

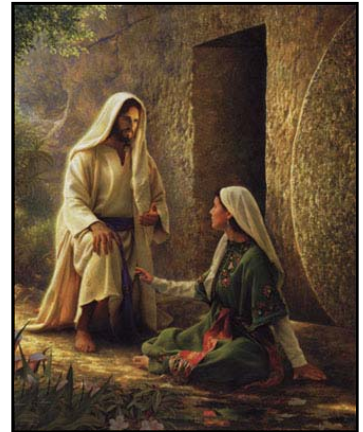
He Has Risen!

[Mark 16:1-8](#)



We ended our last study in Mark with Jesus dead and buried. We looked at His excruciating death upon the cross—a death that was substitutional—He died for His elect.

We also looked at His burial. The significance of the burial is that it served as a certificate of death. The burial signified a public notice that Jesus Christ of Nazareth was dead. This is where we ended in our study; Jesus is now dead and in the tomb. Think of how His disciples must have felt. Think of their despair and hopelessness.



The sad thing here is that their despair and hopelessness was a product of their unbelief. These men and women were all familiar with the Scriptures, and the Scriptures clearly taught that Christ would rise from the dead. We saw in our last study that Christ's death and burial were both predicted in the "Feasts of the Lord." These feasts also predicted His resurrection. These seven feasts represent and typify the sequence, timing, and significance of the major events of the Lord's redemptive career.

The first feast was [Passover](#): The first Passover was celebrated on the 14th of *Nisan*. And almost two thousand years later, Jesus Christ was crucified on the 14th of *Nisan*. While Israel was celebrating their Passover, Jesus, the true Lamb of God, was being crucified. This feast pictured the Lord's death. Did His disciples not see this? Remember how John introduced Jesus?

The next day he saw Jesus coming to him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29 NASB)

God's Lamb died on Passover, why didn't they get this?

The second feast was called the [Feast of Unleavened Bread](#): this took place on the fifteenth of the Hebrew month *Nisan*. It was to last for seven days. On the first night, and again on the seventh, there was to be a holy convocation; these were High Sabbaths. The Feast of Unleavened Bread pictures the BURIAL of the Messiah.

The third feast was FIRST FRUITS, which pictures the RESURRECTION of the Messiah. Do you see the Gospel in the feasts?

Let's look at this third feast—"First Fruits," and see what it is that this feast should have taught His disciples:

"Speak to the sons of Israel, and say to them, 'When you enter the land which I am going to give to you and reap its harvest, then you shall bring in the sheaf of the first fruits of your harvest to the priest. ¹¹ 'And he shall wave the sheaf before the LORD for you to be accepted; on the day after the sabbath the priest shall wave it.' (Leviticus 23:10-11 NASB)

What date is this feast to take place on? Passover was to take place on the 14th of *Nisan*:

'In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at twilight is the LORD'S Passover. (Leviticus 23:5 NASB)

The Feast of Unleavened Bread was to take place on the 15th of *Nisan*:

'Then on the fifteenth day of the same month there is the Feast of Unleavened Bread to the LORD; for seven days you shall eat unleavened bread. (Leviticus 23:6 NASB)

What date is First Fruits?

'And he shall wave the sheaf before the LORD for you to be accepted; on the day after the sabbath the priest shall wave it. (Leviticus 23:11 NASB)

There is no date given. The inspired text says that this third feast *occurs* “***...on the day after the Sabbath...***” As to what exactly this meant was the subject of much discussion and argument between the Pharisees and Sadducees.

Most scholars say the Feast of First Fruits took place on the 16th of *Nisan*. They take the Sabbath here to be the Sabbath of the first day of Unleavened Bread. But I believe that the Sabbath referred to here is the weekly Sabbath, the seventh day of the week. I am reluctant to say that on this issue I agree with the Sadducees.

The Sadducean view was that a Sabbath always referred to a Saturday and, therefore, “the day after” was always a Sunday. And this Sabbath was defined as the first natural Sabbath that fell during the seven-day festivities of Passover and Unleavened Bread.

The Pharisaic view, on the other hand, took the Sabbath to refer to the first day of the festival of Unleavened Bread that was proclaimed by the words “***a holy convocation***” in the Law ([Lev. 23:7](#)—that is, the 15th of *Nisan*). The “***day after,***” according to the Pharisees, had to always refer to the second day of the festivities and was always on the same calendar date, unlike the Sadducean interpretation.

