**The Gospel of Mark: A Disciple’s Mirror**

***Reflections on Following Jesus -*** From A Handbook on Cross-Bearing

**Mark 16:1-20**

***He is risen! Now what?*** Or, “He told us to meet Him in Galilee. . .”

**What’s (happening in) the story?** Jesus rises and moves on.

The evidence points to a rather abrupt ending to the original story (in verse eight), but that has been Mark’s style, after all. The ladies clearly are surprised at the tomb’s emptiness. This implies that neither they, nor anyone else, anticipated Jesus’ resurrection. any more than His crucifixion, even though He had predicted both (8:31; 9:9, 31; 10:33, 34). But Jesus also had looked beyond the Cross, and told the disciples that He would go before them into Galilee (14:28). As all His words have come true, so will this one, as He empowers their ministry until He returns (as Mark 13 foretells).

**What’s the challenge in the story?** To trust Jesus’ leadership.

There is no need to be disquieted by Mark’s alternative ending. The “long ending” of the Gospel of Mark (vv. 9-20) is a summary of things found in Matthew, Luke, and John. We know Jesus appeared to His disciples, commissioned them, and went back to Heaven. Our job is now to trust Him to “go before us” as we share His ministry.

**What are the key elements in the story?**

* ***Almost too good to be true: “He is not here. . .”*** vv. 1-8

We know the Resurrection is true because it has been revealed to us. The body was not stolen, nor did the women stumble into the wrong tomb because of their grief. The angelic messenger clarifies history and sends the women to tell the others. Temporarily, though, they are quite appropriately possessed by fear and awe of this ultimate conquering of death. There is nothing like it anywhere in the religions of the world.

Jesus, as He predicted (14:28) even before their failure, will meet the disciples in Galilee, where they will continue what He began, this time, with understanding.

And all of this will proceed as Jesus predicted (Mark 13), concluding with great cosmic signs and His return to earth. In the meantime, we are not to let nature or persecution or worldliness distract us.

* ***Summary Ending: “Here’s how it played out. . .”***  vv. 9-20

The early church, sensing an abruptness at verse 8, accepted these verses as Mark’s official ending. They are consistent, both with the other Gospels and Mark’s themes: unbelief and doubt in the disciples, their commissioning to carry the Gospel to the nations, and the Ascension.

**What’s the big idea (main point) of the story?** 1 John 3:16

Jesus, Son of God, having died for His people, now leads them

in taking up their crosses to proclaim the Gospel to all nations.

***So, let’s take a look at ourselves in Mark’s mirror. . .***

1. Have I received Jesus, and with Him, forgiveness of sins? John 1:11-13

2. Am I trusting Him fully, living in the light of His resurrection? Rom. 6:1-14

3. Am I engaged in taking the Gospel to others? Matthew 28:18-20