

Discussion Guide

Week of September 22, 2013

Mark 16:9-20

Passage Overview: In Mark 15-16, Mark makes it clear that Jesus truly died and truly rose again. He draws attention to the fact that it is one “who was crucified” that rose again. An angel appears to three women and confirms that Jesus has fulfilled his predictions that he would rise from the dead (8:31; 9:9, 31; 10:32-34; 14:25). These women were witnesses of the crucifixion (15:40), burial (15:47), and empty tomb (16:5), as well as the message of the resurrection (16:6). Mark concludes his Gospel with what is sometimes called the “longer ending” of Mark. This longer ending is missing from various old and reliable manuscripts of the NT. This is why most modern English Bible translations place this section in brackets or otherwise indicate its suspect manuscript evidence. Regardless as to whether it was originally part of what Mark wrote, the content of these verses is best explained by reference to other passages in the Gospels and the rest of the NT. Most of its content is found elsewhere, and no point of doctrine is affected by the absence or presence of vv9-20. Remarkably, that we are aware of the lack of textual evidence for vv9-20 serves to underscore the trustworthiness of the rest of the Bible.

Understanding God’s Word—Read Mark 16:9-20 and Matthew 28:16-20.

- In Matthew 28:16-20, what are we to do (compare Mark 16:15)? How are we to accomplish this?
- Why is the trustworthiness of Scripture so important?

Living and Applying God’s Word

- Read **Acts 1:8**. The disciples were charged with being witnesses of the gospel “*in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.*” Discuss all the ways you can do this in your family, neighborhood/Columbus, nationally and internationally.
- In Matthew 28:20, Jesus promises, “*I am with you always, to the end of the age,*” and in Acts 1:8 he promises a powerful new work of the Holy Spirit—as fulfilled at Pentecost (Acts 2)—to enable his followers to accomplish the Great Commission. In what ways does God’s presence provide hope and comfort to Christians (including us) as they proclaim the gospel?

Turning to God in Faith and Repentance

- Missionaries aren’t just people who go to dangerous faraway places to proclaim the gospel. *All* Christians are missionaries. We are sent out to represent Jesus in this world.
 - Reflect on *your* identity as a missionary. How would thinking of yourself this way change your perspective on life and relationships?
 - At what major points does your life fail to represent Christ? Think of your friendships, neighbors, work-life, and your interactions with family members. Be sure to consider things you have failed to do.
- If someone pointed to the suspect manuscript evidence for the inclusion of vv9-20 in the canon (the collection of authoritative writings) as a reason to reject the Bible’s trustworthiness and authority, how would you respond?

Prayer: Praise God that he has spoken through his Word and has revealed to us the one way of salvation through Jesus Christ his Son. Pray also for one another.

Announcements

- Next Children’s Ministry Orientation (Sept. 29, 9-10am; christy@insidecrosspointe.com)
- Baptism Sunday (Sept. 29; wayne@insidecrosspointe.com)
- CP in Central Asia—hear from Jeremy & Samantha Orlich (Oct. 2, 6pm)
- Pure in Heart Conf.—girls from age 7-12 and their moms and female mentors (Oct. 5, 8:30am-3:15pm; register online)
- Child Dedication (Oct. 13; pre-requisite class Oct. 6 at 9am; sigourney@insidecrosspointe.com)