

Mark 16:9-20

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: 12 April 2015

Preacher: Clay Naylor

[0 : 00] Good to see everyone this morning. Just join me in prayer, just briefly, before we get going. Holy Father, we thank you for our chance to be together this morning.

! You have brought us from so many different places, so many different stages of life and things that we're dealing with. And God, we come together to not just dwell on the things that burden us and make us anxious that we've come to dwell on you and to behold your glory and your word.

And God, I just ask this morning that you would use me and to build up your people. And God, I just thank you for this opportunity.

So, Holy Spirit, work in and through us today for Christ's sake. And we pray that in His name. Amen. Amen. So, Mark 16.

We're going to start in verse 9. It says, Now after He had risen early on the first day of the week, He first appeared to Mary Magdalene, from whom He cast out seven demons.

[1 : 16] She went and reported to those who had been with Him while they were mourning and weeping. And when they heard that He was alive and had been seen by her, they refused to believe it.

After that, He appeared in a different form to two of them while walking along the road in the country. And they went away and reported to others, but they did not believe them either.

And afterward, He appeared to the eleven themselves, and they were reclining at the table. And He reproached them for their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they had not believed those who had seen Him, that He had risen.

And He said to them, Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. He who has believed has been baptized and will be saved, but who has disbelieved shall be condemned.

And these signs will accompany those who have believed. In My name they will cast out demons, they will speak with new tongues, they will pick up serpents, and if they drink deadly poison, it shall not hurt them.

[2 : 19] They will lay their hands in the sick, and they will recover. So then when the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, He was received up into heaven, and He sat down at the right hand of God. And they went out and preached everywhere, while the Lord worked with them and confirmed the Word by signs that followed.

So, that's kind of what we're dealing with today. But if you have a study Bible, or a New American Standard Bible, or an ESV Bible, there probably is a footnote connected to this passage.

If you can find it, just look at it. And it says, basically, most of, or some of, the early manuscripts do not contain verses 9 through 20.

So, what do we do with that? Well, we're definitely going to deal with that this morning. But, right off the bat, I just kind of want to say just two things, two goals that I really hope and pray that will happen this morning for me and for you.

The first one is that we would increase our love and our wonder for God and His Word, the Scripture. and also to bring maybe a proper ending to the Gospel of Mark that we've been in for a long time now and to increase our love and wonder for the Savior.

[3 : 49] So, with that in mind, I really hope that you treasure the Word of God. when I first became a believer, probably around 2001, I couldn't put it down.

It was just something I was always wanting to be in, something I always wanted to read and have my mind in. This was my first copy I had that I started reading when I first became a believer.

It started falling apart and good many years ago, my grandmother took it from me and had it rebound and she put Solideo Gloria on the back of it to God alone be the glory.

This is the new American standard. Back in my early days as a believer, I was like a highlighting maniac. I highlighted everything before the whole book was kind of highlighting.

There was really no point in highlighting. And I loved the Word of God. I spent many nights in the hospital kind of battling with life and death with this Bible.

[4 : 53] And I just put my face in it every night. And the promises that were in it gave me hope. And it speaks to us today. This is not a book that is not relevant to our lives, but in fact, most relevant.

Those of you who have been to my house and been in my room and seen, I have this on my desk, but it's something that my mother wrote to me a long time ago. She used to give my brother and I scripture.

I mostly got this when I was at least five or six, but it has Joshua 1, 8 and 9 on it. Do not let this book of the law depart from your mouth and meditate on it day and night so that you may be careful to do everything that is written in it.

Then you will be prosperous and succeed and will have success. Have I not commanded you? Do be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified. Do not be discouraged for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.

And I'm just telling you that this is such a precious gift and so few people have any idea about how we actually got this in front of us. It didn't just shoot out of a factory and just come before you.

[6 : 05] It has been a process. The stuff that we just sang about are you listened to more or less. Ancient Words is such an awesome song of how we got the Scripture.

So, that's kind of the goals for this morning. And so, hold that in your hand. Hold the Word of God in your hand and participate in a little activity but just hold the Word in your hand.

If you have it on your phone, you can't participate in this activity. Just kidding. But, just to be encouraged by an older brother in the faith.

So, when I first became a believer, I was introduced to the writings of a man who had a huge impact on my life. He's dead now but he still speaks.

