

JESUS: THE SERVANT AT WORK

VOLUME THREE

STUDY TWENTY

A Sunday-Morning Miracle

Mark 16:1–8

Every Lord's Day is a day of resurrection. Every Sunday is a day to rejoice. He is risen!

—Pastor Charles R. Swindoll

THE women who had followed Jesus during His ministry stayed with Him to the end. They saw and heard everything. Eyes swollen with tears, they watched their bloodied and beaten Master drag that crossbeam along the cobbled *Via Dolorosa* to Calvary. They covered their faces in horror as they witnessed the soldiers hammer the spikes into His hands and feet . . . and for the next six excruciating hours, they kept vigil at the foot of the cross.

They marveled at His love for His torturers: “Father, forgive them” (Luke 23:34). They were moved by His tenderness when He put His mother in John’s care: “‘Dear woman, here is your son.’ And he said to this disciple, ‘Here is your mother’” (John 19:26–27). Their hearts ached for Him as His body writhed in pain and He cried out, “My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?” (Mark 15:34). Then, finally, when He uttered a “loud cry and breathed his last” (15:37), they wept as if their world had come to an end.

Still, these faithful, heartbroken women didn’t leave. They stood by as Joseph and Nicodemus removed Jesus from the cross, wrapped Him in strips of linen, and laid Him in the tomb. They saw them push the round stone in front of the entrance of the tomb as the jaws of the grave clamped tightly on their Master. Mark concluded the somber scene with these words: “Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joseph saw where Jesus’ body was laid” (15:47).

If Jesus had been just another great teacher like all the other religious leaders and philosophers in the world, Mark’s account of His life would have been finished. The sun would have set over the tomb of Jesus, and that would have been the end of the story. But, thankfully, Mark’s gospel doesn’t end here. After the sun set on that horrible Friday, Sunday was coming. A new day of hope was about to dawn!



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SEARCHING
THE
SCRIPTURES
BIBLE STUDIES

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Mark 16:1–8



PREPARE YOUR HEART

I also pray that you will understand the incredible greatness of God's power for us who believe him. This is the same mighty power that raised Christ from the dead and seated him in the place of honor at God's right hand in the heavenly realms.
(Ephesians 1:19–20)

Express your deepest gratitude to the Lord for the incredible greatness of His power that sustained you throughout this study of Mark. Thank Him that His resurrection power will continue to transform you into the likeness of His Son.



TURN TO THE SCRIPTURES

In Mark's gospel, we've followed in the footsteps of the remarkable Servant of God at work since He first appeared on the seashore of Galilee. In this final *Searching the Scriptures* Bible study, let's look back at how far we've come by reviewing the "[Mark: Overview Bible Chart](#)" found in the first study of this series. Or you can view it at insight.org.

After the opening section of the gospel, "Introduction and Preparation" (Mark 1:1–13), Mark divided his gospel into two main sections: "The Servant at Work" (1:14–8:30) and "The Servant Rejected . . . Then Exalted" (8:31–16:20). The emphasis in the first half is Jesus' *service to others*; the second half, His *sacrifice for others*.

What was the *core message* Jesus preached, according to [Mark 1:15](#)? What was His *core mission*, based on [10:45](#)? How did everything Jesus did lead to the fulfillment of His mission?

The climax of Mark's gospel details Jesus' final week, leading up to His crucifixion and resurrection. Let's join Mary Magdalene and the other women as they witnessed the Sunday-morning miracle that changed the world.

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Mark 16:1–8



Observation: The Resurrection of Jesus

Read [Mark 16:1–8](#) in an engaging way by stepping into the scene. Careful observation helps you discover things in the text that could easily be missed.¹

Let's Put Ourselves in Their Place—Mark 16:1–3

Note your observations about the time and the day when the women went to Jesus' tomb in Mark 16:1–3. Why did they bring spices? What question were they asking one another? What emotions do you think they must have felt?

Let's See What They Saw—Mark 16:4–5

Read Mark 16:4–5 as if you're reading it for the first time. What did the women notice? What's the first thing that would have come to your mind if you had been among these women? When they stooped down and entered the tomb, what did they see and how did they feel? What information does [Matthew 28:2](#) give about what they saw?

Let's Hear What They Heard—Mark 16:6–7

What did the angel say to them in Mark 16:6–7? Note every detail of the message.

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Mark 16:1–8

Let's Watch What They Did—Mark 16:8

What did the women do in Mark 16:8? How did Mark describe the women's emotions?



Interpretation: A Sunday-Morning Miracle!

The most reliable Greek manuscripts end the gospel at Mark 16:8. The footnotes to [Mark 16:9–20](#) in the NET Bible explain the reasons for omitting these verses. Because these verses are not original to Mark, let's focus our interpretation on how Mark concluded his gospel in Mark 16:1–8.

Feel free to consult Pastor Chuck's commentary [Insights on Mark](#) or [Constable's Notes](#) at netbible.org to learn more about first-century tombs, which were carved into the soft limestone of hillsides. What did you find out about tombs that helped you understand the women's question, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?" (Mark 16:3)? Why did the women bring spices to anoint His body?

