

# The World's Most Amazing Announcement!

The news of the resurrection of Jesus was the most amazing announcement ever made. Let's read:

## Mark 16:1-20

When the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him. <sup>2</sup>And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. <sup>3</sup>And they were saying to one another, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance of the tomb?" <sup>4</sup>And looking up, they saw that the stone had been rolled back—it was very large. <sup>5</sup>And entering the tomb, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, dressed in a white robe, and they were alarmed. <sup>6</sup>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. <sup>7</sup>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." <sup>8</sup>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.

[SOME OF THE EARLIEST MANUSCRIPTS DO NOT INCLUDE 16:9–20.]

<sup>9</sup>[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. <sup>10</sup>She went and told those who had been with him, as they mourned and wept. <sup>11</sup>But when they heard that he was alive and had been seen by her, they would not believe it.

<sup>12</sup>After these things he appeared in another form to two of them, as they were walking into the country. <sup>13</sup>And they went back and told the rest, but they did not believe them.

<sup>14</sup>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. <sup>15</sup>And he said to them, "Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation. <sup>16</sup>Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned. <sup>17</sup>And these signs will accompany those who believe: in my name they will cast out demons; they will speak in new tongues; <sup>18</sup>they will pick up serpents with their hands; and if they drink any deadly poison, it will not hurt them; they will lay their hands on the sick, and they will recover."

<sup>19</sup>So then the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken to them, was taken up into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God. <sup>20</sup>And they went out and preached everywhere, while the Lord worked with them and confirmed the message by accompanying signs.]

The angel's announcement on Easter morning is the most amazing ever:

### 1. **Because of the announcement's first witnesses (vv. 1-3)**

It does not seem unusual to us that the first witnesses of the resurrection news were three women, but in the first century it was most remarkable. Women were not considered credible witnesses; their testimony was not even considered in a court of law. God reverses human thinking—He honors them and elevates their place in His Church. Furthermore, these women had been told at least three times by Jesus that He would be raised on the third day (cf. Mark 8:31; 9:31; 10:34), and they obviously did not understand or believe Him. And most astonishingly, the first witness was a former demoniac! (See Luke 8:2).

### 2. **Because of the announcement's content (vv. 4-6)**

The angel said to the women who were looking for the dead body of Jesus, "He is risen. He is not here." Jesus of Nazareth, who was born in obscurity, who gave His life to make the poor rich, the blind see, and the lame walk, who had been mercilessly tortured and abused on Calvary's cross, is now not dead, but ALIVE! This changes everything. It changes our purpose for living, it changes marriages and families, it changes all our friendships, it changes our financial stewardship, it changes our definition of success, it changes the way we spend our time. It changes everything.

**3. Because of the announcement's intended audience (v.7)**

The angel was clear to say that the women were to go tell the disciples—those who had fallen asleep during Jesus's time of need in Gethsemane, those who had fled at His arrest, those who were nowhere to be found during His crucifixion. It is even more amazing that the angel specifically mentions Peter—the one who had denied Him three times in a colossal failure of discipleship. This message rings out to the cowards, the inconsistent followers, as well as to the despisers of Jesus Christ. Amazing love, indeed!

**4. Because of the announcement's effect (v.8)**

Mark's gospel ends strangely: "for they were afraid." No other gospel ends like this. This is why we have an ending that was attached by later scribes who copied the manuscript. They just assumed that Mark's original ending had been lost or that Mark had been interrupted and unable to complete his gospel. But many believe this was exactly Mark's intent: to show that the gospel proclamation is successful not because of our great courage, but because of God's gracious power. This is why billions now profess the Resurrected Jesus as Lord. The question, however remains: Will you and I be mute, gripped by fear, or will we make His resurrection known to the nations?

**Discussion Questions**

1. How does the experience of the women on their way to the tomb, searching to honor a dead Messiah, parallel much of this world's religious efforts?
2. Why do you believe or not believe in the bodily resurrection of Jesus? Why did these women ultimately believe?
3. What difference does the resurrection of Jesus make to us? What difference does it make in a person's life if he or she believes in the resurrection of Jesus?
4. What makes us want to tell others about the resurrection? What inhibits us?
5. How does the angel's specific inclusion of Peter encourage you?