

Alive
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Mark 16:1-14

People tend to fantasize about being “set for life.” *“When I win the lottery, I’ll be set for life!”* *“When we sell our business, we’ll be set for life!”* *“When we receive our inheritance, we’ll be set for life!”* [Old joke: *“Grandpa, Make a noise like a frog.”*] How would you define being “set for life?”

Because of Christ's resurrection His followers are not just set for life, we are set for eternity. In last week's study of Mark 15 I talked about my prayer list of things for which I'm thankful. I said, because of Jesus' atoning death on the cross, and because I've trusted Him as Savior and Lord, I can experience eternal life. And that is at the TOP of my “thanksgiving list” every day!

The next thing on my thanksgiving list is His resurrection. God's plan of salvation to reconcile people with Him didn't end with Jesus' sacrifice on the cross. Jesus didn't pay our ransom for sin and tell us: *“Your sins are forgiven, you're free to go. Good luck, hope it works out!”* Go where? Do what? For how long? Jesus not only paid our ransom; He secured our resurrection. Because He rose from the dead, we will too. Because He lives forever, so will we. What does that mean for Christ's followers?

The point: Because of Jesus' resurrection, one day, anything pleasant will become perfect and permanent; anything difficult will disappear; and glorious things we've never enjoyed or imagined will be our new resurrection reality. Because of Christ's resurrection His followers are not just set for life, we are set for eternity.

- How can I know Christ is risen?
- What does His resurrection mean for me?
- How should I live today because He lives?

We'll look at all three of those questions. Let's begin by reading Mark's account of that first resurrection day and the days after.

(ESV) — **1** When the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him. **2** And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. **3** 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 back—it was very large. **5** And entering the tomb, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, dressed in a white robe, and they were alarmed. **6** 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. **7** But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going before you to Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you.” **8** And they went out and fled from the tomb, for trembling and astonishment had seized them, and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid. **9** Now when he rose early on the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, from whom he had cast out seven demons. **10** She

went and told those who had been with him, as they mourned and wept. **11** But when they heard that he was alive and had been seen by her, they would not believe it. **12** After these things he appeared in another form to two of them, as they were walking into the country. **13** And they went back and told the rest, but they did not believe them. **14** Afterward he appeared to the eleven themselves as they were reclining at table, and he rebuked them for their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they had not believed those who saw him after he had risen.

- Let's begin with the most challenging question: How can I know Christ is risen?
- **Proof #1: The dramatic change in the disciples.** Who would die for a lie?
- One commentator states, *"They went from a group of men frightened and in hiding to strong, courageous witnesses sharing the gospel throughout the world. What else could explain this dramatic change other than the risen Christ appearing to them?"*
- **Acts 4:33 (ESV)** *And with great power the apostles were giving their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all.*
- **Proof #2: The dramatic change in the Apostle Paul (Acts 9:1-6).** How did he go from persecutor of the church to Apostle, church planter, and author of most of the New Testament if he didn't really hear Christ's voice on that road?
- **Proof #3: The empty tomb.** Why couldn't his enemies find the body? How could those poor disciples have paid off the guards and gotten away with the hoax?
- Josh McDowell states, *"...don't miss this fact: at no time do we have record of any disciple, when arrested and disciplined by the Jewish authorities, being charged with grave robbery. The silence of the Jewish authorities is as significant as the testimony of the early Christians that Jesus lived."*ⁱⁱ
- **Proof #4: Christ's appearances to hundreds of people** (note below).ⁱⁱⁱ
- If non-believers wanted to debunk Jesus' multiple appearances, don't you think we would have some historical evidence of some people recanting their story?
- If Jesus' appearances were a hoax, do you think we'd be studying Mark today?
- **Proof #5: "You ask me how I know He lives? He lives within my heart!"**^{iv}
- The two men who walked with the risen Savior on the road to Emmaus in Luke 24 said to each other: *"Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road...?"* They returned to Jerusalem, found the eleven and testified, *"The Lord has risen indeed."*^v
- If I have faith to believe in the risen Savior, His Spirit will confirm it in my Spirit.
- R.C. Sproul said, *"A Christian is not a skeptic. A Christian is a person with a burning heart, a heart set aflame with certainty of the resurrection."*^{vi}
- What does the resurrection mean for you and me in our eternal future?
- Because of resurrection anything pleasant will become perfect and permanent.
- I'm not saying if you love fishing, you'll spend eternity fishing! It will be better!
- It also won't be an eternal buffet! **Rom 14:17 (ESV)** —"For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness and peace and joy..."
- Okay, slightly out of context. ☺ There WILL be a Marriage Supper! (Rev. 19)
- Seriously, how do we know the pleasant will become perfect and permanent?
- Jesus said, *"...whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life."*

