

Mark 16:1-8

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 05 April 2015

Preacher: Nathan Raynor

[0 : 00] Please take out your copy of God's Word. Turn to the Gospel according to Mark chapter 16.!

We have been for quite some time in our verse-by-verse exposition of Mark's Gospel account in the Passion Week, this final week of Jesus' life.

In fact, since the beginning of chapter 11, Mark is accounting this, which Clay started out for us on September 7th of last year.

We've been working our way through it. We've seen the triumphal entry of Christ into Jerusalem on Monday. Yes, you heard me correctly. Palm Monday. The cleansing of the temple on Tuesday. The teaching and confrontations with Jesus on Wednesday. The prophecy and Last Supper on Thursday. And then the betrayal, arrest, the six various trials, the suffering, the crucifixion, and burial on Friday.

[1 : 30] And we haven't talked about it at all because it wasn't in our text, but there is also the silence of Saturday. There is a rather famous motto of the Protestant Reformation, which is in Latin, of course, which is *post tenebrous lux*, which means after darkness, light.

And they meant it in various ways. They were coming out of what would have been called the Dark Ages, separating from, reforming Catholicism.

But they also meant it for what Christ has done in the world. The darkness of sin being pierced by His sacrifice on the cross. And certainly today, we have much to celebrate in that.

After the darkness of Christ's suffering, crucifixion, and burial, we have the light of the resurrection. And today we get to look at that.

What a glorious thing to do in chapter 16, verses 1-8. This is likely the end of Mark's narrative.

[2 : 45] Some of your translations may not include a verse 9-20, although most do, but we'll put it in brackets and give some explanation to the fact that very few of the early manuscripts contain verses 9-20.

Most scholars agree that verses 9-20 were not in the original text. And there's much contention about whether or not our ending, verse 8, is in fact Mark's intended ending or not.

We have to use verses 9-20 with a great deal of caution. Certainly, denominational practice should not be formed on those verses. And I will say to you today, I'm thankful that this is my closing of Mark's gospel account.

But we are going to look at verses 9-20, and Clay is going to pick up that gauntlet and tackle that for us next week. Likely mostly to talk about bibliography and how it is we arrive at what is the scripture and what isn't the scripture.

So, for our kind of study proper, this will be the closing of Mark's gospel account. For fun, I looked back. We began our sermon series through Mark's gospel account on September 22nd of 2013.

[4 : 06] That's 81 Sundays ago. I can't say with certainty that we've done anywhere near that many sermons. I know we've taken a couple of breaks, at least four for sure, this past February.

But we've been at this for quite some time. And what a wonderful, glorious way to end it now with the resurrection. I'm so very thankful for this text of Scripture, Mark's gospel account.

And so very thankful for the opportunity to preach it to you over this past year and a half. Because in so many ways, my heart has been rent in two as we've studied Mark together.

It has been pierced and divided. It has been impressed upon me the high cost of discipleship and the subsequent glories thereof. The beautiful nature of following Christ, that it's going to mean suffering in this world, but glory beyond.

Mark's purpose for writing of this narrative has been so carefully applied to my being by the transforming work of the Spirit of God. And I hope that this has been true for you as well.

[5 : 14] If you're a guest with us, I know you haven't heard all of this. But for those of you who have been here regularly, I really hope that Mark's gospel account has worked in you in the way that it's worked in me.

And if you are a guest with us this morning, I hope this closing will do the same. So let's read together. Mark 16, verses 1-8. When the Sabbath was passed, Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James and Siloam brought spices, so they might go and anoint Him.

And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. And they were saying to one another, Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance of the tomb? And looking up, they saw that the stone had been rolled back. It was very large. And entering the tomb, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, dressed in a white robe, and they were alarmed.

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?

[6 : 21] 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. 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. This is God's Word to us. It was written for His glory and our good.

We would all do well to listen to it in order to believe its promises and obey its commands. Now, this morning, I do not wish to play the apologist compounding for you the facts concerning the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Although there are many, and I would encourage you, if you are a skeptic to any degree, to take a good look at them. This morning, by faith, I and I hope you accept the reality of such an event, this resurrection of Jesus Christ, our Lord.

