

BEHOLD THE PLACE WHERE THEY LAID HIM

Text: Mark 16:1-8

1. *Inaccurate Expectation*

A. What they expected

- To find the body of Jesus so they could anoint it with sweet spices (Mk 16:1)
- To find a sealed tomb with an unmovable stone in front of it (Mk 16:3)

B. What they found

- The stone rolled away (Mk 16:4)
- An unguarded tomb. We don't see it here, but it Mt 28:4—"For fear of him [the angel] the keepers did shake, and became as dead men."
- A young man—an angel according to Mt—clothed in white that frightened them (Mk 16:5)
- An empty tomb

C. Why the women were wrong

- Not told here, but we do have the answer in Luke 24:5-8 ⁸ And they ***remembered his words,***
- The angels reminded them to remember Jesus' words; they then remembered His Words
- Was it a matter of simply having forgotten Jesus' words—or was there more to it than that? Jesus told them on numerous occasions that He would rise from the dead on the third day so it wasn't that they forgot; rather, it was because they had a hard time believing—just like the disciples
- Notice verse 9
- v 10; Mary M "went and told them that had been with them as they mourned and wept."
- v 11 The disciples "believed not"

D. What it cost them

- Sweet, anointing spices (Mk 16:1)
- Possibly embarrassment for not believing what Jesus had said

Let's pause here for a moment and consider this question—what would we have done? Would we have had doubts about what Jesus said and gone to the tomb to anoint His body? The disciples were not the first ones to go to the tomb—and it wasn't because they were so ***convinced*** of Jesus' resurrection that they considered it a waste of time. No; they were discouraged because their Savior was dead and their hope had died with Him. We just noted in v 10 that they "mourned and wept." They were slow to believe what Jesus had told them about His upcoming crucifixion and His resurrection.

More importantly than what you would have expected then, what are you expecting ***now***? Someday your soul will leave your body and will be transported to a new place. What are you expecting to find? The women expected to find one thing—and instead found something else. Their expectation was inaccurate—they had it wrong! Why were they wrong? Because they ***didn't believe*** the words of Jesus!

What did it cost them? Some spices and some embarrassment.

What is your expectation when you wake up on the other side? Is it accurate? Do you have it right? Will you wake up in heaven—or find yourself in Hell?

Who wakes up in Heaven? Those that hear Jesus' words and believe them. What did Jesus say about heaven?

- He said "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3).
- He said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by Me" (John 14:6)
- And He said, "And ye will not come to me that ye might have life" (John 5:40).

What happens if you have it wrong? It will not be merely money wasted on spices or some temporary embarrassment. It will be **everlasting suffering** and everlasting shame. You and I can get a lot of things wrong in this life and “survive,” so to speak. We cannot survive in the next life, however, if we get this wrong!

Not only is there an inaccurate expectation; there is also an

2. Invited Examination—“Behold the place where they laid Him” (Mk 16:6)

A. The divine invitation—v 5 “And entering into the sepulchre, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment; and they were affrighted.”

The “man,” of course, is an angel. In Mt 28 he is called an angel—and only one is mentioned; in Luke 24 it refers to “two men in shining garments,” and in John 20, Mary saw two angels. How many angels were there? Two. Were they there the whole time? Probably not.

The number is not as important as what **was said**. Notice verse 6 “And he saith unto them, Be not affrighted: Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: He is risen; He is not here: Behold the place where they laid him.”

God wanted the women to know and the disciples to know and the whole world to know that Jesus was not there—He had risen from the dead—and that they were invited to “Behold the place where they laid Him.”

Although we obviously cannot go back in time to that resurrection morning and physically “Behold the place where they laid Him,” God’s invitation has not been retracted. Just as we can visit **the cross** in our mind’s eye through God’s Word, we can also go and “Behold the place where they laid Him.”

They had a divine invitation; let’s consider now

B. The detailed examination

What did the women...and Peter and John and others...discover when they examined the place where they laid Him? Before we look inside the tomb, let’s take a step back and consider what they already knew about the tomb and what they may have observed from outside the place where they laid Him. What did they know already? And what did they observe?

i. It was a borrowed tomb.

In Mk 14:43 we see that Joseph “craved” the body of Jesus. In Mt 27:60, we see that Joseph took the body “and laid it in his **own** new tomb.”

Why a borrowed tomb? A practical reason is “why not”—it was only going to be used for a short time anyway! Spurgeon suggests the significance might be in this: “He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed” (Is 53:5). So, what’s the point?

The point is this—the sins that Jesus died for were “borrowed”—they were not His own—and the borrowed tomb may have served as a reminder of that wonderful truth.

ii. It was a new tomb; a never-before-used tomb.

Not only was it a borrowed tomb; Matthew 27:60 plainly states that Joseph laid the body of Jesus “in his own **new** tomb.” It was a new, never-before-used tomb. Why is that important? Imagine if the tomb already had bodies in it. The stone is rolled away; the angel bids come and “Behold the place where they laid Him.” How would they truly know if the missing body was the one that belonged to Jesus? “There were 5 bodies in here; now there are only 4. But how can we know **for sure** Jesus’ body is the one that is missing?” No one could claim it was someone else’s body that arose because only one body had ever been placed there!

iii. It was a rich man's tomb.

Last week we noticed in Isaiah 53 that the Suffering Savior would make his grave “with the rich in His death.” Mt 27:57 tells us Joseph was a rich man. Why was Jesus buried in a rich man's tomb? Besides the fact that it **had** to be a rich man's tomb in order to fulfill the prophecy of Isaiah 53:9, Spurgeon suggests this reason—“Christ was unhonored until He finished His sufferings.”