And, those of you who love John Piper, this is where John Piper gets a lot of his stuff from. But, Jonathan Edwards is one of my heroes. And if you guys, particularly college students who are really into wanting to read some stuff that's really scripturally in-depth and cause you to want to live for God and die for God, get into Jonathan Edwards.

[7 : 23] Edwards was a Puritan pastor in colonial America. He went to Yale when he was 13. And he graduated at the top of his class when he was 17.

He knew Greek, Latin, and Hebrew. He pastored a church in Connecticut. And, in 1758, he became the president of Princeton.

So, pretty smart guy. Encyclopedia Britannica, which is not a Christian source, I remind you. It voted Jonathan Edwards the most brilliant mind America has ever produced.

So, all these things are, these stats are impressive. But, those of you who really want to know Edwards will see more of his heart rather than just these stats.

See, this man loves and adored the Savior. So much so that even after he experienced some rejection from his church, he went to be a missionary to the Indians in colonial America.

[8 : 26] And, he loved the Savior. And, the things around his mind that you hear him say the most are the glory of God. How can I live for the glory of God? So, as you hold the Bible in your hands this morning, just listen to something he says about the Scripture.

He says, you all have by you, this, a treasure of divine knowledge and that you have your Bible in your hands. Therefore, do not be contented with just possessing a little bit of this treasure.

God has spoken much to you in Scripture. Labor to understand as much of what he has said as you can. God has made you all reasonable creatures.

Therefore, let not the noble faculty of reason or understanding lie neglected. Content not yourselves with divine truth you accidentally gained in conversation, but let it be very much your business to search for it and that with the same diligence and labor with which men ought to dig in the mines for silver or gold.

This is such a precious gift and we need to have our minds and our hearts in it on a daily basis and to labor for it the way that men labor for silver and gold to have divine truth.

[9 : 51] As a joke, some of you in the earlier days don't remember, I like Jonathan Ewers so much that a friend of mine in Ireland bought me this. Jonathan Ewers is my own boy. It's a little too small for me right now, so this is the only thing I can use it for.

Something like this. So to keep in mind, we're going to talk about just the Word of God this morning and then at the end kind of bring it back into the Gospel of Mark.

But we need to understand that because of our sin and because of our rebellion against such a wonderful Creator, we don't deserve anything.

God could have just chosen to keep us in the dark, keep us in silence, dealing with the consequences of our sin, left in eternal darkness, left us to our sin indefinitely.

He could have. Y'all understand that when the angels rebelled against God, God did not save one of them, not one, to the fact that He even tries or is going to work in the hearts of man, such a grace.

[11:00] So God could have left us in silence and in the darkness, but yet He spoke. He chose to speak to us, foretelling of a Savior to save us, to bring redemption.

And so we have to see this book as a precious gift of grace. It really is. And it hasn't come to us really in an easy way. Martyrs, people who have shed blood to bring the word to us.

Scripture is such a gift. So many people in the world don't have it, as some of you are aware. But Scripture is what we call a specific revelation. Nature is general revelation.

It's enough to tell us that there is a God, that He is powerful, that He should be adored. That's why you can go to many places in the world and they know that there's a God, they know that there is a Creator.

I always use the Native Americans as an example. I really love the Cherokee a lot. I go up there a good bit and they believe that there is an ancient Creator who made all things.

[12:03] He needs to be loved and revered. Out west, the Apaches, some of you have heard of the Apaches before, Geronimo, Cochise, all of them. They believed in Yosin who is the one God and the Father of all men.

So that is what general revelation is, but Scripture is specific because it tells us who God is, who we are, and what we have to do to live right before Him and to be saved by Him.

You can't get that in nature alone. So this is specific revelation. And before we go further, I know there's a lot of questions that you're going to have that I won't be able to answer this morning.

I'm already worried I'm going to go over time, so if I start, Daniel Swanson Esquire is going to let me know if I'm going over time this morning. But just, I'm always about resources, but one book you can look at is called Nothing But the Truth, The Inspiration, The Authority, and The History of the Bible by Brian Edwards, Nothing But the Truth.

So, this is called the Word of God, and it's not called that for no reason. God Himself defines truth, has inspired truth in this Word, and He's revealed it to us, though we were lost and separated from Him.

[13:23] Holy Scripture is a witness to us about who God is, the true knowledge of God and how He relates to us. So, unlike any other book, it claims to be the Word of God.

