

# "He Has Risen"

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 04 April 2021

Preacher: Mike Salvati

[0:00] When the Sabbath was passed, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Salome, bought spices so that they may go and anoint him, thinking the corpse of Jesus.

And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb and they were saying to one another, who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance of the tomb? And looking up, they saw that the stone had been rolled back. It was very large. And entering the tomb, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, dressed in a white robe, and they were alarmed.

And he said to them, 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, Jesus, is going before you to Galilee.

[1:07] There you will see him just as he told you. And they went out and fled from the tomb, for trembling and astonishing had seized them. And they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

That's a rather odd way to end the gospel. Kind of leaves you hanging. We've experienced a lot of that this year.

What a year it has been. It's been one crisis after another, hasn't it? And each crisis seems to raise its own set of issues that you need to make decisions on.

In order to make decisions on that, you need to gather information. In order to gather information, you need to have sources of information that you can trust. Who do you believe is telling the truth? Who's telling the truth about the coronavirus?

Remember that a year ago. Who's telling the truth about masks, about social distancing? Who's telling the truth about George Floyd, Jacob Blake, and all the social justice issues that have erupted?

[2:14] Who's telling the truth about the future of our nation? Presidential debates. What is fake news? And what is true news?

What a year. And even though the coronavirus, matters pertaining to social justice, the future of our nation, these are all very important things.

None of these is what is most important. What is of first importance. And what is of first importance is what is true about Jesus of Nazareth.

Because eternity is riding on what you believe about him. I've been talking to a friend about Jesus. And she's at this really interesting intersection.

She wants to know more about Jesus. And she's open to talking about Jesus. But she has got questions about whether she can trust what the Bible says about Jesus.

[3:24] It's valid. Is the Bible a source of fake news about Jesus? Or is the Bible true news, good news about Jesus?

You see, the Bible and the Gospels in particular claim to present true good news about this person, Jesus of Nazareth.

Now, I'm not going to make a defense of the reliability of the New Testament this morning. But if you're not a Christian and you've been wondering about how reliable are the Gospels, these biographies of Jesus, I've got two of these books.

You can grab one for me at the Kringle table out on the sidewalk on your way out. I'd be happy to give this to you. This helps you understand why you can actually trust that what the Gospels are saying are true.

What the Gospel writers assume is that the reader will take what they're saying at face value. They present their information about Jesus as eyewitness accounts.

[4:27] So, this morning, if you're not a Christian, would you approach the Gospel of Mark with me? At face value. That these are eyewitness accounts of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

So, let me, as you can see on the back of your bulletin, there's a little outline. I'm going to give you the Gospel background of the Gospel of Mark. And then we're going to kind of dive into those eight verses in Mark chapter 16.

And then I'm going to point out the extraordinary claim that's being made here. And at the end of the sermon, I'm going to kind of bring it to bear on where each of us is living in this room. The Bible can be divided into two big sections.

The Old Testament and the New Testament. And the Old Testament is about a promise God made to a people, Israel. And Israel ended up failing to keep that promise.

But all throughout the Old Testament, there are these prophecies, these anticipations of someone who would be coming. The Messiah. The Christ. A king who is from the line of David.

[5:45] And he would come and he would establish a new covenant. A new promise God makes to a new people. And what you need to understand about the Old Testament, all these sacred writings were written before Jesus came.

The New Testament are God's sacred writings after Jesus came. And what the New Testament, it claims and explains is that Jesus is that long-awaited Christ.

The Messiah. The king. The king. And he came to establish a new relationship between God and sinners through his blood.

At the beginning of the New Testament, you have four biographies. They are called Gospels. And each biography is presenting Jesus to the reader, to the hearer, to show Jesus as the Christ.

This king who does miracles, whose teaching is unlike anyone else. How he engaged people was absolutely phenomenal because it was God engaging with people.

[6:53] These four Gospels point to Jesus being the Christ. And each Gospel has its own emphases and its own audience that it's aimed at.

