

Easter Sunday | Mark 16:1-8

Introduction	Notes
There are three special days that give Christianity center stage around the world: Christmas Day points to a cradle, Good Friday points to a cross, and Easter points to a cave. Without Easter, the other two days would be meaningless. Our world is filled with thousands of religions, but only four are built on personalities rather than philosophies. Judaism's Abraham, Buddhism's Buddha, and Islam's Mohammed all died and remain dead. But Jesus Christ did something no other religious leader has done; He rose from the dead. Christianity traces its beginning to one single event—the resurrection. Mark 16:1–8 tells us about that first Easter morning, when grieving women discovered the news that would change human history: "He has risen! He is not here." That empty tomb gives us hope for our lives now and for eternity.	Notes
Key Points	
Acknowledge the Doubt of the Resurrection	
When Jesus died on Friday, the hopes and dreams of His followers died with Him. Despite His repeated promises that He would rise again, no one anticipated the resurrection. The women went to the tomb Sunday morning not to witness a miracle, but to anoint a corpse—worried about who would roll away the stone. Their doubt makes sense within a first-century context. Neither Jews, Greeks, nor Romans believed an individual bodily resurrection was possible. Even after Jesus prophesied His resurrection multiple times, not a single disciple waited at the tomb. How many apostles heard Jesus say He would rise	
again? All of them. How many waited at the tomb? Zero. If you doubt the resurrection today, you're in good company—Jesus' closest followers doubted it too.	
Even our doubts can be transformed into faith when we	

encounter the risen Christ.

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2. Address the Display of the Resurrection

Some of the women who followed Jesus remained devoted despite their doubts. At the tomb, they discovered the impossible—the stone rolled away and an angel inside proclaiming: "He has risen! He is not here" (Mark 16:6, NIV).

No one—not Romans, Jewish leaders, or historians ever disputed that Jesus' tomb was empty that morning. The question that echoes through history is: What happened to the body? After two thousand years, only one explanation makes sense: Jesus rose from the dead, just as He said He would. The empty tomb alone doesn't prove the resurrection, but a resurrection demands an empty tomb. Whatever you believe about Jesus, you must confront the reality of that empty cave.

The undisputed empty tomb forces every person to decide what they believe happened to Jesus.

3. Accept the Demand of the Resurrection

Believing in the resurrection comes with responsibility. The angel's first command was, "Go, tell his disciples and Peter" (Mark 16:7, NIV). This wasn't a suggestion; it was a command. If you truly believe Jesus conquered death, you cannot remain silent. Jesus was "going ahead" of them to Galilee—a verb describing a shepherd leading sheep or a general leading troops—showing He would continue to lead them forever.

Most unchurched Americans have Christian friends who've never shared why they follow Jesus. Yet nearly half would discuss faith if approached, especially when they're seeing Christians authentically living their beliefs. The first command after Jesus' resurrection was "Go, tell." If you believe "He is risen," who is your "one"—that person who needs to hear about Jesus?

True belief in the resurrection will always lead to telling others about Jesus.

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4. Admit the Decision About the Resurrection

Mark's Gospel ends with the women fleeing in fear, initially silent. "Trembling and bewildered, the women went out and fled from the tomb. They said nothing to anyone, because they were afraid" (Mark 16:8, NIV). But from other Gospels, we know these women eventually did tell others. They made the most important decision of their lives—to believe in Jesus' resurrection.

Now we face the same decision: Will you believe it? Will you accept it? Will you share it?

In December 1941, Winston Churchill heard about the attack on Pearl Harbor bringing America into World War II. That night, he wrote that despite Britain's hardships, they had "won the war" because America's involvement meant Britain would survive. Churchill "slept the sleep of the saved and thankful." No matter what storms you face today, you, too, can "sleep the sleep of the saved" because of the empty tomb. He is risen!

When we decide to believe in the resurrection, we can face any storm with the peace of being eternally saved.

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Reflection Questions:

1.	What doubts or questions do you have about the resurrection? How does knowing that Jesus' own disciples doubted help you process your questions?						
2.	The empty tomb is an undisputed historical fact. What implications does this have for your faith and how you view Jesus?						
3.	If you truly believe Jesus rose from the dead, who is your "one" person who needs to hear this life-changing news from you?						
4.	How has the reality of the resurrection brought hope to difficult circumstances in your life?						