In the Old Testament alone, that phrase is used 2,000 times alone. In the New Testament, the term Word of God is used 40 times. So, it is an actual book that calls itself the Word of God, over and over.

So, I'm pretty sure you only have like two or three places to look this morning, but look at 2 Timothy chapter 3, verse 16.

Paul writing to his young apprentice Timothy. So, those of you who are around here are no strangers to this verse, but I'm begging you to refuse for it to be familiar to you.

Don't allow it to be familiar. When you really put your mind on what this says, it will just spin your world around. So, chapter 3, verse 16, says, all scripture is breathed out by God and is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

[14:58] So, amazing words. All of scripture is there, again, for us to know God, to be saved by Him, to live rightly before Him. And if you see here, it is all valuable, it is profitable, and it is useful.

There are not parts of it that don't have some meaning for us today. It all is relevant and speaks just as loud today. But the phrase I want you to really look at is right at the beginning.

It says, scripture is breathed out by God. And in this text, Paul uses a word that is not used in any other ancient Greek text.

and it's not used in any other Bible Greek text. So, it's almost saying like he put this word together to really emphasize a point.

This is the word theopneustos, God, theopneustos, which is where we get our word pneumatic or pneumonia from, this idea of breathing out. That's what it means.

[15:59] It means that God literally breathed out that God spoke to us in the dark. of sin. It expresses the divine origin, inspiration, authority of scripture.

So, it's a huge, huge word that he put together to emphasize a point that scripture has a divine origin. All of it is beneficial for our souls and to help us to know God.

Very similarly, flip over to 2 Peter. We're doing all eternity now and you can just listen the rest of the time. But, 2 Peter chapter 1, 2 Peter chapter 1, verse 19.

Alright, Peter just described the transfiguration and how they were with Christ on the mountain. verse 19. He says, And we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed, to which you would do well to pay attention, as a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.

Knowing this, first of all, that no scripture, no prophecy of scripture comes from one's own interpretation. For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man. You see that?

[17:30] Like, man did not do this, but man spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. Look at verse 19.

It gives us the idea that paints a picture of the darkness of a fallen world and sin, right? And that the word of God is the lamp that shines light into the darkness.

Into the dark places. God spoke. Alright? And then it says, as the day dawns, until the day dawns, and the morning star rises. So God's word is like bringing about a new creation, a new heaven and a new earth, and it is a process.

It is here now and it is now coming. It will be fully here one day when Christ returns. But then he goes on and he says that this has not come from man.

This is something that God has done. So where we get our term, the idea of inspiration of scripture. Now, when man wrote God's word, it wasn't like he just sort of possessed them and they became just a machine and they started writing stuff.

[18:38] And they were like out of their minds. God used them. This phrase here where it says carried along by the spirit. It's this idea of a leaf or something else like that that could be in a river that's being carried along by this flow of the river.

And God is involving them in the process of writing his word. He used their experiences, their own vocabulary. He used their backgrounds. Everything unique. But God involved them in the process so that all the Bible writers could say, like David said in 2 Samuel 23, David said, the spirit of the Lord speaks by me.

His word is on my tongue. The God of Israel has spoken. The rock of Israel has said to me. Right? So God worked in the hearts of men and the souls of men and they spoke and wrote the words of God.

And it's amazing because I hope you realize that your very life right now, very life, like the heartbeat you have, the air in your lungs, is being sustained by the word of God.

When Jesus says, man shall not live by bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God, it's like an active tense of God speaking.

[20:02] All right? So literally, in him we live and move and have our being. And in him is our life, breath, and everything. He sustains us by his word. By his word.

So the Bible really has no equal. There's no other text in ancient or modern literature at all that compares to the Scripture.

It's not written by one man in a short period of time who claims that he heard from God, like the Koran, for instance. But rather, the Bible was written over the course of 1,500 years, roughly.

It has 66 different documents that span that 1,500 years, and at least 40 different authors that contributed to this. And what's crazy is like you have that large span of time, all these different men telling you the same story, that there is a creator, that we have rebelled against him, that there is sin, that there is a Messiah coming.

That's crazy. That's just simply astounding. And including in that, the Bible is composed of many different types of literature, law, poetry, history, everything in there, prophecy.