There is no date given in Scripture for the Feast of First fruits, because it is **always** on a Sunday! So, the date would change from year to year, but it is always on a Sunday—the first day of the week. What is interesting is that on the year that Christ was crucified, there had to be three days between the 14th and the first day of the week. And it just so happens that there was.

If the “*day after the Sabbath*” was the 16th of *Nisan*, why didn't God give us the date? He didn't give the date because the date changes from year to year, but it is always on a Sunday. It's significant, therefore, that Jesus is raised from the dead on the *Biblical* day on which the waving of the first fruits of barley took place; Sunday.

I believe that Jesus was crucified on Wednesday, was buried by the end of the day. He was in the grave from Thursday at sundown until Saturday at sundown, which is 3 days, and 3 nights or 72 hours. He rose from the dead on Sunday—sometime after sundown on Saturday evening. Here is a time line:

- **14th of Nisan**; Jesus was tried early morning and declared faultless by Pilate (Wednesday). He was hung on the Cross from 9:00 AM until 3:00 PM. Jesus dies the same time the Passover lambs are being slaughtered in the Temple. He is prepared for burial and placed in the tomb just before sunset.

- **15th of Nisan**; the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread (which was a High Sabbath) Jesus is in the tomb. 1st night and 1st day (Thursday).
- **16th of Nisan**; Jesus spends the 2nd night and 2nd day in the tomb (Friday).
- **17th of Nisan**; Jesus spends the 3rd night and 3rd day in the tomb (Saturday of the Jewish Sabbath).
- **18th of Nisan**; Jesus is resurrected at the close of the Sabbath, beginning the first day of the week. This is the day of First Fruits, Jesus' body could not be found, the tomb was empty (Sunday).

So First Fruits is ALWAYS on a SUNDAY. As to the significance of the Feast of First Fruits, as with the other feasts, there is no room for doubt or speculation that it represents **Christ's resurrection**:

But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep. ²¹ For since by a man came death, by a man also came the resurrection of the dead. ²² For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all shall be made alive. ²³ But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ's at His coming, (1 Corinthians 15:20-23 NASB)

So, hundreds of years before Christ was ever born, God was teaching His people that their Messiah would come, and He would die for them on Passover, the 14th of *Nisan*. Jesus was the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. God was teaching His people that for three days Jesus would be in the tomb, and that He would arise from the dead on the first day of the week—the very day that Israel celebrated the Feast of First Fruit. Jesus' disciples knew this; they should have anticipated the resurrection, not doubted it.

On one particular morning, the First Fruits were being waved before the alter in the Temple, and that particular morning some women were heading to an empty tomb:

And when the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, bought spices, that they might come and anoint Him. ² And very early on the first day of the week, they came to the tomb when the sun had risen. (Mark 16:1-2 NASB)

These three women were the first witnesses to the resurrection. I believe that Mary Magdalene was Lazarus' sister Mary. She is one of four prominent "Marys" in the New Testament; she was freed from seven demons by Jesus according to [Luke 8:2](#). There was also Mary, the mother of James and Joses. Little is known of the faithful follower, Salome. She was the wife of Zebedee and the mother of James and John.

What is significant about this text? Even though the role of the woman in the ancient world was of a second class citizen, Christ chose to appear first of all to women, not to a man. The first to testify to the risen Lord was a woman from whom Jesus had cast out seven demons.

Here are three disciples of Jesus, they were the foremost amongst the women disciples of Jesus who had followed Him in Galilee, and yet they obviously did not believe what Jesus had taught them.. We know from Mark, chapter eight and verse thirty-one, that Jesus had told His disciples that He would ***"be killed and after three days rise again."*** We know from Mark, chapter nine and verse thirty-one, that He had told them that *after three days He will rise*. We know from Mark ten and verse thirty-four that He said, *"Three days later I will rise."* There were probably other occasions on which He explained to them His trial, death and resurrection, but they found it incredible to accept, just as the people of our town today refuse to believe in the resurrection from the dead.

And they were saying to one another, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance of the tomb?"⁴ And looking up, they saw that the stone had been rolled away, although it was extremely large. (Mark 16:3-4 NASB)

The women don't appear to have been aware that a Roman guard had been placed at the tomb during the Sabbath.

And entering the tomb, they saw a young man sitting at the right, wearing a white robe; and they were amazed. (Mark 16:5 NASB)

Mark doesn't identify this young man as an angel; but the other Gospel writers do. We, for some reason, have this need to always put halos and wings on angels. But most of the time in the Bible they just appear as men. And that's the case here.