The Gospel of Mark emphasizes, it shows the eyewitness accounts of Jesus. They're believed to be the actual eyewitness accounts of the Apostle Peter that Mark shares with us, the readers.

Now, I'm going to ask Robin to put up Mark 1.1. This is the very first verse of this Gospel. And why I'm asking her to do that is to let you know what Mark is setting out to do in writing this biography for us.

At the beginning of the Gospel of Mark, Mark says, The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. And here's what you need to see. You need to see three things. Jesus is the name of this man who is totally man.

You see at the end that title, the Son of God. That's a claim that Jesus, the Christ, is totally God. And Jesus Christ, Christ isn't his last name.

[8:00] It's a title. He also goes by that same title, the Christ. Jesus talks about himself as the Son of Man. That's another way of describing himself as the Christ.

And so all throughout the Gospel of Mark, Mark weaves these claims together. God the Father at Jesus' baptism says, My beloved Son with whom I'm well pleased.

At Jesus' transfiguration he says, This is my beloved Son. Listen to him. God is claiming this man to be his son. And this all climaxes.

Jackson did such a great job this past Friday night. Showing us from Mark 15 how all this weaves together. Because in Mark 15 you have these six claims of Jesus being the King of the Jews.

The King of Israel. And they were all designed to be mocking Jesus at his crucifixion. It ended up being true. That title King of the Jews is a claim of Jesus being the Messiah.

[9:06] It's just another way of saying Christ. And it's at the very climax of Mark 15.

That Jesus has this piece of wood above his head saying King of the Jews. Jesus cries out, Eloi, Eloi, Lema, Sabachthani.

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? He breathes his last. And in the book of Mark, the only human being that recognizes him as being the Son of God is one of the Gentile Roman centurions who oversaw his death.

Truly, this was the Son of God. And then in verses 40 and 41 of chapter 15, we see three women at the cross watching what just happens.

Mary Magdalene. Mary, the mother of Joseph. Moses and James. That's Jesus' mother, Mary. And Salome. And then at the burial in 1542 through 47, two of those three women watch where Joseph of Arimathea lays the corpse of Jesus.

[10:30] Joseph laid the corpse of Jesus in his own tomb. It was the tomb of a rich man. And Mary and Mary saw exactly where that body was laid.

Jesus had been removed from the cross and entombed in Joseph's tomb all before the Sabbath set. That's a little background that leads us up to Mark 16, 1 through 8.

And in Mark 16, 1 through 8, there are actually three scenes. There's a scene of these women going to the tomb. That's verses 1 through 4.

There's a scene of these women in the tomb. That's 5 through 7. And then there's the scene of these women coming from the tomb. That's verse 8.

When it comes to these women going to the tomb in verses 1 through 4, I just want you to notice a few things. Remember, notice who these women are.

[11:38] Mark names the three. Mary Magdalene. Mary the mother of James. That's Mary the mother of Joseph as well. The mother of Jesus.

And Salome. These are the women that had just seen Jesus crucified just a couple days before. And these are the women who saw Joseph lay the body of Jesus in the tomb.

What I also want you to notice in verses 1 and 2 is when this is taking place. This is after the Sabbath. The Sabbath has passed. Verse 2, it's very early in the first day of the week at sunrise.

They're getting an early start. They have fragrant spices to anoint the body of Jesus with. But here's what you need to understand. In the Jewish mind in the first century, they thought of a day differently than we think of a day.

We think of a day starting at kind of like 12 a.m. going to 11.59 p.m. For the Jew, they thought of a day in terms of sunsets. One sunset to another.

[12:40] And so for the Jewish mind, the Sabbath was Saturday. And it actually began on sunset of Friday. And that Sabbath go from sunset on Friday to sunset on Saturday.

What we see here is that these women, very early Sunday morning, the first day of the week, what we as Christians call the Lord's Day, because it's the day that Jesus was raised, they're on their way to the tomb.