[21:15] It's all there. So, such a variety just in the Bible itself, literature. And when we talk about this idea that no matter the 1,500 years that God has done this, the Bible is astoundingly consistent in its themes, its message, and its truthfulness.

Right? That's what we refer to by, you've heard the term inerrancy. We could talk about inerrancy a long time, but it really just means that the original Bible manuscripts, okay, the original Bible manuscripts do not affirm anything contrary to fact or truth.

Right? That it was literally from God and that they wrote it down. So, the harmony of the Bible is, it kind of, it blows us away. It is so consistent.

And those of you who looked and really read, like, you learn that the Bible is also a very real book. It shows the ugliness of sin, how there's no hero in the Bible that doesn't have some serious screw-up.

Abraham sold his wife out, at least twice, and was a coward and ran. David committed adultery, murder, and scandal. The Bible is a very real book.

[22 : 28] Very real book. And it exposes how needy we are, okay? It's unlike fantasy at all. One writer said, Behold, the works of all our philosophers with all their pompous dictum, how mean and contemptible they are in comparison with the scriptures.

It is possible that a book at once so simple and sublime should never be merely the work of man. Another writer, he says, the Bible is not such a book a man would write if he could, or could write if he would.

It's just not possible. And so today, we could talk about the Old and New Testament, but just because we're in Mark, we're going to focus on the New Testament particularly.

So we're just going to look at three questions. So, the first one won't take as long to answer, but what are the origins of the New Testament manuscripts?

Where do we get the New Testament? Well, for the originals, God's own word was written by men who were chosen and prepared by the Spirit of God to do this.

[23 : 49] The original copies of the Old Testament were written in the first century, A.D., the same time as Christ lived and walked the earth, days of the early, early church. And it's not reflecting back on events that happened hundreds and thousands of years ago.

It's reflecting on recent events that happened. So, those of you who study history know that the longer the time gaps, the more danger you would have being inconsistent.

And God shows his joy and his wisdom by choosing a large variety of different types of men to write. Rabbis, tax collectors, fishermen, doctors, scholars, all contributed to the New Testament. God loves variety, and so he elected these men. So, we're blessed to have this New Testament. And God chose also to pick one of the most descriptive and precise of all languages that's ever been around.

Koine Greek, most of the New Testament written in Koine Greek, a very precise language, that God would choose that language to write the Scripture. Pretty awesome. So, that's a very simple answer to that one.

[25 : 01] What are the origins? So, these men in the first century wrote the New Testament. Okay? So, a little bit longer here. Number two, how do we get our current New Testament?

Like, how do we get this? Alright? Because, there are no original manuscripts left. Alright?

We have no original copies of any of the New Testament. But don't be alarmed by that. We're going to get into that. So, there's two reasons mainly why we don't. The first one is the materials that they use to write, papyrus or papyri, not the most durable material.

It would crack and crumble pretty easily. And most ancient writings are written in that. There's no originals that exist. Any kind of physical mistreatment or bad weather can destroy papyri.

And secondly, in the second and third centuries particularly, there was immense persecution. And not just on the believers themselves, but on the Scripture.

[26 : 14] Particularly under Domitian, Trajan, Marcus Aurelius. They really tried to annihilate the Scriptures. Like, find all that we can and burn them. Just destroy them.

So, there was an immense persecution in those early centuries. They felt like it was their responsibility to stamp out Christianity and the Scriptures. So, are we lost because we don't have any of the originals?

The answer is no, we are not. And why? Because we have copies upon copies upon copies of the originals. Alright?

If you went to some of the college you guys have heard some of this stuff before, but I can just get over it and hear it again. If you went to Washington, D.C. And, I love colonial history in America, but if you went to Washington, D.C.

and you saw the, you can go and see it, the Declaration of Independence. Right there. I've seen it. With these very eyes. I've seen the Declaration of Independence. Yeah.

[27 : 21] You can go and see it. So, let's just say that there was a massive fire that occurred and something happened and the Declaration of Independence was completely obliterated.

So, would we at one time say, wow, I guess we just don't know what the Declaration of Independence says anymore. And, and why is that so, you know, absurd?

And, the reason is we have copies of copies of copies of the Declaration of Independence. Tons of them. So many that if there was a small difference we could tell because of the other 99.99% of them say this and not that.

So, God is the sovereign preserver of Scripture. Y'all do, y'all do know that like he says, like when I have a purpose that cannot be thwarted. I've declared the beginning from the end.