So much hangs on the historic veracity as we will soon see. But for the skeptic this morning, let me read just a short quote from Charles Spurgeon, the Prince of Preachers, who said, the resurrection is a fact better attested than any event recorded in any history, whether ancient or modern.

[7 : 43] And I hope for the skeptic in you that may allow your mind to rest enough, give some assumption to the reality of this event to see what it is that has been made possible by it.

Let's notice together a few things before we get into the doctrine of the resurrection. Let's notice a few things about Mark's telling of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. If you look at the synoptics as well as John, there's a lot of variance in the tellings.

And so, let's look at Mark's account, and I'll pull together some of the others for you as well. And we notice first, the women that go when the Sabbath was passed.

To begin with, we need to be clearly thinking about the amount of days that have passed since Jesus was crucified. And for some, this becomes problematic because He was crucified on Friday, and He was resurrected on Sunday, which from our estimation is only two days.

But He has predicted over and over again that after three days, He would rise. So just as a note to you, you must know that the Jews would have counted as a part of a day, a full day.

[8 : 53] So Friday would have been day number one when He was laid in the tomb. Saturday day number two. The end of Saturday would have been sundown on Saturday. Sunday begins, and it's on this day that He's resurrected.

And so three days, and He is risen. So it's when the Sabbath has passed. Saturday, the day of rest. It would seem that the women were unable to properly adorn His body, able to take the spices that would have been given.

Not that He would have been embalmed the way the pharaohs of old would have been embalmed in Egypt, but it was a process they went through, a way of preserving the body a little bit longer, mostly to show honor to the one who was being buried.

There was a great deal of rush about the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, making sure that He was dead and put in the tomb before sundown on Friday when the Sabbath began and the Jews could do no work at that time.

And so it would seem that He wasn't properly embalmed at that time. And so when the Sabbath is over, they have gone, they have bought these spices, and now they're coming to anoint Him.

[10 : 02] Very early, verse 2 says, on the first day of the week. And Mark, as he's so glossary sometimes, includes very few details, in this case wants us to be sure to know that it's when the sun

had risen.

It's early, early morning on Sunday. And they go to the tomb, and they're not very prepared, I'll have you note, when they go to the tomb, because on their way to the tomb, they're wondering how in the world they're going to even access the body of Christ.

This very large stone, Mark tells us, has been rolled in front of the tomb. And they say, who will roll away the stone for us?

But when they get there, verse 4, they see that the stone has already been rolled back. Mark doesn't give us much else. It leaves a lot to be assumed on our part.

But Matthew records in 28, verse 2 of his Gospel account, And behold, there was a great earthquake, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone.

[11:04] And sat on it. So God Himself sent a messenger to roll away the stone to prepare for them to come and see that their Savior was, in fact, risen.

It's very significant that it's women that go, and they're the first ones to see this, and that all of the accounts record that this is the case.

For two reasons. First, they were witnesses to His life. You can see that in chapter 15, verse 41 of Mark. To His death. Chapter 15, verse 40.

To His burial. Chapter 15, verse 47. And now, His resurrection. These women have been given privy to see all of these events together.

It's as if it taps it all off. That their testimony might be able to carry across all of the major events of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection.

[12:02] His life, death, burial, and now His resurrection. Secondly, they're women. Significant. The significance of the women is that they are women.

And to us, this isn't very telling, but certainly, in this day, it would have been. Let me read you a little bit from Sinclair Ferguson's commentary on Mark.

He writes, Mark tells us that it was the women who first discovered the empty tomb and who heard the first announcement of the resurrection. To our 20th century Western minds, that may seem unremarkable.

But in the context of first century Palestine, it was highly significant. For women were often treated as second-class citizens. Their testimony would be inadmissible in a court of law.

As witnesses, they had no standing. No one who wanted to fabricate a convincing account of the resurrection in first century Palestine would have dreamed of doing it in this way.

[13:03] These were not the witnesses for this day. They did not carry with them the credibility to speak to this. So if someone were simply making this up, they would not have included this detail about the women.

Later, we see in John's account that John and Peter go and see the empty tomb. This is where they would have begun if they weren't committed to sharing the whole story with their readers.

There's a great deal of beauty in the Gospel and this extension of God to women of this day that they might be the first witnesses of such an event.

To just kind of cap that off for you, Josephus, who's a Jewish historian, in his book entitled Antiquities of the Jews said, But let not the testimony of women be admitted on account of the levity and boldness of their sex.

