

They Did Not Believe

Mark 16:1-14

1 Now when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, that they might come and anoint Him. 2 Very early in the morning, on the first day of the week, they came to the tomb when the sun had risen. 3 And they said among themselves, "Who will roll away the stone from the door of the tomb for us?" 4 But when they looked up, they saw that the stone had been rolled away--for it was very large. 5 And entering the tomb, they saw a young man clothed in a long white robe sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed. 6 But he said to them, "Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He is risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid Him. 7 But go, tell His disciples--and Peter--that He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him, as He said to you." 8 So they went out quickly and fled from the tomb, for they trembled and were amazed. And they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid. 9 Now when He rose early on the first day of the week, He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom He had cast seven demons. 10 She went and told those who had been with Him, as they mourned and wept. 11 And when they heard that He was alive and had been seen by her, they did not believe. 12 After that, He appeared in another form to two of them as they walked and went into the country. 13 And they went and told it to the rest, but they did not believe them either. 14 Later He appeared to the eleven as they sat at the table; and He rebuked their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they did not believe those who had seen Him after He had risen.

Evidently no one had ever told Mark how to tell a story so that you could convince the most people.

He was not much of a sales person. Why would he recall how that none of Jesus disciples believed that Jesus was actually raised from the dead?

I mean if this is all an elaborate hoax Mark could have done much better at lying.

I don't marvel when people today do not believe in the resurrection of Jesus.

His own disciples could hardly be made to believe until the resurrected Jesus actually appears right in front of them. But even then some did not believe. Matthew 28:17 (NKJV) 17 When they saw Him, they worshiped Him; but some doubted.

I think that if Mark was making this up he could have done much better, like this.

Now when the third day came all the disciples and the women were there at the tomb awaiting His resurrection. The Jewish leaders were also there with their guard. When all at once there was this earthquake and the guards and the Jewish leaders were frozen and unable to move. Next the stone at the door exploded and a great fire and Jesus stepped out with gleaming white robes and hundreds of angels filled the skies. The disciples all cheered and looked at each other as if to say see I knew He would rise from the dead. Now that is a resurrection story to be relived over and over again.

I mean if Mark was going to make up a story, he could have done much better.

- I. I am sorry ladies.
 - A. But if you were going to try to sell an eyewitness account you would not have women to be the first to see the risen Christ.
 - 1. In that day, before Christianity elevated women, they were not considered trustworthy.
 - 2. They were more property than persons.
 - B. Luke in his gospel makes a special point to recognize the women as the first witness of the resurrection.
 - 1. Luke 24:1-11 (NKJV) 1 Now on the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they, and certain other women with them, came to the tomb bringing the spices which they had prepared. 2 But they found the stone rolled away from the tomb. 3 Then they went in and did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. 4 And it happened, as they were greatly perplexed about this, that behold, two men stood by them in shining garments. 5 Then, as they were afraid and bowed their faces to the earth, they said to them, "Why do you seek the living among the dead? 6 He is not here, but is risen! Remember how He spoke to you when He was still in Galilee, 7 saying, 'The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.' " 8 And they remembered His words. 9 Then they returned from the tomb and told all these things to the eleven and to all the rest. 10 It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them, who told these things to the apostles. 11 And their words seemed to them like idle tales, and they did not believe them.
 - 2. Luke 24:22 "Yes, and certain women of our company, who arrived at the tomb early, astonished us. 23 "When they did not find His body, they came saying that they had also seen a vision of angels who said He was alive.
 - C. So if they were making up a story they would have never put women as the primary witnesses.
- II. But they did believe.
 - A. Because Jesus continued with them for forty days.
 - B. Because He was seen by so many.
 - 1. 1 Cor 16: 6 After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep.
 - 2. Therefore it was verifiable and had been for almost 20 years.

3. This precludes the explanation that Jesus was not raised for all the authorities would have to have done is produce the body to prove that Jesus resurrection was a hoax.
- C. Because they came to understand that the Old Testament made it plain that Jesus had to suffer and die.
1. This becomes part of their message.
 2. Not just the resurrection but that God's purpose was for the Messiah to die for His people.
 3. The Old Testament had come alive to them.
- D. Because the understood that the sacrifice of Jesus was the final sacrifice of the Jewish sacrificial system.
- III. The story of the resurrection changed lives.
- A. The lives of the brothers of Jesus was changed by the resurrection.
1. For they did not believe before that time.
 2. John 7:5 For even His brothers did not believe in Him.
 3. But afterward they did.
 - a. James becomes the first pastor of the Jerusalem church.
 - b. James also writes the book of James.
 - c. Jude, another brother of Jesus writes the book of Jude.
- B. Peter, who did not have courage to stand up to a servant girl, on the day of Pentecost preached a powerful message and 3,000 were converted.
- C. All the other apostles with the exception of John died a martyrs deaths for the cause of Christ.
- D. The apostle Paul was converted and became one of the most influential people of his day.
- IV. What does this mean to us today.
- A. That our faith is built on a sure foundation.
1. It is not just blind faith.
 2. It is not just ignorance to believe.
- B. That we have a tremendous witness.
1. We can be bold in our witness for Jesus.
 2. We can be confident that what the Bible says is true.

- C. We can build our lives on Jesus and His teachings.
 - 1. That is where there is purpose in life.
 - 2. That is where we can fulfil our lives to Him.
 - 3. All in the resurrection power of Jesus Christ.