In verse 3, notice what they're saying to each other. They're talking about who's going to roll away the stone. This is the massive stone that was rolled in place by Joseph of Arimathea.

You can see it at the end of Mark 15, verse 46. Most likely it was Joseph and a couple other guys that moved the stone in place. These huge stones were usually on little ramps that use gravity to drop into place before this tomb cut out of a cliff side.

So they're wondering, who's going to move this stone for us? So let's not miss what's going on here. These three women, early Sunday morning, are calm.

[14:03] They're in their right mind. And they are expecting to see the corpse of Jesus in the tomb. Verse 4, they look up, and they see the massive stone has already been removed.

There's no sense of panic. I'm guessing they're kind of relieved. Oh, great. Somebody move the stone. Let's finish our work. This is the first scene of the resurrection account.

Everything changes in this next scene. Verse 5 and 7, in the tomb, this is the hot spot of the resurrection account.

And you know how you can tell? By what happens before and after. Before we have these women who are in their right mind, they're expecting to find the corpse of Jesus, and then in verse 8, if you look at verse 8, they've completely freaked out.

They are trembling. They're astonished. The whole gospel of Mark ends with the word fear.

Whatever happened in between them going into the tomb and coming out of the tomb was some kind of forever life-transforming experience.

[15:22] So what happened? Let's look at verse 5. They walk into the tomb, expecting to see the corpse of Jesus laid out on a platform, cut into the rock, and look at what they find.

And entering the tomb, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, dressed in a white robe. He was sitting on the platform where the body of Jesus would be laid, at the right side of that.

He's wearing white. This is an angel. And for those of you who are not familiar, all throughout the Bible, angels are those who are messengers of God.

They declare God's news. He goes unnamed. But the freak out commences.

Look at the end of verse 5. Mark writes it, and they were alarmed. That is like a massive understatement because they were completely flipping out. Could you imagine if you were one of these ladies going into this tomb, what would be rolling through your mind if you didn't see the corpse of Jesus but saw this cute, young, white guy in a white robe?

[16:37] I'm not sure if he was a white guy, but he was in a white robe. I think you'd be flipping out too. And then we're drawn into what this angel says.

So they're freaking out, and this angel says to them, ladies, don't freak out. Don't be alarmed. Don't panic.

You're in the right place. He knows who they're seeking. You seek Jesus of Nazareth.

Do you know how that would have struck Mary, Jesus' mother? You seek your son. And then he said, who was crucified?

This angel in the tomb on the third day since Jesus' crucifixion knew that Jesus had been crucified.

[17:42] In fact, all of heaven knew that Jesus, totally God, totally man, had been crucified on that first Good Friday.

all heaven knew. And then he says this.

He has risen. He has risen. He's not here.

He's not here. He's not here. He's not here. He's not here. And then what's really interesting is that he then points to the empty platform and says, see, here's where they laid him.

Nothing. He's not here. He's not here. He's not here. He's not here. This is the extraordinary claim at the end of the Gospel of Mark.

[18:50] The claim is that Jesus is alive. And what you need to recognize is that it's not a man making this claim. It's a messenger of God making this claim.

In other words, this is God's announcement. This is God's announcement that the one who was crucified has been raised from the dead. He is alive.

This is God's good news. This angel goes on to say to these women in verse 7, Galilee, if you're wondering, is the place where it all started for Jesus and His disciples.

That's where His public ministry began. That's where He called His original disciples, where they came together and He started to teach and heal. And so what's going on here is after His death and resurrection, He is seeking to regather His disciples after He's been raised from the dead.

I hope you noticed that the very first eyewitnesses to the empty tomb and those who are being commissioned by an angel to go declare that Jesus is alive are three women.

[20:15] That's risky for Mark. I'll come back to that in a second. But did you also notice that He singles out Peter in verse 7, but go tell His disciples and Peter that He's going before you to Galilee?