And ladies, I don't know if that's offensive to you or not, but there certainly is a degree of both things which we love about you. And we see that they enter the tomb in verse 5.

[14:07] I'm trying to backpedal off that, but I can't. So we will move on. In verse 5, we see that they enter the tomb. They see a young man sitting on the right side.

Very little detail again from Mark. A young man seated on the right, dressed in a white robe, and they are alarmed. Who is this man?

Why should they be alarmed? Again, Matthew's account gives us a bit more detail in chapter 28, verses 3 and 4. Matthew writes, His appearance was like lightning and his clothing white as snow. And for fear of him, the guards trembled and became like dead men. They passed out is what that means. This is a phrasing that would have been used in this day.

So presumably, the women, when they show up to the tomb, they're not alone. There's this man sitting there who's like lightning, but also the guards are passed out on the ground because he was such a fearful sight.

[15:05] And he says to them, as so many angelic appearances start in this way, do not be alarmed. Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth who was crucified.

And then this most wonderful, most emphatic statement, He has risen. He is not here.

Listen to the same telling from Luke 24, verses 6 and 7. Luke records, He is not here, but has risen. Remember how He told you while He was still in Galilee that the Son of Man must be delivered in the hands of sinful men and be crucified and on the third day rise.

So in Luke's account, this angel gives to them a remembrance of the things that Jesus said. And they're saying to them, the things that Jesus has said would come to pass, have.

Do not be alarmed. He told you this would happen. And He does it a number of times in Mark's account. Mark 8, 31, 9, 31, and 10, 33-34.

[16:13] If you've been here, we've gone through those and repeated them a number of times. Let me read to you just Mark 9, 31, where Jesus says, the Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men and they will kill Him.

And when He is killed, after three days, He will rise. So, the previous prophecy has already come to pass.

Jesus has been delivered into the hands of men and they have killed Him. And now, it's fulfilled that after three days, He has risen. And the angel gives a command to them, but go.

Do not be alarmed. This thing has happened that's supposed to come to happen. Verse 7, but go. Tell His disciples and Peter that He is going before you to Galilee. There you see Him just as He told you.

But just as He told you is found in Mark 14, 28. It's a little detail that's easy to miss, but Jesus says, but after I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee.

[17:17] We'll go back to the place of preparation, the place in which He gathered up the disciples, the place where most of His ministry took place. Kind of the home turf is where they would gather together once again before Jesus finally ascends and sends them on their mission to establish the church and to change the world.

But they leave. Mark's record is very brief at this point. They leave the tomb. They flee from it. And for trembling and astonishment, they say nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

We have noted on a number of occasions Mark's particular way in which he records the failures of those who were close to Jesus, pressing at us all through his Gospel account to be disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ, but showing all along how very difficult and challenging this is.

We know of Mark's life that he deserted Paul and Barnabas. Paul wanted nothing to do with him after that. In fact, that was the conflict that called Paul and Barnabas to part ways.

And Barnabas wanted to take his cousin, John Mark, along with him on this next stage of their journey. And Paul wanted nothing to do with the deserter. But we get to see later on in multiple texts that now this Mark is now serving alongside and likely imprisoned with Paul in a number of places.

[18:47] He himself has been this restored deserter. We see it to be true of Peter and the way in which he tells Peter's story. And we know that Peter is restored. And he seems to do it again here.

He seems to hang the ladies out that they didn't do what they were asked to do by the angel of the Lord, at least not in his telling. In other tellings, we see that they do go and they do share with the disciples.

But at this moment in time, they say nothing because they are so very afraid. And it would seem that this is the way that Mark concludes his Gospel account of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

So we should take some time. We would do well to reflect upon the doctrine of the resurrection or the things that are possible because of the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

So, you had your exegesis now for your doctrine. Firstly, Jesus' resurrection is the guarantee of our regeneration.

[19:59] Now, regeneration is an act of God in which we are given new spiritual life. to borrow the language of John 3, to be born again. In John 3, Jesus says that we must be born again to see the kingdom of God.

That our image-bearing capacity has been spoiled by sin. By very nature, we are not acceptable to God. And so we must be born again.