The word for "amazed," in the original Greek is *ekthambeo*, which means: *"to throw into terror or amazement."* They were caught up in trembling; in awe at what they heard from the angel in the tomb.

And he said to them, "Do not be amazed; you are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who has been crucified. He has risen; He is not here; behold, here is the place where they laid Him. (Mark 16:6 NASB)

Notice that what the angel says to them is very specific. He doesn't say, "You know, you're at the wrong tomb...who are you looking for?...it might be down the road a little bit." He says, "I know who you are looking for. You're looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified." That's pretty specific. *"He is risen; He is not here; behold, look where they laid Him. He is gone."*

"He is risen" Mark juxtaposes two words in Greek to drive home the point: *"the one who was crucified"* (one word in Greek) is followed immediately by *"he was raised"* (also one word).

All four Gospels include the resurrection; it was an historical event that serves as the height of each Gospel. Just as Jesus was really dead, now He was really alive again. The resurrection is the heart of Christianity! So it is constantly under attack.

Some theorize that a literal, physical resurrection did not take place. Over the centuries, great men of understanding have sought other plausible solutions to the empty tomb. Let's consider some of these "empty explanations" and why they fall short of the facts:

1. *Jesus did not die on the cross, but merely swooned.* This alternative explanation has been repackaged with many variations. The most popular variant was *The Passover Plot*, published in 1965. The basic argument is that Jesus and His disciples conspired to fulfill messianic prophecies by faking Jesus' death on the cross. They managed to manipulate the Jewish leaders into trying Him, the people into demanding the crucifixion, and the Roman government into executing Him. The legal manipulation would have been a miracle in itself. Before being nailed to the cross, Jesus was given a drug that appeared to make Him look dead and trick the soldiers into removing Him from the cross while He was still alive. The cool damp air of the tomb revived Him and He appeared alive to His followers.

By just using simple logic, this argument fails miserably. Jesus was beaten so badly that He was too weak to carry His own cross, and a bystander was commissioned for Him. He had nails driven through His wrists and feet. The blood loss is hard to escape. The blood poured out His feet, hands, back from the

beating, and finally between His ribs when the spear pierced His heart.

If someone can get past the impossible odds of survival, there are a few more problems. How does a man who has had spikes driven through His limbs get up and walk? Somehow Jesus revived, untangled Himself, pushed a massive stone away from the entrance of the tomb without any guards seeing it, and ran away unnoticed. Not only did He escape, but He also walked seven miles from Jerusalem to Emmaus with two travelers who did not notice He was wounded. How is it that most people can't walk with minor pain in their feet, but Jesus was able to walk with holes in His? He had full use of His hands, because he took over the evening meal and broke bread. We could come up with dozens of functions that would cause Him excruciating pain if this was a faked resurrection—not to mention how weakly He must have looked. It seems a little hard to get the multitudes fired up by seeing a half-dead Jesus.

2. Jesus' Body was stolen. This is the only counter-argument that is even remotely logical. It also has flaws that can't be explained. First, who stole the body? **It is undeniable that the body of Jesus was no longer in the grave.** The disciples, Jews, and Roman soldiers all concurred that the body was missing. As one historian put it, *"History's silence is deafening concerning the body of Jesus. No one has ever claimed to see the body of Jesus after the resurrection."* If the Jews or Romans stole it, they would have produced it. All of the efforts to squelch Christianity, and the determination to explain away the resurrection would have ended quickly if someone produced the body. We know that the soldiers did not have it, or they would have surely produced it. They were paid for their silence; how much would they have been paid if they produced the body? There would have been no need to think up and rehearse the story of the disciples stealing it if the soldiers had it. We know the Jews didn't have it, because they would have been the first to put it on display. This only leaves the disciples or the resurrection.

Let's look at the possibility that the disciples took Jesus' body. When Jesus was arrested, the disciples scattered like little girls. Peter was the boldest of the 12, and he denied Jesus 3 times. To show how cowardly he was at this point, he was afraid of a servant girl who probably had no say in that culture at all. Yet, when she confronted Peter, he called curses down upon himself to prove he did not follow Jesus. They were too afraid to come forward to take Jesus down and help with the burial. How is it that they would suddenly be bold enough to risk certain death and sneak among the guards, move the stone without rousing anyone, and take the body? Also consider that the head cloth was neatly folded and laid beside the burial cloth. Anyone sneaking into the tomb would be hastily retreating after getting the body. They would not take the time to fold the cloth. Most likely, they would not remove the cloth at all. It was also at night in an unlit tomb. This argument also does not hold water. The disciples were too afraid to do anything.

