

The Resurrection

Mark 16:1-8 The Message (MSG) translated by Eugene Peterson

16 ¹⁻³ When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices so they could embalm him. Very early on Sunday morning, as the sun rose, they went to the tomb. They worried out loud to each other, “Who will roll back the stone from the tomb for us?”

⁴⁻⁵ Then they looked up, saw that it had been rolled back—it was a huge stone—and walked right in. They saw a young man sitting on the right side, dressed all in white. They were completely taken aback, astonished.

⁶⁻⁷ He said, “Don’t be afraid. I know you’re looking for Jesus the Nazarene, the One they nailed on the cross. He’s been raised up; he’s here no longer. You can see for yourselves that the place is empty. Now—on your way. Tell his disciples and Peter that he is going on ahead of you to Galilee. You’ll see him there, exactly as he said.”

⁸ They got out as fast as they could, beside themselves, their heads swimming. Stunned, they said nothing to anyone.

What lies ahead?

Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome thought they were going to prepare a body that would return to ashes.

We all like to think we know well the path we follow; and we set rather high expectations of what paves the road we follow.

Do we always know what lies ahead?

When you see the signs along the road, “**Road Work Ahead,**” or “**Construction Zone,**” it’s time to slow down and drive with caution.

It’s often a time when we become curious. What are those workers doing? Are they widening the highway? Are they putting down new pipes? What’s happening?

If you drive along that same road day after day, you may wonder when everything will be done, and traffic returned to normal. Is the work finished? No, not yet.

- On Good Friday, we passed a cross roads sign; and daylight turned to darkness. We thought Jesus’ work on the cross was done.
- He had paid the debt we owed for sin; he suffered the penalty we deserved.
- He said, “It is finished,” and bowed his head and died.
- The earth shook, and graves were opened.



- The temple curtain was torn in two.

Jesus' work was done, at least in the normal human thinking, so his friends and followers took up the necessary work that remained to be done on that sad and terrible day. Little do we appreciate how humanity entered a "faith construction" zone ... a construction zone, a transformation zone, a transition zone ... that would last for centuries (a life time).

Joseph of Arimathea asked permission to take the body of Jesus. With the help of Nicodemus, the Lord's body was prepared for burial and placed in Joseph's own unused tomb. A heavy stone was rolled in front of the entrance to the tomb.

Again, we think the work is finished. But, No, not yet.

The women who followed Jesus thought there was still working to be done. Jesus' body had been buried quickly, so once the Sabbath day of rest was past, women carried spices to the tomb to further anoint the body of their Lord.

The women did wonder:

- "Who will roll away the stone for us from the door of the tomb?"
- How will we be able to enter the tomb and do the work we have come to do?

But in the early dawn of that Sunday morning, they weren't the only ones who arrived at the tomb, ready to work.

Like a shattering earthquake, an angel came down from heaven and rolled back the stone. His heavy lifting done, the angel sat down on the stone and invited the frightened women to see for themselves what had happened.

- The tomb was empty! Jesus is alive!
- So, now, is the work done? No ... the work continued. The angel put the women to work:
- "Come, see the place where he lay.
- Then go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead!"
- Come see! — go tell!

Talk about road work ahead! The women took off running. As they ran down the road they met Jesus on the way – there He stood — the crucified one himself,

- real and alive,
- living, breathing, in the flesh
- and they fell and worshiped him.



The risen Lord, had more work for them to do: “Go and tell my brothers!” Come see! Go tell! **Is the work finished?** No, not yet.

For 40 days after his resurrection, Jesus met with his followers. Repeatedly he showed them that he was alive—in the flesh!

- **He invited** them to touch the scars from the crucifixion.
- **He ate** with them.
- **He taught** them about the kingdom of God.
- **He gave** them work to do **and** He gave them energy: “You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”
- **He demonstrated** to them that he was alive.
- **He gave** them permits, blue prints, charts, schematics, written instructions, verbal instructions, **He left** messages, signs, warnings, and opportunity
- **he sent them out** to proclaim his death and resurrection, repentance and forgiveness in his name—and talk about road work ahead! —to the end of the earth.

Come see! — go tell! Is the work finished? No, not yet.

Jesus is alive! Death has been defeated. Death will not separate us from God, in this life time or in eternity.

The curse of the law and the power of sin are broken.

Our sins are forgiven.

In baptism, we were buried with him.

His death became our death, and we were raised with him to new life. The victory won by Jesus Christ is for us.

But the work isn't done yet. It continues. The apostle Paul describes the resurrection of Jesus Christ and the resurrection still to come for us on the Last Day when our risen Lord returns.

Paul offers a few words of encouragement, “Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.”

Get to work, remember that your work is not done in vain. Your work has meaning and purpose because Jesus is alive! Come to the empty tomb and see for



yourselves!

Now get to work and go and tell others about the forgiveness and life that our risen Lord brings.

Use your words and your actions, to be a witness to Jesus' saving death and his victorious resurrection! There is road work ahead! We are in a faith construction zone for life.

Come to the tomb and see! —go tell!

Is the work finished? No, not yet! Amen.

