

## Mark 16 Questions

Read Mark 16:1-8

### Mark's take

Mark's gospel ends quite abruptly (verses 9-20 were almost certainly added later). A secular scholar has commented that "The conclusion is either intolerably clumsy; or it is incredibly subtle" (Frank Kermode, *The Genesis of Secrecy*, cited in David Garland's NIVAC commentary *Mark*, p. 623)? Which do you think it is? Why? Why do you think Mark ended it the way he did?

Why do you think the women disobeyed and didn't tell anyone--wasn't it very good news to share to others?

### The reality of the resurrection

If someone asked you to explain why you think the resurrection happened, what would you say?

In *The Resurrection of the Son of God* (pp. 683-718), N.T. Wright lays out a defense of the resurrection starting with this premise: the early Christians definitely believed Jesus rose from the dead, and as a corollary, their own eventual resurrection. He next states that the necessary and sufficient explanation for such beliefs is:

- The empty tomb
- Sightings of Jesus

What do you think about his argument (i.e., starting with the early Christians' belief, and then working backward to the empty tomb and sightings of Jesus, rather than defending an empty tomb and sightings of Jesus directly)? Why are both of these events necessary? What other reasons might be put forward to explain the early Christians' belief that Jesus rose from the dead?

### Theological implications

If our sin is the thing that separates us from God, and Jesus in his death paid the penalty of sin, it seems that his *death* is all that was necessary for our salvation. Is the resurrection then just icing on the cake? Was it necessary? Could Jesus have not been raised (maybe just his spirit ascends to heaven) and we still be in the same place?

Read 1 Cor. 15:12-32, Romans 4:25, 5:10, and 6:1-14. What do these have to say about the significance of the resurrection? Do our typical gospel presentations share these truths?