I work all things according to the counsel of my will. No man can stop me or say, what have you done? This is God. So, even though Satan and the world have sought to destroy the Word of God by persecution, listen to this, there are roughly 5,366 copies made of the original New Testament manuscript.

[28 : 40] Alright? So, just as God is the author of Scripture, he also is the preserver of Scripture to pass down to us his Word. Alright?

He moved on the preservers to make sure the Scripture stayed true and pure throughout history. Some of the early church fathers, when you get into the 4th century, particularly, the emperor Constantine made Christianity kind of like the state religion.

Maybe it wasn't even the best thing that could have happened, actually, but probably not, definitely not a Christian. But, he made it legal to follow Christ and when that happened, copies of the Scripture began to pop up everywhere.

There was a huge kind of resurgence. And around 325, the Council of Nicaea, there was two manuscripts, particularly, of the New Testament. Alright? The first one is called Synecetus and it's actually in a British museum today and it's about 350 A.D.

and it's the entire New Testament. Entire New Testament. The second is called Vaticanus and it's actually at the Vatican in Rome 325 A.D.

[29 : 53] and it's also the whole Bible. So, these two full, complete New Testaments are there for us to see and very close to, again, the originals.

So, think about this. The writings of the early church fathers, alright? We're talking just in the second, third, fourth centuries. They quote from the New Testament, direct quotations from the New Testament 32,000 times.

Alright? Their writings are contained in libraries, museums, you can go and see it. And there's so many quotations of the New Testament that you literally can reconstruct the entire New Testament just on their quotations.

Pretty awesome. And there's over 19,000 quotations from the Gospel writings. So, the early church fathers, again, preserved, helped preserve the New Testament.

So, in our New Testament, you can always look at your table of contents, but what you see in front of you, I remember when I was an early Christian, every Bible study, I went to turn to so-and-so, and everybody like, I'd be like, you know, didn't know where to turn.

[31 : 08] But you look at the table of contents and the New Testament that you see before you was kind of decided on. There was a series of church councils that met, and one particularly, 397 A.D., the Council of Carthage, they used certain criteria to decide whether or not books belonged in the Scriptures or not.

So, here's these three criteria, and they're very good. You couldn't come up with better criteria. The first one was whether or not the document was written by an apostle or one in close association with an apostle.

So, he was one or he talked to the guy who was there. So, not from this guy, from this guy, from that guy. Very close to the knowledge itself. Secondly, whether or not the document was recognized as authoritative by the early church.

meaning that if there was some crazy writing out there, that the apostles could have said, like, that writing, stay away from it. This guy, stay away from it. And did they use those, did they affirm each other?

Peter and Paul actually talk about each other in their letters. They say, what Peter says, what Paul says. They affirm the truth back and forth. And thirdly, a good blanket one here, whether or not the document conformed to the high standards and truths taught already by recognized scripture.

[32 : 39] Is it consistent with what we know is scripture? Alright, so from what we know about the character of God from the Old Testament, what we know about the writings of John and Mark and guys who were there, is it consistent?

Does it tell the same story? right? So those are great criteria, and that's how you get your New Testament. And so just for fun, this is definitely, this is just where I nerd out, so sorry, it's just, I'm a history guy, and this is kind of where I nerd out.

But the New Testament manuscripts compared to other ancient writings from the ancient world, there's nothing that compares to them. There really isn't.

Both in their uniformity and consistency, all right? So you should just know that we have no copies of any original ancient writing, none whatsoever. So let's just take a well-known one, Homer's Iliad, what was written in the archaic period of Greece, 800 B.C.

is when he was supposedly penned the Iliad, all right? So, but the earliest copy we have of the Iliad is from 400 B.C.

[33 : 52] So there's a 400-year time gap between when he wrote his original and the ones we actually have today. And then there's only 643 copies of it, all right?

Herodotus, who wrote about the Persian Wars, you know, Leonidas, Thermopylae, all of that, Marathon, he wrote in 480 B.C. And the earliest copy we have of Herodotus is in 900 A.D., the 1300-year gap, and there's only eight copies.

Plato, from the classical Greek period, 400 B.C. is when he supposedly wrote his stuff. The earliest copy we have is 900 A.D., again, a 1300-year gap, and there's only seven copies of Plato.

