to be quoting from something that they had as a record prior to the Kodus Siniaticus. So I accept it as genuine.

Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils ([Mar 16:9](#)).

John will give us a more full account of His appearance to Mary.

And she went and told them that had been with him, as they mourned and wept ([Mar 16:10](#)).

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Now, this is the third day after and they're still mourning and weeping. I mean, it was a wipeout. You can be sure. All of their hopes were pinned in Jesus. They were hoping for the kingdom to be established by Him. And they're devastated that He was crucified, and they're still weeping and mourning three days later. And Mary came and she said, "I've seen Jesus. He was there. He appeared to me in the garden." And they said, "Ah, go on! Hysterical women!"

And after that he appeared in another form unto two of them, as they walked, and went into the country ([Mar 16:12](#)).

In Luke's gospel he'll tell us more fully about the two men on the road to Emmaus to whom Jesus appeared, and we'll study that in Luke.

And they went [came back] and told it unto the residue [rest of the disciples]: neither believed they them [but they wouldn't believe them]. Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them [He read them the riot act] with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen ([Mar 16:13-14](#)).

You know, in a sense it's sort of comfortable that these guys were such skeptics. It's all the more proof of the risen Christ. Of course, tremendous proof in just their changed lives. Look at them before the resurrection and after the resurrection, and the changed lives testify of the resurrection.

And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature ([Mar 16:15](#)).

Now the commission is to all the world; originally Jesus sent them out to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Now the commission is to the whole world.

He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned ([Mar 16:16](#)).

That's what I told you before; you can either believe or not believe. He that believes and is baptized will be saved. He that believes not will be damned. I mean, the Bible doesn't really mince much words. In John we read, "He that hath the Son hath life; he that hath not the Son of Life shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him." You're in one of two boats. You either believe or don't. You're either saved or damned.

And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they

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drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover ([Mar 16:17-18](#)).

Now, these signs are given in context of going into all the world and preaching the gospel to every creature. As they're preaching the gospel to every creature, yes, they will be speaking in new tongues, new languages. I think of the tremendous translation work of the Wycliffe Society today, casting out devils. That's a task that the missionaries find quite common. It isn't as common here in the United States because of the powerful Christian influence. But you get into some of the foreign lands, and demonology becomes a very heavy issue.

Taking up serpents ([Mar 16:18](#));

You remember when they were building a fire on the island after the shipwreck, and a poisonous asp fastened on Paul? And the natives said, "Wow! He must really be a wicked man. Because even though he escaped the judgment of the storm and the shipwreck, yet the gods aren't going to let him live." And they waited for Paul to roll over in convulsions and die. And after awhile Paul just shook the thing off into the fire. And after awhile when nothing happened to Paul and he didn't go into convulsions and die, they said, "He must be a god." And they were ready to worship him as a god. There are those cults today who foolishly gather rattle snakes and they get into some kind of a spiritual frenzy, speaking in tongues and all, and then they take the rattlesnakes and they begin to pass them around the circle. Down in the hills of Kentucky, there are quite a few of these snake handlers. And actually, they are not all in Kentucky; there were some people over in Long Beach who were involved in this cult. So it's close to home.

Another radical pastor took poison around and had each one of his board members drink the poison to prove their faith, whether or not they had enough faith to serve on the board of the church. Some of the board members did not have enough faith, and the pastor was charged with second-degree murder. When Satan took Jesus to the pinnacle of the temple, he said unto Him, "Jump! For it is written, 'He will give His angels charge over you to keep you in all your ways, lest at any time you dash your foot against the stone.'" And Jesus said, "It is written again, 'Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.'" The Lord never intended anybody to deliberately put themselves into jeopardy to prove anything. He doesn't expect you to go out and take up rattlesnakes to prove that you have faith, or to drink poison to prove that you have faith. "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." You are not to do any foolish rash act to make a proof of your faith.

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So then, after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat at the right hand of God ([Mar 16:19](#)).

Henceforth you will not see the Son of Man until you see Him sitting at the right hand of the throne in glory.

And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following ([Mar 16:20](#)).

Now, there is an order in the scripture, and the signs are never to be used as gimmicks, as extravaganzas, as a spectacular display to draw attention of people. The signs in the scripture were used to confirm the truth of what they were declaring. And those today who are going around advertising miracle services, "Come and see a miracle! Come get your healing!" and who are going around advertising and are using signs, miracles and wonders as a tool to draw people's attention or to draw the crowd, are not following the scriptural pattern. That was not the purpose. The purpose of the signs and the wonders were to confirm the truth of the message that they were declaring that Jesus was risen from the dead. The signs followed, not preceded. And any time you put the signs up front and make the big thing over signs, you are reversing God's order. The big thing was the proclaiming of God's truth. That was foremost, that was first. The signs only confirmed that what they were proclaiming was indeed truth.

Father, we thank You for the power of Jesus Christ. And we thank You, Lord, that through Him we have life and that more abundantly. Lord, help us as we go forth this week to share that life in Jesus. That His light might shine forth through us, that those who are in darkness may see the light, might come to the light and be saved. Thank You, Lord, for Your Word, a lamp unto our feet, a light unto our path. May we walk in its light. In Jesus' name. Amen.

What shall I do with this man Jesus who is called the King of the Jews? You've got to determine that yourself. You're the judge. But you're also the plaintiff, you're judging yourself. If you haven't received Him, you have rejected Him. If you haven't confessed Him, you have denied Him. If you don't believe in Him, you're lost. I would encourage you tonight to confess Jesus as your Savior, to believe in Him, to submit your life to the King. Bow before His throne, kiss His scepter. You'll find that to serve Him is to reign in righteousness and in love and peace. Maybe tonight you'd like to make your commitment to Jesus Christ. I would encourage you to go back to the prayer room. And there, just get on your knees before the Lord and just ask God to take over your life. Give Him the loose ends, the broken pieces. You'll be amazed how He can put it together and make

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something worthwhile out of you. For Jesus declared that redemption was possible. That's why He came, to seek and to save those who are lost.

God bless you, fill you with His love, with the power of His Spirit. And may you be obedient to His commission as you go into your world and declare His gospel to those around you. By your life that you live and by the opportunities He gives for you to speak. May the Lord make it a very profitable week to you spiritually as you grow in grace and in knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.