I'll come back to that in another second. At the end of verse 7, we read, there you will see Him in Galilee just as He told you.

Just as He told you. When did Jesus say that? If you've got your Bible, look at Mark chapter 14, verse 26.

This is right after Jesus has totally kind of Jesus-ified the Passover meal. He says, now the Passover, do it in remembrance of me, which is phenomenal in itself.

But after the institution of the Lord's Supper, Jesus in verse 26 says, and when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives and Jesus said to them, you will all fall away, for it is written, I will strike the shepherd.

[21:21] That's a reference to His death. And the sheep will be scattered. 28, but after I'm raised up, I will go before you to Galilee. There it

is. That's what this angel is referring to when He says, just as He told you.

But it's more than that. Because if you flip in your Bible back to Mark chapter 8, verse 31, Jesus talking about Himself as the Son of Man, the Christ, He starts saying things like this.

The Son of Man must be handed over. He must suffer and die and on the third day be raised from the dead. He says that in chapter 8, verse 31, and then chapter 9, verse 31, He says the same thing.

The Son of Man must suffer, be handed over, die, and be raised on the third day. And if that's not enough, in Mark chapter 10, Jesus says, See, we are going up to Jerusalem and the Son of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests and the scribes and they will condemn Him to death and deliver Him over to the Gentiles and they will mock Him and spit on Him and flog Him and kill Him and after three days He will rise.

Jesus predicted not just His own death, but His own resurrection three days later, which was all fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies of the Christ in Psalm 16 and Isaiah 53 that would talk about this Christ who gives Himself and comes back to life for His people.

[23:02] That's what happens in the tomb. And in verse 8, we see the scene of these women coming out of the tomb and what do you expect?

You read these accounts in verses 5, 6, and 7 and you're thinking, okay, this angel is commissioning these women to go. They're going to go tell the disciples. Right? Well, they definitely hightail it out of the tomb but in verse 8 you see that this hightailing was a fleeing from the tomb. They were terrified. They wanted to get out of there. Trembling, astonishment, and fear completely shocked, disoriented, and terrified.

And then they don't do what the angel tells them to do. They don't tell anybody. All throughout the Gospel of Mark there's this theme of the disoriented and unbelieving disciples including these three women.

These three women respond to this news in fearful silence. And it's in stark contrast to the centurion in Mark 15, 39 who upon seeing the crucified Jesus breathe his last, speak with faith-filled confession.

[24:32] truly, this was the Son of God. Why would Mark close a Gospel open-ended like this?

Why would he leave us hanging like this? I mean, don't you want closure? Well, we know what happens to these women.

We know the rest of the story. We know these from the other Gospels that these women come to their senses and they go tell the disciples and they go meet Jesus in Galilee and they see Jesus. We learn from the Apostle Paul that Jesus not only appeared to them but to 500 other of his disciples.

And these women, these same women in the book of Acts are part of the early church that empowered by the Holy Spirit, they go and declare to all people that Jesus is the risen Christ who died on the cross for sinners.

We know the rest of the story. But why? Why would Mark close like this? It's open-ended by design.

[25:43] It's to bring you into the tomb. It's for you to ask the question, how would I respond if I were in that tomb with that angel and know Jesus present?

How would you respond to this extraordinary claim of this angel that he has risen? In verses 1-8, there's this extraordinary claim.

That's where I'm at in your outline in the bulletin. The extraordinary claim is this. Jesus is alive.

That's the claim. And not just that he's on, that he's alive, he's on the move.

He's on his way to Galilee. Are you guys familiar with C.S. Lewis? C.S. Lewis wrote the Narnia series for children.

The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe was one of those books. And we learn in this novel of the great lion Aslan, the king of Narnia.

[26:54] And it comes to a head when this lion Aslan is slain on an ancient rock altar by the wicked and icy queen of the north.