Think about that for a moment. Jesus had left the splendor of heaven and came to earth to die for your sins and mine. He was born of poor parents, worked as a carpenter, and had no home of His own. Not only did Jesus live a poor, unglamorous life—He died a **criminal's** death.

--A crown of thorns was placed on His head, then beaten into place with a rod

--His beard was plucked from His face

--His face was spit in and beaten with fists

--His back was whipped to a bloody pulp

--Nails were driven into His hands and feet

--And He hung on the cross for 6 agonizing hours, every breath a struggle

--The greatest weight was not that of His body as He painfully hoisted Himself to exhale—the greatest pain was in being forsaken by the Father as He endured God's wrath to pay for your sins and mine!

And all the while there were mockers in the crowd that yelled, “Ask God to deliver you—if He will have you!” No wonder Isaiah said “He is **despised** and rejected of men; a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief” (Is 53:3)! Why a rich man's tomb? To demonstrate to the world that God was **satisfied** with Jesus' work and it was now time to honor Him for who He was—the name that is above every name and the One to whom every knee will bow some day!

iv. It was an empty tomb. The body of Jesus was not there—only the grave clothes He had been wrapped in. The account in Mark does not refer to the grave clothes, but John 20 does.

--John and Peter run to the sepulchre; John, being younger, gets there first (John 20:4)

--John stoops down and sees the linen clothes (John 20:5)

--Peter went in and saw the linen clothes lie (John 20:6)

--v 7 “And the napkin, that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself.” What exactly did Peter see?

--He saw the linen clothes—what Jesus' body had been wrapped in. If the body had been stolen, would those who have stolen it taken the time to unwrap the body? Probably not; they would have done things quickly in order to not be caught by the soldiers who had fainted in front of the sepulchre.

--The language used indicates the linen clothes were wrapped neatly—not hastily unwrapped and thrown into a big heap

--The napkin—the part that wrapped around His head—was wrapped together in a place by itself. Some suggest the possibility that the language used here implies that the body came **right up out** of the linen clothes and that the napkin “not lying with the linen clothes” means that the “space for the face” was what separated the linen clothes from the napkin.

--I would not be dogmatic and say with 100% certainty that that is what is meant here, but we can say this—upon seeing this, John **believed** (John 20:8). It “clicked,” so to speak, and at that point He believed that Jesus had indeed risen as He said!

Back to Mark 16. So far we've seen an inaccurate expectation and an invited examination. Lastly, let's notice

3. Instructional Revelation

A. Verse 6—He was crucified. Why was He crucified?

Is 53:5-6 “But He was wounded for our transgressions...

II Cor 5:21 “For He hath made Him to be sin for us”

Jesus was crucified for our sins

B. Verse 6—He is risen. The death and resurrection of Jesus Christ are facts that are not just recorded in the Bible—they are events documented in Jewish and Roman history. Two Roman politicians—both of whom were **against** those who followed Christ—acknowledge that Jesus was executed by Pontius Pilate. When Paul wrote the book of I Corinthians in AD 56, he stated this: “After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep.” Let that sink in: 500 people saw the resurrected Christ at one time—and 25 years later over half of them—“the greater part”—were still alive!

Why did Christ rise from the dead?

--Because He said He would and because He conquered death

Rom 4:25 “Who was delivered for our offences”—[sins]—“and raised again for our justification.”

He died for the **payment** of our sin; He rose again to prove **God’s acceptance** of Christ’s payment.

“It is finished!” was Christ’s victory cry over sin and death; the resurrection was God the Father’s AMEN!

C. First part of verse 7: “But go your way, tell his disciples and Peter...” He is a forgiving Savior.

It seems the angel was making it a point that the women tell **Peter**—the one who had denied Jesus and wept bitterly upon the realization that he had done so—that Jesus would appear to him too! Peter was forgiven by Christ—not rejected because of his lapse of faith—and would be given another chance! What a blessing that our God gives second and third and fourth and 490 chances!

D. Mid of v 7: “He goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see Him...” He is a living Savior.

The uniqueness—and superiority—of Christianity is that our “founder” is still alive!

The Buddhists and Confucists and Muslims cannot make that claim. Only the followers of Christ serve a **living Savior**; only the followers of Christ can be led by the one they serve because He is still alive!

--“He goeth before you.”

Do you follow Him? Do you listen to Him? Do you love Him? Do you serve Him?

E. Last part of v 7 “there ye shall see Him, “as He said unto you.” Jesus told the truth.

Everything that Jesus said came to pass—or will come to pass.

--Jesus said He would be shamefully treated and die but rise again on the 3rd day—and He did.

--Jesus here said He would go before them into Galilee and that they would see Him—and they did.

--Jesus said when I leave you I will send another comforter—the Holy Spirit—who will live in you.

--Jesus said the Holy Spirit would also remind the disciples of what He had said and would also teach them of things to come. Did those words of Jesus happen? Yes—and we hold the evidence of that in our hands!

--And Jesus told the disciples in John 14 that He was going to prepare a place for them. Jesus promised He is coming again—and He will—just as He promised.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS:

1. What are you expecting to have happen when you get to the other side? Your body will lie lifeless in a coffin someday, but your soul will be very much alive. Where will it be? How do you know? **Will you be wrong** because you trusted in what you thought was right? Don’t get this wrong—look to the words of Jesus and trust Him as your Savior.

2. Christian, your Savior **is alive**—do you live your life like you believe that? Do you love Him and strive to please Him—or do you live as though He is still dead? He will return some day—and **reward you** for what you have done. Will you hear “well done, thou good and faithful servant”—or will you be ashamed of how little you have done for the one who died for you—the one who purchased your salvation with His own precious blood?