We must be made new to be found acceptable and to be part of His kingdom. We're once not a people, but we need to be made a people. We're not citizens. We need to be citizens of the

kingdom of God.

And this requires regeneration. Ezekiel 36, 26 and 27, the Lord says this, and I will give you a new heart and a new spirit I will put within you and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.

And I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes and be careful to obey My rules. This is regeneration. And what He's doing in such beautiful language is saying that our hearts apart from Christ, apart from His intervening work in our lives, are hearts of stone, cold, hard, against the things of God.

[21 : 25] But He will take that out of us and He will put in us a heart of flesh, a heart that beats for Him. He will make us new. He will give us His Spirit and cause us, move us to keep His statutes and to obey all of His rules.

And the text there gives us a clue. How is it that God works this change in us? What is the means by which He accomplishes this work?

John 3.8 says that regeneration is a work of the Holy Spirit. It's one of the great works that God accomplishes by that part of the Trinity known as the Holy Spirit.

John 3.8 says the wind blows where it wishes and you hear it sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.

So Jesus' resurrection is incredibly important to us because He made a promise to the apostles to send the Spirit to them. He needed to be alive.

[22 : 32] He had said all these things to them. What a sad, sad day for them from their perspective, from their side of the cross. His death was because all of the things He had said would come to pass had yet to.

How is it possible that He would do the things He said He was going to do if He's dead and buried and in a tomb? John 16.7 says, Nevertheless, I tell you the truth.

It is to your advantage that I go away. For if I do not go away, the Helper, He's referring to the Holy Spirit there, will not come to you.

But if I go, I will send Him to you. Jesus is telling His disciples before His death that His death, burial, resurrection, and ascension is necessary that the Spirit of God would come.

I have at many points in my life wished that Jesus would be here now with us. Of course, I long for His second coming when He'll finish His work. But in the meantime, wishing that He would be here with us.

[23 : 33] But He says it's to our advantage that He goes away. We have a better thing. It's better to be a Christian now, to have new hearts and the Spirit of God working within us, than to have walked with Him in those days.

That's hard for me to get my mind around. It's something to certainly meditate upon. It's a better thing to have the resurrected and ascended Jesus Christ and been granted the promised Holy Spirit.

1 Peter 1.3 helps tie this thought together. Peter writes, Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. According to His great mercy, He has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

Now, Peter sees that this was a necessary thing. The resurrection of Jesus Christ must have taken place in order to guarantee our regeneration. So that was firstly.

Jesus' resurrection is the guarantee of our regeneration. Secondly, Jesus' resurrection is the guarantee of our justification. Now, justification is the right legal standing before God.

[24 : 50] Justification is the opposite of condemnation. To state it in the negative, to be justified before God is to not be guilty of the sins that are ours, that ultimately belong to us, that we own, is to have those dismissed, stricken from the record.

That's to state it in the negative. And I don't mean in a bad way. Right? Stated in the positive, to be justified is to be declared righteous.

righteous. In the perfect life and death, suffering, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, we have given to us both the effect of Jesus' passive and His active obedience.

His passive obedience being the suffering of His life and His death. His active obedience being all of the righteousness that He exhibited before in His living. Right?

That we're not just found neutral before God, having our sins dismissed, but that we're found righteous before God because we have Christ's righteousness. Christ's propitiation says, thank you,

He appeased God's wrath with His death.

[26 : 09] Right? Christ's propitiation says He appeased God's wrath when His death, the wrath that was due us, we have failed in every way to keep God's moral law. If you're not found in Christ today, please know that this is true of you.

It's true of all of us. The great meta-narrative of humanity is that we all have sinned and we all fall short of the glory of God. There is none righteous. No, not one.

We have all failed to meet His standard. It's impossible to do so because of our sin nature. So there is infinite wrath due to us.

But because of Christ's sacrifice, because Christ took the wrath of God on our behalf, we have been given a dismissal note for that. 1 John 2.2 says, He is the propitiation for our sins and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

So Christ's propitiation, He appeased God's wrath with His death. Christ's imputation, we are granted His righteousness. Romans 10.4, For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

[27 : 17] It doesn't mean that there's not a standard we are still to live to. This is not cheap grace. Grace is costly in that it requires your life. That we are meant to pursue God with all that we have.

We are still meant to fulfill the moral law of God, but when we fail and we will, we still have His righteousness. We get to wear it.