But soon after his death, this altar breaks in two and Aslan is raised from the dead and he's on the move. And he's on the move breathing life onto all of those who've been put under the curse by the

queen.

Thawing them. Thawing them to life. breathing back to life. All those under the curse. And gathering to himself a kingdom of beloved creatures brought back to life.

C.S. Lewis was a Christian. And Aslan was a Christ type. And that beautiful scene in the Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe, he's making a claim that Jesus has been raised from the dead.

C.S. Lewis also wrote another book. It's called Mere Christianity. I have a number of these copies. If you're interested, I would be glad to give you one. I'm going to read a section of this. Because Lewis was also a Christian apologist.

[28:22] Which means he sought to make a case for Jesus. Listen to this. I'm trying here to prevent anyone saying the really foolish thing that people have often said about him, Jesus.

Quote, I'm writing to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don't accept his claim to be God. That is the one thing we must not say, says Lewis. A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher.

He would either be a lunatic on a level with the man who says he is a poached egg, or else he would be the devil of hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was and is the son of God, or else a madman or something worse.

You can shut him up for a fool. You can spit at him and kill him as a demon, or you can fall at his feet and call him Lord and God, but let us not come with any patronizing nonsense about his being a great human teacher.

He's not left that open to us. He did not intend to. If this extraordinary claim is true, that Jesus is the Christ raised from the dead, that he is alive and on the move today, it changes everything.

[29:45] He's breathing life on the dead under the curse. He's gathering for himself a new people under a new promise. He's gathering for himself people from every tongue, tribe, and nation into one people.

It's called the church. You can fall at his feet. You can fall at his risen from the dead feet.

This extraordinary claim is made in an extraordinary way that he's alive. We know the rest of the story of the Marys and Salome.

They went to tell the disciples and they themselves saw the risen Jesus. These three women were the first eyewitnesses bearing testimony to the resurrected Jesus.

But here's what you need to understand. In the first century, women did not have the same rights as men, especially when it comes to credible, credible testimony, believable testimony, whether that's in a court of law or somewhere else.

[31:02] The question becomes, why would Mark risk the credibility of the claim of his gospel that Jesus is alive, that Jesus is the Christ?

Why would he risk that by including this account of these three women? Because it's true. It really happened.

So confident was Mark of the reality of this account that he has nothing to hide. And in fact, it strengthens the witness.

Do you know what a linchpin is? I've got a picture of a linchpin for you. A linchpin is, you see that spike going through the axle of that wagon wheel?

A linchpin keeps a wheel on the axle of a wagon. You pull out that linchpin and the wheels fall off.

[32:08] The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the linchpin of Christianity. It keeps the wheels on Christianity.

It is the definitive validating claim that Jesus is in fact the Christ who came to die for sinners to bring them into a life-giving relationship with the one true God.

If Jesus was not raised from the dead, he is not the Christ and there is no salvation in him, you are still in your sins.

But if he was raised from the dead, he is the Christ. Totally God, totally man, sent to die as a ransom so that you could live forever in a right relationship with God.

that's good news. The resurrection is why I personally am a Christian, humanly speaking. I reached a point where I could not explain the resurrection of Jesus in any other way than that it actually happened.

[33:25] It demonstrates, it sheds light on the rest of the claims of Jesus about himself and what he's done. The question is, how will you

respond?

The simple question I'm asking you to answer this morning is, is it true? Did the resurrection happen? Is Jesus alive?

Totally God, totally man? Let's say you're a genuine follower of Jesus Christ. Christ. You believe Jesus is totally God, totally man.

You believe he's the king, the Christ, the son of man who died in your place to give you a place among God's people. When you hear of the resurrection of Jesus, that he's alive, you should be assured because your faith does not rest on thin ice, brother, sister.

Your faith rests on the historic granite granite of the real bodily resurrection of Jesus the Christ.

[34:33] You've not made a mistake. Let that assurance turn to perseverance. Press on. If you're a 21st century follower of the risen Jesus, you love him.