When therefore it was evening, on that day, the first day of the week, and when the doors were shut where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst, and said to them, "Peace be with you." (John 20:19 NASB)

Not only were they fearful, these men just didn't understand or even believe in the resurrection. Although Jesus had told them over and over it would happen, they never got it, and must have concluded He was speaking figuratively.

Now after He had risen early on the first day of the week, He first appeared to Mary Magdalene, from whom He had cast out seven demons.¹⁰ She went and reported to those who had been with Him, while they were mourning and weeping.¹¹ And when they heard that He was alive, and had been seen by her, they refused to believe it. (Mark 16:9-11 NASB)

Initially, they doubted, but something happened that changed these fearful men.

3. The final possibility is that Jesus was resurrected. We see that the evidence against the resurrection falls short, but what evidence lends credibility to the resurrection? Let's begin by examining the disciples. These men fled in all directions when Jesus was arrested, and they did not offer any defense on His behalf. After the resurrection, there was a dramatic change in their lives. These men, who were afraid to be present at Jesus' burial, now were going into the very city where the crucifixion occurred and were boldly proclaiming His resurrection at their own peril. The crowds were still present and so were the council members that tried Jesus and soldiers who crucified Him. Why would they suddenly have such a change of heart that they would preach the same Jesus that they had just denied? Not only did they preach the resurrection, but they also condemned those responsible for His death and called them to repent so they could be forgiven:

"Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know--²³ this Man, delivered up by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death.²⁴ "And God raised Him up again, putting an end to the agony of death, since it was impossible for Him to be held in its power. (Acts 2:22-24 NASB)

To create a legend, one wouldn't go where the eyewitnesses were and exaggerate when the facts were still fresh. Legends are born by carrying the story to a distant land or waiting until the facts have faded. The disciples went to where the iron was still hot. They proclaimed the resurrection before those whom they knew would examine the facts.

There were many eyewitnesses to the resurrected Christ. Look at Paul's statement:

After that He appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time, most of whom remain until now, but some have fallen asleep;⁷ then He appeared to James, then to all the apostles;⁸ and last of all, as it were to one untimely born, He appeared to me also. (1 Corinthians 15:6-8 NASB)

Paul presented his claim before those that could question him and, in fact, is inviting them to question. He is saying, ***"Most of these witnesses are still alive and available to examine."***

We must rely on the testimonies of those who witnessed the resurrected Christ. For those scoffing at such testimony, we must not forget that all of the great events of human history that we study and reflect upon, we have by virtue of others' testimony. The conquering mastery of Alexander the Great and Charlemagne, Columbus' discovery of the New World, Guttenberg's invention of the printing press, Washington's nighttime crossing of the Potomac, and Lincoln's *Gettysburg Address* rely upon verifiable testimony of different witnesses. We have no trouble believing witnesses to *other* historical figures and events. But the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead appears to be a different story with many people.

People may be willing to die for what they believe to be true, but who would die for what they knew to be a lie? The eleven disciples saw Jesus die. They gained absolutely no financial gain from this faith; just the opposite, they lost everything except their joy and the hope of heaven. When Jesus was alive, their hope was their expectation of an earthly kingdom. After the resurrection, they lived for Christ with reckless abandon as they were committed to the hope given to them of eternal life. According to church tradition, only John died of old age. According to tradition, each of the other disciples were beaten repeatedly and killed. Look at how Jesus' disciples died and see if this sounds like men clinging to a lie: *Matthew was*

slain in Ethiopia; Mark dragged through the streets until dead; Peter and Simeon were crucified; Andrew crucified; James beheaded; Philip was crucified; Bartholomew flayed alive; Thomas pierced with lances; James, the less, thrown from the Temple and stoned to death; Jude shot to death with arrows; Paul was boiled in hot oil and beheaded.