Hours dragged by and they began to think, His body is decaying in that tomb. So, they gathered together some spices with plans to "anoint Him." It isn't like a ceremony. Anointing is massaging or rubbing. They're going to rub more of the spices on the casement around Him to keep the smell away.
—Pastor Chuck Swindoll

A stone doesn't roll uphill by itself—something supernatural caused it to roll! What is the significance of the angel's appearance in Mark 16:4–5, particularly for the early Christians?

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The word translated “shocked” (Mark 16:5) is a vivid Greek term, *ekthambeo*, which conveys intense emotions—fear, wonder, astonishment, and distress. They were in shock, which explains their inability to share the message at first. Eventually, they did tell the disciples, which we’ll examine in the Correlation section below. For now, look up [Mark 16:7–8](#) in the MSG and the J. B. Phillips translations. Do you find any insights from these paraphrases? Why do you think the angel emphasized telling Peter? Explain the significance of the angel’s message to first-century readers and to believers today.

He has been raised! He is not here. He is risen! —Pastor Chuck Swindoll



Correlation: His Resurrection, Our Resurrection!

Only Jesus could conquer death! He rose from the dead just as He said He would ([Mark 8:31–32](#); [9:30–32](#); [10:32–34](#)), and He promised all who believe in Him victory over death. Compare our passage with [Romans 8:11](#); [1 Corinthians 15:20–22](#); [Colossians 2:12](#); and [1 Thessalonians 4:14](#). How does Jesus’ resurrection guarantee our victory?

*Jesus was the first One ever to be resurrected, called in other places of the Scriptures “the first fruits of those who are asleep” [1 Corinthians 15:20 NASB].
—Pastor Chuck Swindoll*

Hope that’s broken into pieces, doubt that won’t go away, fear that paralyzes our feet and shuts our mouths—the women experienced this level of deep emotional distress. Despite seeing an angel, they could say nothing to anyone at first because they were so afraid. Later, however, joy overcame their fear, and they “rushed to give the disciples the angel’s message” (Matthew 28:8).

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Mark 16:1–8

Fear paralyzed the disciples as well, but in the weeks that followed, they went out bravely and proclaimed the news of the resurrected Christ. From [Matthew 28:16–20](#) and [Acts 4:23–31](#), what do you think transformed these timid sheep into roaring lions?



Application: Go and Tell!

Think about how the Holy Spirit enabled the disciples to be bold in sharing the good news of Jesus Christ. How can you tap into God's power to not let fear paralyze your feet and close your mouth so that you can go and tell?

You have nothing to fear. You're one of the few people on earth who knows where you're going when you die. What assurance is that! How much hope is that! You're one beggar telling another beggar where to find bread. And you've got the goods. Say it straight. Get it said. Keep it moving. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll

Though Peter denied Jesus three times, the angel specifically told the women to tell “his disciples, including Peter,” about Jesus’ resurrection and that they should meet Jesus in Galilee (Mark 16:7). What a gracious invitation! How has the Holy Spirit used this passage to encourage you to move past shame and guilt into the plan that God has for you?

Some of you look back to not that long ago. You've done some shameful things . . . only the Lord can deal with. But listen to His invitation. Your name is in it. You're to hear His message, “Come on back. Hide no longer. That's enough shame.” —Pastor Chuck Swindoll

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Yes! Jesus rose again just as He told them He would! How has Jesus' prediction about His own death, burial, and resurrection strengthened your faith in God's promises?

He keeps His word. Never doubt it. Don't ever let a casket remove from you the promises of God. His promises are good through life and beyond this life, through the jaws of death and into eternity. If He says He will do it, He will do it. He will keep His word. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll

What a magnificent journey through the gospel of Mark! We've followed in the footsteps of the remarkable Servant of God—Jesus Christ—from His calling of the disciples on the seashore of Galilee to an angel in the empty tomb telling Jesus' followers to go and tell.

Our journey together through Mark has come to an end, but you can continue to follow the remarkable Servant of God! You can let the truths you learned from His life and ministry be your guide. And whenever you sense your heart in need of the true and reliable compass, join us again on the seashore of Galilee, where our great Savior awaits.



A FINAL PRAYER

Heavenly Father, what an incredible journey following Your remarkable Servant—Jesus Christ! What great news that He came, died, was buried, and rose again! Grant me boldness to go and tell! No fear! No shame! May I put my feet in His footsteps every day. In His great name, I pray. Amen.

ENDNOTE

1. To learn more about Pastor Chuck Swindoll's *Searching the Scriptures* Bible-study method, go to the web page "[How Does Pastor Chuck Swindoll Study the Bible?](https://insight.org/how-does-pastor-chuck-swindoll-study-the-bible/)" at insight.org.

For the 2027 broadcasts, this *Searching the Scriptures* Bible study was developed by Mirlenda Noëlliste in collaboration with Bryce Klabunde, vice president of *Searching the Scriptures* Ministries, based upon the original outlines, charts, and transcripts of Charles R. Swindoll's messages. Copyright © 2011, 2026 by Charles R. Swindoll, Inc. All rights are reserved worldwide. Duplication of copyrighted material for commercial use is strictly prohibited.

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