- Jesus told His disciples, “...you have sorrow now, but I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you.” (John 16:22)
- Jesus promised His followers eternal life with Him.
- What about our loved ones in eternity? We know the relationship will be different (Matt. 22:30) but will we know them? **1 John 3:2 (ESV)** — **2** Beloved, we are God’s children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is.
- Missionary Amy Carmichael spoke to our question and that verse: “*Shall we know one another in Heaven? Shall we love and remember?...Would you be yourself if you did not love and remember?...We are told that we shall be like our Lord Jesus. Surely this does not mean in holiness only, but in everything; and does not He know and love and remember? He would not be Himself if He did not, and we should not be ourselves if we did not.*”
- Here is what really convinces me what is pleasant will be perfect and permanent.
- David wrote in **Psalm 16:9–11 (ESV)** — **9** Therefore my heart is glad, and my whole being rejoices; my flesh also dwells secure. **10** For you will not abandon my soul to Sheol, or let your holy one see corruption. **11** You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.
- Randy Alcorn writes, “*For the Christians, all those partial, broken and fleeting perfections which [they] glimpse in the world around [them], which wither in [their] grasp and are snatched away even while they wither, are found again, perfect, complete and lasting in the absolute beauty of God.*”^{vii}
- Anything pleasant in this life is fleeting; good things come to an end. Because of the resurrection one day anything pleasant will become perfect and permanent.
- Also, because of the resurrection anything difficult will disappear.
- No death, or pain. **Revelation 21:4 (ESV)** —**4** He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.”
- There will be no sin in Heaven. **Revelation 21:27 (ESV)** — **27** But nothing unclean will ever enter it, nor anyone who does what is detestable or false, but only those who are written in the Lamb’s book of life.
- Because of the resurrection, anything difficult will disappear.
- It gets even BETTER than that. Because of the resurrection, glorious things we've never enjoyed or imagined will be our new resurrection reality.
- **1 Corinthians 2:9 (ESV)** — **9** “...no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him...”
- Scholars argue that verse applies to the Christian life today and I agree. Here’s good news: If it applies now, we KNOW it will apply in eternity!
- Because of the resurrection, glorious things we've never enjoyed or imagined will be our new resurrection reality. IT will be better than anything our minds can conceive.
- That’s what the resurrection will mean one day for followers of Christ. How should it impact me NOW? How should I live TODAY because He lives?

- **Ephesians 1:18–20 (ESV) —18** having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints...
- I should live with HOPE because of the “glorious inheritance” He has for me!
- The next verse, verse 19 says: **19** and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might **20** that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places,
- I should live with CONFIDENCE because through His Spirit I can access the same power that raised Jesus from the dead.
- Beyond living with HOPE and CONFIDENCE, the reality of the resurrection should motivate us to share the GOOD NEWS.
- Jesus said in **John 11:25 (ESV) — 25** ...“I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live,
- If you knew the cure for cancer, would you keep it to yourself? Sin is the terminal spiritual illness that is destroying people’s souls for eternity. The good news of the gospel is that thanks to Jesus’ resurrection, anyone can live forever with God by trusting Christ as Savior and Lord.
- The resurrection is tremendous motivation to share that GOOD NEWS!

So, What’s the Takeaway?

- 1 Corinthians 15 is all about the resurrection. Listen to these verses:
1 Corinthians 15:51 (NLT) — 51 But let me reveal to you a wonderful secret. We will not all die, but we will all be transformed! **53** For our dying bodies must be transformed into bodies that will never die; our mortal bodies must be transformed into immortal bodies. **57** But thank God! He gives us victory over sin and death through our Lord Jesus Christ. **58** So, my dear brothers and sisters, be strong and immovable. Always work enthusiastically for the Lord, for you know that nothing you do for the Lord is ever useless.
- Because of Christ's resurrection, one day:
 - Anything pleasant will become perfect and permanent.
 - Anything difficult will disappear.
 - And, glorious things we've never enjoyed or imagined will be our new resurrection reality.
- Because of Christ's resurrection His followers are not just set for life, we are set for eternity.
- THAT should cause us to be THANKFUL every day.
- It should help us to live in the POWER of His Holy Spirit.
- It should motivate us to share that GOOD NEWS with others.
- Finally, the reality of the resurrection should encourage us to be “strong and immovable” as we “work enthusiastically for the Lord!

ⁱ <https://www.gotquestions.org/was-Jesus-resurrected.html>

ⁱⁱ https://www.josh.org/jesus-resurrection-fact/?utm_source=google&utm_medium=cpc&utm_campaign=MW_JMM_445C-46255_google-grant-fy23_20220901_JC9GGA&utm_content=nil_nil_nil_nil&mot=JC9GGA&mwm_id=496610987446&mwsc=JMM-445C-JC9GGA&mot=J79GNF&gad_source=1&qclid=CjwKCAiA04arBhAkEiwAuNOsItR-y9v4PwNglzB6hYHbuc5y5RJiyvb4AgUWm_eYaCtt-bT8bY4bhBoC950QAvD_BwE

ⁱⁱⁱ **Numerous Appearances by the Resurrected Jesus**

> The Bible gives us 12 distinct instances in which Jesus appeared to individuals or groups of people after He rose:

> Mary Magdalene: see John 20:11-18 — saw, heard, touched Jesus

> Women leaving the tomb: see Matthew 28:8-10 — saw, heard, touched Jesus

> Emmaus disciples: see [Luke 24:13-19](#) — talked with Jesus

> Simon Peter: see Luke 24:34 and 1 Corinthians 15:5 — saw, heard Jesus

> Disciples without Thomas: see [Luke 24:36-43](#) — saw, heard, touched, Jesus ate with them

> Disciples with Thomas: see John 20:24-29 — saw, heard, touched, saw wounds of Jesus

> Disciples at the Sea of Galilee: see [John 21](#) — saw, touched, Jesus cooks for them

> Disciples on a mountain in Galilee: see Matthew 28:16-17 — saw, heard Jesus

> Disciples: Luke 24:50-52 — saw, heard Jesus

> 500 believers: 1 Corinthians 15:6 — saw, heard Jesus

> (Jesus' half-brother): 1 Corinthians 15:7 — saw, heard Jesus

> Paul: Acts 9:3-6 — saw, heard Jesus

^{iv} <https://www.hymnal.net/en/hymn/h/503>

^v [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Lk 24:32–34). (2016). Crossway Bibles.

^{vi} <https://www.ligonier.org/learn/articles/hearts-set-aflame-certainty-resurrection>

^{vii} <https://www.goodreads.com/work/quotes/86257-heaven>