All of these men could have lived if they had said one statement: "He is dead." But they refused. Not only did these men die for their beliefs, but they endured all kinds of tortures. Paul was stoned 3 times and survived. He was beaten with 40 strips from a cat of nine tails on 5 occasions and imprisoned repeatedly. Similar stories follow the other apostles. They lived lives that would be considered sheer misery by the world, yet they rejoiced in their sufferings. Not one of them caved in and chose the easy life. Can anyone believe that not one of these men would deny His resurrection unless they absolutely witnessed the resurrected Christ? What did they have to gain by forming this kind of religion? They lost property and often were abandoned by friends and family.

Even if you could believe that these men were willing to suffer for a lie, would they be willing to draw their own friends and families into suffering? They may have suffered for Christ on the outside, but they rejoiced openly and lived with joy and peace, which their captors did not have and could not understand. Throughout history, many of the very people who have persecuted Christians have become Christians. As they saw the strength, joy, and peace that defied logic, they saw their own lives as meaningless. There are many testimonies of captors who witnessed persecution and said, "I want what that person has."

If they had stolen the body of Jesus in hopes of being religious elitist, they would have quit their quest to found a religion around Him when the illusions of grandeur proved to be a failure. If it were a lie, they would quickly have tired of the beatings. Look at James, the brother of Jesus. He rejected Jesus during His life. I am sure that he thought of his older brother as just another sibling, and a delusional one at that. Yet after seeing the resurrected Christ, James was a changed man as well. He no longer called himself the brother of Jesus but a bond servant of Christ. Not a single critic ever questioned that the tomb was empty. There was no doubt of this fact. The real question is: Which testimony do you believe? Those who reject Christ or those who were eye witness testimonies to His resurrection and GLADLY suffered for their proclamation of this truth?

The earliest apostolic writings can be dated back to eyewitnesses. You can't make that claim from other religions. Christianity was written down closer to the actual events than other religions. Buddha lived in the sixth century B.C., but the scriptures of Buddha were not written until the first century A.D. Muhammad died in A.D. 632, but his sayings were not written for more than 100 years, A.D. 767. Unlike other religions, outside the Bible there are many supporting witnesses that verify the accuracy of the accounts of Scripture. Without the Bible, we can prove through historical evidence that: Jesus was a Jewish teacher; many people credited Jesus with healing and exorcisms; people believed He was the Messiah; He was rejected by the Jewish leaders; He was crucified under Pontius Pilate in the reign of Tiberius; after His shameful death, His followers believed He was still alive, and this faith spread to the multitudes throughout Rome by A.D. 64. The Christian faith was held dear by all manner of people; women, men, slave, free, rich, poor. Those who converted, worshiped Jesus as God. There are also tens of thousands of archaeological discoveries that validate the Scriptures and silence criticism.

The evidence of the resurrection of Jesus confirms that **JESUS IS WHO HE SAID HE WAS**. Jesus claimed to be God, and He proved it. He overcame death.

You have probably heard people say something like: "*Jesus was a great moral teacher, like Buddha, or Confucius, or Mohammed.*" You can't really say that, and here's why. [Buddha](#) and [Confucius](#) claimed to be

moral teachers, and nothing more. [Mohammed](#) claimed to be a prophet of God, but he never claimed that he was more than just a man. Jesus made claims about Himself that Buddha, Confucius, or Mohammed never made about themselves. **Jesus claimed to be God.** He claimed that He had always existed, that He would always exist, and that this world and everything in it belonged to Him and would someday be ruled by Him. Jesus told the Jews that He existed before Abraham:

Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am." (John 8:58 NASB)

A literal translation would read, ***"Before Abraham was brought into being, I existed."*** The statement, therefore, is not that Christ came into existence before Abraham did, but that He already existed before Abraham was brought into being; in other words, Christ existed before creation, or eternally. In that sense, the Jews plainly understood Him, for they wanted to stone Him for blasphemy.

Jesus said, ***"You shall worship the Lord your God, and him only shall you serve."*** And when He rose from the dead, men and women bow at His feet and worship Him and He receives it without rebuke:

And behold, Jesus met them and greeted them. And they came up and took hold of His feet and worshiped Him. (Matthew 28:9 NASB)

To worship anyone but God alone is blasphemy. But this One is God in the flesh. They grabbed hold of His feet in acknowledgment of His worthiness and their unworthiness, and they worshiped.