And because you love him, you're going to constantly be learning from him so that you constantly be living for him. Press on. He's alive. But there's one more piece of this.

If you're a genuine follower of Jesus, it's called hope. Your risen king has defeated death for you.

You will see him. Not in Galilee, in glory. And you're one day closer. Jesus is alive.

Now let's say you're a nominal Christian. A nominal Christian is a by name only Christian. There's two things you should be aware of.

[35:43] You remember Scott's testimony like Scott who before he was converted to Christ, he thought he was a Christian by virtue of those who are around him. Cultural Christianity is a claiming to be a Christian by virtue of your surroundings.

A genuine Christian is a follower of Jesus by virtue of a changed heart and a changed allegiance. A genuine Christian dies to themselves daily in order to learn from and live for Jesus daily because we love him.

are you a nominal Christian? Jesus is alive. And he's calling you today, come, die, live for me.

But there's another aspect of this nominal Christianity that I want to raise to your attention. Do you remember how the angel in the tomb singled out Peter? It's in verse 7. He said, but go tell his disciples and Peter, why does the angel single Peter out?

Because Peter, at the worst possible time, denied Jesus three times. All leading up to Jesus' crucifixion.

[37:07] Could you imagine the shame? Could you imagine the guilt? The despair? The despair? Peter? Maybe at one point, you started following Jesus and then something happened.

And now you're thinking, there's no way that Jesus would take you back. Well, if Jesus was able to forgive Peter for his thrice denial, and not just forgive him, but make him the leader of his church, all by his grace.

If he's able to do that with a hothead like Peter, who denied him three times, he is able and willing to do the same for you. You are invited by the risen Jesus to come and follow him.

In fact, I want to invite you to come follow Jesus with us. Christ the King Church is not a building, we're a people. And we've been rescued by the risen Jesus and now it's our joy to learn from him in order to live for him.

And come, come back next week. Come join a life group. Come join the pack as we follow Jesus together. We love him. You're invited to join us.

[38:38] Finally, let's say you don't claim to be a Christian. You never have. Maybe you're learning about Jesus for the very first time.

Maybe this is the first time you ever heard someone proclaim from the Bible what the Bible claims about Jesus. Now, believe me, nobody likes to be strong armed into anything, myself included, especially when it comes to matters of faith.

But let me encourage you to gather your information about Jesus. Would you consider seeking Jesus, the true Jesus, by reading the gospel of Mark on your own?

Better yet, would you consider reading the gospel of Mark with another Christian? God's name? My neighbor just finished reading through the gospel of Matthew, and we have been regularly trading texts on his observations and questions as he's been working through that gospel.

It's been great. If you want to sit down with another Christian to read through the gospel of Mark or Matthew or John or Luke, on your connect card, there is a little box to check.

[39:57] I would like to learn more about Jesus. Just check that box, put it into one of the baskets that a connect team member is going to have on your way out, and we'll set it up for you.

Gather your information. How are you going to respond to this extraordinary claim of this angel that Jesus has risen? He's alive.

Let me wrap this up by saying the basic question I put before you this morning is what Mark 16 puts before us. Did the resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth actually happen?

Is it fake news or good news? And I've been making my case based on Mark 16, 1-8, that Jesus is alive and it's the best news anyone could hear.

It's the linchpin of this claim that Jesus is the Christ, the King who came and died and was raised to bring people back into a life-giving relationship with God.

[41:00] Jesus is totally God, totally man, the risen King who is alive and is on the move and he's inviting everyone in this room, come, follow me, and live.

He is risen. God, thank you so much for Mark 16, 1-8. God, would you do the work that you intend to do.

God, would you rescue sinners, deliver them from darkness, bring them into the kingdom of your beloved risen son. And for those of us, Lord Jesus, who are seeking to follow you, God, would you put strength in our heart again to remain faithful until we see you.

Amen.