

STUDY GUIDE:

Extraordinary Life Series in the Gospel of Mark Responses to the Resurrection | Mark 16

An Empty Tomb

This wasn't normal. The dead coming back to life was not ordinary... it created quite a stir, just as it would today. Did it *really* happen?

Jesus followers in the first century believed Jesus rose from the dead. Think about this... They believed in this historical event many years before there was a Bible. Many paid for their lives because of this belief.

They believed it beginning on the morning of the resurrection. And they did exactly what any of us would do if we say a man raised from the dead: they talked about it, and they wrote about it.

His Resurrection

Read Mark 16:1-8.

"We don't believe in the resurrection because the Bible says it happened. We believe because eyewitnesses and people who met eyewitnesses wrote about it." Do you agree with that statement? Why or why not?

Read 1 Corinthians 15:12-19.

Believing that Christ died for us is one thing, but according to Paul in these verses, how much of our faith is hinging upon the resurrection?

Five Reasons we know Jesus rose from the dead:

(see sermon for deeper explanation)

- Public execution assured his death.
- Hundreds of people claimed to see and experience him alive.
- His apostles were dramatically changed... and killed for their belief.
- It fits the experience of those who trust Him today.

Our Responses

Pastor Neal lead us to consider three different responses to the resurrection that we see from witnesses to the event in Scripture:

Where are you? Maybe you've experienced all three... or perhaps you have a loved one camping in one of these responses...

1. See and believe. John 20:8

- This is believing in and embracing Jesus' resurrection. Was this your first response to hearing about Jesus the first time? How long did this take for you? When was the first time you believed?

2. Resistance. John 20:26-27

- Thomas resisted...s many of us do with doubts and hang ups. Thomas drug his feet. But what was Jesus' response to his need for proof? Did he chastised or experience grace from Jesus?
- Read the next two verses... Jn. 20:28-29 What does this say to you?

“State your concerns honestly to Jesus. Do what millions of people have done, ask God if this is real. God, if Jesus is your son and the resurrection did happen, please show me. I am willing to believe if you will show me, help my unbelief.” **If God loves you enough to send his own son to die for you, and powerful enough to raise him from the dead, he can show it to you in a way that leads you to believe.**

3. Hiding. John 21:3

- This moment looks like fishing, but it's actually hiding and avoiding. He went fishing because he had just denied affiliation with Jesus and he couldn't admit his failure or ask risen Jesus for forgiveness. His faults seemed bigger than God's love and Jesus' forgiveness — Shame, guilt, embarrassment of the past can wrongly whisper that God won't accept you and love you... So, you hide. Have you ever felt that way?
- Anyone remember Magnificent Nybo's thumb and screen trick here? Perspective: Small hang-ups can block out big truths if we let them.

If your response to the resurrection is hiding, I invite you to come out of hiding and experience the all-encompassing unconditional love and forgiveness of Jesus, our risen Lord. *“Taste and see that the LORD is good; blessed is the one who takes refuge in him.” Psalm 34:8*

Question: Can a mature follower of Jesus fluctuate? Is that immaturity or reality? Are their seasons of faith where you find yourself believing, resisting, or doubting? How have you had this experience with faith?

Three Responses - Three Different Journeys - One Landing Point.

It turns out that all three disciples ended up responding to the resurrection by believing. The first just plain saw and believed. The second resisted, then recognized Jesus as his Lord and God. The third hid, then dove in.

Jesus wants to surprise us with life.

We are not just saved *from* something. We are saved *for* something.

We are saved to be a part of God's work in this world —

to be hope, faith and love... to be light in the dark!

You'll hear more of this next week in our Living the Life series!

May Jesus surprise you with life this week.