I get to put it on as a cloak. And as I endeavor by God's grace to live to His righteous standard, my failures are covered by His goodness to me in Christ.

Romans 4.22-25, after a rather lengthy discourse about Abraham's faith in God's promise, says this, That is why his faith was counted to him as righteousness.

We're talking about Abraham. But the words that was counted to him were not written for his sake alone, but for ours also. It will be counted to us who believe in Him who raised from the dead Jesus our Lord, who was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification.

[28 : 26] You see Paul wrapping those ideas together. Us being given our justification. Our sins dismissed. Us taking on the righteousness of Christ because of the One who raised Jesus from the dead.

So Jesus' resurrection is the guarantee of our regeneration. Jesus' resurrection is the guarantee of our justification. And thirdly, Jesus' resurrection is the guarantee of our resurrection bodies.

This is a bit briefer point, but an equally glorious one. Jesus was the first recipient of a new body.

This transformed state. You know, there are other men who had been resurrected. Take Nicodemus as the example for that. But 1 Corinthians 15.20 says, but in fact, Christ has been raised from the dead.

The first fruits of those who have fallen asleep. So He's the beginning of something. The first fruits.

[29 : 37] He's the beginning of this new type of transformed body. And we will be recipients of the same type of body which will have no more disease, sickness, suffering, death.

There's much conjecture about exactly what this will look like. I have absolutely no idea. I'm going to guess maybe my 18-year-old self. I'm going to go back to that because life hurt a lot less in those days.

Take my 18-year-old self and take out type 1 diabetes and that I think might be my resurrected state. We don't really know, but we know that we will have transformed bodies, that they will be without all the suffering and the disease and the sickness of the world and that they will not die.

So to say that Jesus' resurrection is the guarantee of our resurrection bodies is to say that we will live with Him forever. Praise God. 1 Corinthians 15.42 Paul says, So it is with the resurrection of the dead.

What is sown is perishable. He's using this analogy of the way that seeds bring forth something else. The way a seed goes into the ground and it dies, but then it brings forth a different type of vegetable or fruit.

[31 : 00] What is sown is perishable. What is raised is imperishable. So Jesus' resurrection is the guarantee of our regeneration, our justification, and our resurrection bodies.

We have been changed by God, made righteous in His sight, and will live with Him forever because Jesus lived the perfect life. He died to bear our sin, and He was raised to glory.

So what? What do we do with these types of doctrines? I hope firstly, not as a point of application, but I hope firstly that those kinds of truths just warm your heart.

That you're just given cause to celebrate who God is to us in the personal work of Jesus Christ. That you want to exalt His name because of what He's done on your behalf. It really should be enough. But all the same, Jesus' resurrection, as I mentioned before, supplies to us the Holy Spirit.

[32 : 09] Let me read to you again John 16, 7. Nevertheless, I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away. For if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send Him to you. All of us who have placed our faith in Jesus Christ are given the gift of the Holy Spirit.

We have Him. He abides within us. And I know that's trippy to think about. But He does. All the same. We are given Him as a seal and as a helper.

So firstly, Jesus' resurrection supplies by the Holy Spirit the surety of your salvation. the sure knowledge of your justification before God and your eternal state of your future resurrection body. I think it would be good if you turned with me to 1 Corinthians 15. The classic resurrection chapter. Some people might try to not preach a sermon on Easter Sunday using 1 Corinthians 15. It's rather difficult to do. It would seem that a number of the Corinthian believers or otherwise those that were part of the church believe that it is not possible that a person could be raised from the dead.

[33 : 35] And Paul is addressing that here in chapter 15 in such a wonderful way. Let's begin at verse 1 and 2. Now I'd remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preach to you which you received in which you stand and by which you are being saved if you hold fast to the word I preach to you unless you believed in vain.

So let's just note he's saying, now it reminds you of the gospel I preach by which you are being saved. And then he goes on to elaborate in the rest of the chapter about this gospel he preached. What is it that he had come and preached to them?

Earlier on in the book of 1 Corinthians he said, I came and I knew nothing among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified. Which includes the resurrection.

He elaborates on that later on in that chapter. So 1 Corinthians 15.12-19. Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead?

