

THE SURPRISING JESUS

Studies in the Book of Mark

~Week Twenty~
"All Things Considered"
Mark's Gospel in Retrospect



Life Groups

A reminder... This weekly Bible study is connected to the Sunday sermons at UPC. It includes a "Look Back" section to help you reflect on the previous Sunday's sermon.

With this lesson, our study of Mark comes to an end. If you have missed any of the sermons or study guides in this series, the entire collection is on our website:

www.upc-orlando.com

LOOK BACK – Mark 16:1-8

The gospel of Jesus does not end with his death on the cross. As good as Good Friday was, Easter Sunday was even better! All four gospel writers – Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John – tell us that Jesus rose from the dead on the third day. The accounts differ slightly from each other because each writer focuses on unique aspects of the resurrection story. But they all affirm the wonderful truth that "Christ the Lord is risen today!"

- a) Several women who faithfully followed Jesus when he was alive went to his tomb on Sunday morning with spices in hand. What was their purpose, and what do you suppose was their motive (vss. 1-2)?

- b) A "very large" stone had been placed at the entrance of the tomb (vss. 3-4). In addition to this barrier, what else was intended to block people from getting inside the tomb and possibly stealing the body of Jesus? (Hint: See Matthew 27:62-66)

- c) Who was the young man dressed in white that greeted the women inside the tomb (vs. 5)? (Hint: See Matthew 28:2-3)

- d) Why do you think Mark mentions Peter by name, but none of the other disciples specifically, in verse 7?

e) Most scholars believe that Mark 16:9-20 is a later addition to Mark's gospel, most likely put there by someone(s) who didn't care for the abrupt ending at verse 8. The choice of words, the writing style, and even the content of verses 9-20 are not consistent with the rest of the book of Mark. It is possible that Mark's original ending had been lost (which often happens to last pages of books!). Or, Mark may have really intended his book to end rather abruptly. We do know that the silence, fear, and bewilderment mentioned in verse 8 soon changed. Read Matthew 28:8-10 and Luke 24:9-12. How did the women feel, and what did they do, after the reality of the resurrection began to sink in?

f) What does the resurrection of Jesus mean to you personally?

LOOK IN – Reflect

a) We entitled this Bible study "The Surprising Jesus." As you reflect on all you've read and learned in the book of Mark, what character traits, teachings, actions, or attitudes portrayed by Jesus have surprised you?

b) Have you identified with anyone in particular in the book of Mark? If so, who and how?

c) Look back and find a parable, a miracle, a teaching, or an incident that meant a lot to you. Share how it impacted you.

d) Pick one of the following topics and find one or more places in the book of Mark where someone could find help with that topic:

- Prayer _____
- Faith _____
- Submission to Civil Authorities _____

- Patience _____
- Commitment to Jesus _____
- Obedience _____
- Witness _____
- Worship _____
- Generosity _____
- Divorce _____
- Humility _____

LOOK OUT – Apply

James 1:22 says, “Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.” Now that you have studied Mark’s gospel, the real test is how you will apply what you’ve learned.

But the Bible is not simply a collection of commands to obey and principles to follow. If it were, it would be no different from any other book of wise sayings and advice. The Bible is the revelation of the person and work of Jesus Christ. So “doing the Word” primarily means living in light of the gospel. Take a few minutes and complete the following exercise:

- a) Write out a verse or two from the book of Mark that will help you remember how much God loves you:

- b) Write out a verse or two from the book of Mark that will help you trust God in a time of difficulty:

- c) Write out a verse or two from the book of Mark that will help you serve others instead of giving in to selfishness:

- d) Write out a verse or two from the book of Mark that will help you be more faithful to your calling:
