

But How Do You Know?

Text: Mark 16:1-8

Hymn: "Christ Has Arisen, Alleluia" (LSB 466)

*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.*

*Mark 16:6*

He is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

But how do you know that? Did you see Jesus personally? Did you feel his body? Did you put your hand into his side? On what basis do you declare him raised?

Let me tell you what the basis is. It is the witness of the Gospel. It is the witness of the Scriptures. It is the testimony of those who saw. It is the testimony of those who knew.

And that is why St. Mark's Gospel ends the way it does - at 16:8 - with no resurrection appearances, and with no vision of the risen Christ. Mark's story ends the way you experience resurrection hope! Not with sight. Not with touch. Not with physical evidence. Only with witness. Only with the witness of the Word!

In some ways this is a fearful thing. In fact, the women fled from the tomb on that first Easter morning. They were afraid, having only the witness of the young man, and facing a future that seemed unknown. And so, too, as it were, do you and I.

But there is good reason not to fear. Fear not! We need not fear, because our Lord's word is ever sure! Especially in Mark's Gospel, our Lord's word is ever sure.

Consider what transpires in this book:

Our Lord predicts that the disciples will find a young donkey as they enter Jerusalem before Palm Sunday, and that someone will object to their taking it for him - and it is so.

Our Lord predicts that the two disciples that he sends into Jerusalem to prepare to eat the Passover on Maundy Thursday will be met by a man carrying a water jar - and it is so.

Our Lord predicts that that very man will lead them to the house where someone has an upper room prepared for them to celebrate the Passover - and it is so.

Our Lord predicts that he will be betrayed into the hands of the Jewish leadership - and it is so.

Our Lord predicts that his disciples will stumble and be scattered - and it is so.

Our Lord predicts that he will be mocked, spit upon, and scourged - and it is so.

Our Lord predicts that he will be killed - and it is so.

And - and this is our point today:

Our Lord says that he will rise from the dead on the third day - at 8:31, at 9:31, at 10:34, and at 14:28 - and the testimony of the young man

- not to mention the testimony of Peter (Acts 2:24; 1 Cor. 15:5), of the Twelve (1 Cor. 15:5), of the Five Hundred (1 Cor. 15:6)

- the testimony of St. Paul (1 Cor. 15:8, 12-13)

- and the testimony of the Gospel message preached by the church throughout the ages (1 Cor. 15:4)

the testimony of the young man is that yes, it, too, is so.

This is why the young man's word is all we get in that Easter Morning story in the Gospel of Mark, chapter 16, verse 6. It is all we get, because it is based upon the sure word and promise of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ-

Remember how that young man ends his witness to the women, with the words  
“just as He told you”? -

Such a word is all we really need. Sons and daughters of the king, “He is risen!”  
He is risen, indeed! “Alleluia!” Just as he told you! You have His word on it!

Amen.

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