But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain. We are even found to be misrepresenting God because we testified about God that He raised Christ whom He did not raise if it is true that the dead are not raised.

[34 : 53] Are you tracking his logic through that? For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins.

Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied. So the resurrection of Jesus Christ by the Spirit gives us this surety of our salvation.

If it didn't happen, we are fools. We are absolute fools. What are you doing with this mourning if Jesus Christ has not been raised from the dead?

Go do something else because this is a waste of your time. That's stated in the negative. We are fools if Christ has not been raised. Don't leave. I'm thankful that He has been.

Stated in the positive, we have not believed in vain because He, in fact, has been raised. We are not fools.

[35 : 55] We are wise for having believed this thing. 2 Corinthians 1.22 says, God has also put His seal on us and given us His Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee of these sure realities that we may be found in Him.

So Jesus' resurrection supplies by the Holy Spirit the surety of our salvation and secondly, the power for your sanctification. The power for your sanctification.

Let me draw your mind back to the doctrine that the resurrection guarantees your regeneration. The power for that comes from the resurrection.

Your regeneration. That you have been changed. That you have been made a new creation. The term sanctification has two elements to it. One is that once we are found in Christ, we have been set apart.

We have been sanctified. We have been separated in status. We are a new type of individual. But it also carries with it this element that we are still in the process of being made into those people for the glory of God.

[37 : 03] That all throughout our lives we will be made in greater and greater degree more like Christ. So this is the type I'm talking about. That power for our sanctification.

We have been made new. Therefore, we have the ability to proceed to strive after righteousness. After all, Paul says in Philippians 1.6 and I'm sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.

God has saved us and God will perfect us. Romans 8.11 Paul writes, that the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you.

He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you. We have been given the Spirit of God that we might live to God.

And there are far too many people today who profess the name of Christ and there's zero evidence of it in their life. None whatsoever. What does Jesus say about vines that don't bear fruit?

[38 : 11] They'll be trimmed away and thrown into the fire. A good tree bears good fruit. It is necessary that having been saved, the evidence of this is that we live for God.

And the Spirit gives us the power to do so. It gives us the power to resist sin. Beloved, we do not have to sin any longer.

We've been set free from it. We're no longer slaves to it. Romans 6, 9-11. We know that Christ being raised from the dead will never die again.

Death no longer has dominion over Him. For the death He died, He died to sin once for all. But the life He lives, He lives to God.

You see this? He died a death to sin. Now, being raised, He lives to God. Verse 11, so you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

[39 : 20] You have been given the ability to keep God's standard now. Will you? It's not likely. It's not likely. But you can and you should.

We've also been given the power by the Spirit to be obedient. to not only do the things that we're not supposed to do, but to do the things that we are supposed to do.

Paul again, Colossians 3, 1 and 2. If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.

Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. We have been given the ability in Christ by His Spirit because of the resurrection to live in this way.

Beloved, there is such a great mission set before us as the people of God. The exaltation of God, declaring the supremacy of Christ in all things to all peoples.

[40 : 26] We've been given the power to do this, to resist sin, to be obedient to this. To be the disciples that Mark is calling us to be all throughout the text. To give up all things for the sake of Jesus Christ and the gospel of the kingdom of God.

I'll repeat to you the motto of the Reformers post-Tenebrous Lux. They meant it certainly for their reform from Catholicism coming out of the dark ages, the wonderful translations of Bibles that were taking place.

So much light in that sense. They meant it also in terms of the way in which a dark heart is turned to God that the light of the gospel would penetrate it.

And I would say to you this morning that this very same motto should be true of us today. That those ways in which we have not pursued God in light of the glorious truth of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, we should allow the light of the gospel to penetrate those dark places in our hearts as well.

If you don't know Christ, your fate is eternal damnation. And you need to hear that. You need to be warned of the judgment that is to come.

[41 : 49] God is a good, loving God. He's also a just, condemning God. He has a standard that none of us have held and we must have Christ's righteousness on the day of judgment.

So please, I plead with you, if you have not placed your faith in Christ, allow the light of the gospel to dawn in your hearts for the first time this day. The call of the gospel is not to walk an aisle and repeat after me.

The call of the gospel is to repent, turn from your sin, and believe in the person and work. His life, death, burial, resurrection, ascension of Jesus Christ.

Let's pray together. Amen.