And so, compare that to the New Testament. The largest time gap, it was written around 50 to 100 A.D., the New Testament, and we have anywhere from 50 to 100 years in the time gaps.

It's not hundreds, not thousands. The New Testament has the shortest time gaps between the originals and the ones we have today, so you're looking at a huge difference there, and there's 5,366 copies of it, which dwarf all the others put together.

[35 : 14] 643 copies of the Iliad, nothing compared to 5,366 copies of the New Testament. So, think about that. So, these Greek manuscripts that we have today are from the 2nd and 3rd century.

Christ walked the earth in the 1st century. That is a tiny, tiny time gap. So, we have large fragments of the Gospel of John that were found from 100 A.D.

in Christ, oh, excuse me, John wrote that in the 90s, and that's the earliest copy we have, it's like from 100 A.D. very close to the originals. So, if that's an argument, then it's a really terrible one because you have to throw away all the stuff from ancient history along with it.

Very poor argument. So, praise God for his preservations. So, with such, here's a question that may come up. You may ask, with such a large wealth of copies, are there any errors or discrepancies at all in the copies?

And the answer is yes, but they are very small and insignificant. Scribes may have put in a wrong word, a wrong spelling, and they might have tried to clarify what a writer was saying, but even those minor discrepancies don't threaten anything really.

[36 : 33] And the reason why is because we have so many manuscripts. again, if you have, I mean, this is an example, if you have, let's say, you know, 99 manuscripts that say all the same thing, and you have one that has a tiny little discrepancy, what are you going to do?

Like, what do you do? By logic, like, you take what the 99 says and you correct that one. It's very simple, it's not rocket science at all, it's just how it is.

There are so many copies of it. In our English translation, this is a whole other deal, how we got our English Bibles, but the translations that you have in your hand, if it's one of the literal equivalent translations, English Standard Version, New American Standard Version, King James, just a few of the literal translations, you're holding a very accurate translation in your hand.

English language is a very rich language, and can give us very close to what the original writers meant, in a lot of ways. That's why you can look up the Greek, and you'll be like, what's the Greek say? It says exactly what the English says a lot of the time.

But if you hold certain translations in your hands, you may have a paraphrase or something like that. It's called a paraphrase for a reason. It's not as close to the original as you can get, so I really

encourage you to get an ESV or a New American Standard.

[38 : 01] There's a whole other, all kind of stuff I can say on that. But one scholar says, named A.T. Robertson, the vast array of manuscripts has enabled textual scholars to accurately reconstruct the original text more than 99.9% accuracy.

Pretty crazy. So we have a great gift in front of us, and it's come by way of that. So, third question, what should we do with this postscript and mark?

What do we do when there is something like this in Scripture? So, just personally, after I've studied this, I don't think it belongs there.

I don't think that it's a part of the original manuscript of Mark. And there's three reasons why. Firstly, it is not in the earliest manuscripts we have of Mark.

The oldest one is from 100 A.D., and it's excluded from that one. And then the two most important ones we have that I mentioned earlier, the ones you can see at the Vatican and at the British Museum, they also end at verse 8.

[39 : 17] They don't continue. And then, secondly, the early church fathers, they wrote all the Greek manuscripts down to the New Testament, and most all of them end at verse 8, again.

So it's not really recognized by a lot of the early church fathers that it was there. And Ysidobos wrote, the Greek manuscripts do not include these endings, and they are not a part of the originals. That's in the 4th century when he wrote that. And then, thirdly, it's kind of disjointed it from the other gospel accounts. It kind of just seems like it was just thrown in there at the very end of the gospel of Mark.

So this doesn't really flow that well really from a literary standpoint. So, understand, those are the three main reasons that most people don't think they belong there.

But, here's why we include them, okay? First of all, just honesty, alright? The vast majority of scholars, though they don't believe it belongs there, they're just trying to say, look, this is out here, we're not trying to hide it from you, here it is, this is what we think about it.

[40 : 33] So I think that's actually pretty cool. They're just kind of wanting to keep stuff out in the open and say, here it is. And they also encourage you to read it with caution. You know, on the way here, I was just joking with Daniel, he asked, are we going to have some snakes busted out at the end and some other things?

And I said no, and he wanted me to take them home because we weren't going to have snakes. So, like, some weird stuff can be drawn out of these verses, for sure.