Jesus said He would some day rule the world:

And Jesus said, "I am; and you shall see THE SON OF MAN SITTING AT THE RIGHT HAND OF POWER, and COMING WITH THE CLOUDS OF HEAVEN." (Mark 14:62 NASB)

Now, if I made those claims—If I stood before you this morning and said: "Folks, I am God, and someday I'll rule the world"—would you leave here today thinking, "What a good teacher David is!"? Of course not. You would think, "That man is lying, he's crazy, and he's dangerous." And, of course, if I made those claims, you would be correct in thinking that. But when Jesus made those claims, He wasn't lying, He wasn't crazy, and He wasn't dangerous—He was telling the truth. Repeatedly Jesus claimed to be God, and it drove His enemies crazy.

For this cause therefore the Jews were seeking all the more to kill Him, because He not only was breaking the Sabbath, but also was calling God His own Father, making Himself equal with God. (John 5:18 NASB)

Jesus claimed to be God, and He proved His claim by conquering death. Do you know what that means? It means that we have to take seriously everything He said. For example, He said that He is the only way to heaven:

Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me. (John 14:6 NASB)

This means we have to abandon the notion that ***"all religions lead to the same place,"*** and ***"it doesn't matter what you believe, as long as you're sincere."*** Jesus said specifically:

"I am the door; if anyone enters through Me, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture. (John 10:9 NASB)

By the “door”, He is saying He is the only way to heaven. And apart from trusting in Christ, you will spend eternity under His wrath.

Jesus defeated death; this proves He is who He said He was; God. And as God, He promises resurrection and life to all who put their trust in Him:

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me shall live even if he dies,²⁶ and everyone who lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?"²⁷ She said to Him, "Yes, Lord; I have believed that You are the Christ, the Son of God, even He who comes into the world." (John 11:25-27 NASB)

In verse 26, Jesus asks, ***“Do you believe this?”*** What is “this”? It is the statement about Jesus Himself that He gives in verse 25. He tells Mary that He is the resurrection and life. But that’s not all He asks her to believe. Jesus is saying, ***“I guarantee eternal life to everyone who believes in Me.”*** To believe that Jesus is the Christ is in essence to believe that He is the guarantor of eternal life to everyone who trusts in Him.

Because of the resurrection, these words carry weight they never would have carried otherwise. If He had remained in the grave, the question of whether or not He is the **only** way to heaven would be a matter of debate. However, the resurrection answers the question and ends the argument once and for all. Is Jesus really the Son of God? Well, He has power over death, so I guess that means He is everything He claimed to be.

To deny the resurrection of Jesus Christ is to destroy the entire basis of the Christian faith. The Christian faith is not based primarily on the teachings of Jesus, the life of Jesus, the miracles of Jesus, or the death of Jesus. The Christian faith is based on all of these, culminating in the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. If there is no resurrection, all of these other factors are valueless.

"But go, tell His disciples and Peter, 'He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him, just as He said to you.'" (Mark 16:7 NASB)

It is very interesting that the angel says, ***“Go and tell the disciples and Peter.”*** By this time I’m sure that all of the followers of Jesus were well aware that Peter had denied his Lord three times, exactly as Jesus said he would. And there may have been a lot of question as to whether or not Peter was still part of the group, whether or not Peter had disqualified himself. And He wanted Peter specifically to know: Peter, Jesus is alive. You’re still on the team. He wants to meet you in Galilee.

The reality is we can all identify with feelings of failure—times when we should have done better and we felt like we really let God down. And if that happens very often, we start to wonder if God could use us at all. Yet we remember that God is a God of grace, and what He says to us over and over again is: ***“You’re still on the team. And we still have a job to do. Meet Me in Galilee. Let’s get it done.”*** And that’s really the message of the angel to Peter.

The emphasis on Jesus’ appearing in Galilee stresses the importance of Galilee in Jesus’ plans. It was there that He had carried out His main ministry and there where the largest number of disciples could be found. It was natural for Jews to think in terms of Jerusalem as the center of God’s purposes, and to think of men

flowing to Jerusalem in order to receive the truth, but the new way was to be totally unlike that. Jerusalem was no longer to be the center of God's purposes. God's purpose here was to woo their minds away from Jerusalem as the center of things.

And they went out and fled from the tomb, for trembling and astonishment had gripped them; and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid. (Mark 16:8 NASB)

So the Gospel ends with the women running off, trembling, bewildered, mute and afraid.

Jesus said, ***"I guarantee eternal life to everyone who believes in me."*** That is quite a promise! But remember, this promise is coming from a Man who rose from the dead. Jesus not only conquered death Himself, but He conquered death for everyone who comes to Him in faith. If you have never put your trust in the Lord Jesus Christ, I beg you to do it now.

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