

The Gospel of Mark The Empty Tomb Effect

Interpreting the Text:

1. Why do Mary, Mary, and Salome make the trip to Jesus' tomb on Sunday morning? What does this tell us about them? What risks might have been associated with their trip?
2. The end of Mark that appears after 16:8 in modern Bibles is not in our earliest manuscripts of the Gospel; they seem to have been added later by copyists. Why wouldn't a copyist be satisfied by the ending of Mark at 16:8? How should we treat this addition to Mark? Do you feel it is important that the story is 'complete'?
3. Mark's Gospel begins immediately with Jesus' adult ministry and keeps a quick, action filled pace throughout. How does this ending, narrating Jesus' death and (in the additional verses) resurrection seem to maintain that writing style or deviate from it?

Applying the Text:

1. Mark implies that an encounter with Jesus changed the feeble disciples into the heroic martyrs they later become. Has the presence of the living Christ impacted your life? How?
2. The variety of resurrection stories indicates mystery. But the differences between the accounts of Jesus' resurrection have caused some to doubt that Jesus rose. How do you understand the differences? Do you find the original ending of Mark's Gospel unsatisfactory?
3. How would you preach to an Easter congregation that had just heard Mark 16:1-8? What is the core of your message given this particular account?
4. Having completed Mark's Gospel, how do you feel about it now? How do you feel about it in comparison to the other Gospels? What was the most surprising thing you discovered in this study of Mark?

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