But, here's the other reason why we include it, number two, is there's no serious doctrine compromised, okay? So, in other words, regardless of whether this postscript is authentic or not, it doesn't contradict any kind of Christian doctrine that we believe.

Nothing is threatened by it being there or not being there. All right? That's really just kind of the point. So, just the text absence or presence doesn't threaten anything we believe, necessarily. And one textual scholar named Christopher Ash wrote this, says, since we do not have access to any of the original manuscripts, this means that scholarly work of textual criticism is necessary.

[41 : 52] Textual criticism is the discipline of examining manuscripts we don't have while working back from those that we do have from the originals.

It is an honorable skill and one that has been well honed over the years. And this is what he says here, thank God we have excellent and strong manuscript evidence that it is not difficult to become very confident indeed about the large majority of the Bible's words.

No Christian doctrine depends on those parts where there are small uncertainties. So, meaning that, like, we don't base our whole belief system on a tiny little deal, I guess, based on what the whole thing says.

And that's very clear. So, that's why we keep it in there, those two reasons. Honesty and then no doctrinal compromise, really. So, just look back at Mark, Mark 16, and how should we end the Gospel of Mark, what we've been in for quite a while now.

Alright. If you just look at it, there's, it's very, very clear that you can find most of all this just in other Gospel accounts.

[43 : 14] Okay? For example, verse 12 is taken from Luke 24, the road to Emmaus. Very clear. He appeared to them on the road, two of them while walking.

And then verse 12, or excuse me, verse 15 is really the Great Commission right out of Matthew 28. Like I said, verse 17 and 18 are definitely just a little odd.

If we lean on that too much, we're going to be breaking the commandment by putting God to the test. The early apostles did have the power to do some of these things.

If Pentecost, this kind of stuff happened. But at the same time, just realize that we can reconstruct this entire section just based on what other Gospel accounts say.

So again, not really too big of a problem. But just at some point, at some point, some of these guys who were writing down Mark felt like there should be a better ending to the Gospel of Mark.

[44 : 17] And so they probably added this in, more than likely. But when you think about it, look at verse 8.

That's what I just kind of want to focus on, which is where Mark probably ended his Gospel. Okay? It says, 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. Alright? So, that's where Mark probably ended his Gospel. But is that a bad ending?

And I really don't believe so at all. The resurrection is shocking. If you were there, I don't know what you would have done. You probably would have done the same. That's why the angels and everybody else is like, fear not, don't be alarmed, don't be afraid, because people are literally terrified.

That word for afraid is like the word phobia, right? It's where we get this bewildering, irrational experience. We just can't explain it. And they're left speechless.

[45 : 27] They're overwhelmed and they run. They're terrified. And so, is the resurrection to me and to you, is it overwhelming? Does it astonish us?

Are we amazed that Christ is risen in his love for us? Right? This morning, like this morning, the saddest cases here are people who have been lovingly chosen by the Father, graciously saved by the Son and his blood, and dwelt by the Spirit and have lost the wonder of that.

A lot of us have. It'll show probably in the next few hours about what you talk about, how quickly it's just snuffed out after you leave here. It's sad.

Our faith has become thin, drab, colorless, stale, unimaginative. We know it all, we've heard it already, and we've lost the wonder of the Savior.

One writer, he said, sometimes I think the people to feel the most satisfied for are people who once knew what profoundness was, but who lost or become numb to the sensation of wonder.

[46 : 41] We have to be bewildered at the resurrection that our Savior lives today. I struggle to keep Christ in the forefront of my mind on a daily basis.

I struggle with all the same stuff you do. Some of you students kind of put me up in a higher place, and it is not that way. Those of you who know me well know that's not true. I have fears.

I have sin in my life. I struggle, and I need a risen Savior to save me. But I know at the same time, all that's true, that when I put my mind and my heart on Christ, love for Him and all of Him begins to take me over, and His fellowship drives away any darkness that I'm presently living in, and that's the power of the risen Lord.

And I'm ready after those moments when I know that Christ is with me, I'm ready to live for Him and die for Him in any context He asked me to, to engage the lost, to make disciples for His glory.

The risen Lord is with us today, He is present with us. Don't lose the wonder of that. Ask that God rekindle your wonder in your all, and live for Christ.

[47 : 58] Let the present reality of the living King change you, right? So with that, let's just devote ourselves to Christ this morning anew. Just close with me in prayer.

Amen. Amen. Amen.