

Date : 23 Nov 2025
Theme : Servanthood in Mark's Gospel
Topic : Resurrection: Teaching and Evidences
Passage : Mark 12:18-27 and Mark 16:1-14
Key Verse : *"Jesus replied, "Are you not in error because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God?" Mark 12:24 (NIV)*

Introduction

The resurrection of Jesus is central to our faith, yet many misunderstand it due to ignorance of Scripture. But the Bible, including Old Testament passages like *Exodus 3:6*, *Isaiah 26:19*, and *Daniel 12:2*, affirm resurrection as a divine promise. In *Mark 12:24*, Jesus rebuked the Sadducees (*they were aristocratic priests of a certain Jewish religious sect, known for their strict adherence to the Torah but rejected certain doctrines like resurrection*) for not knowing the Scriptures or the power of God - reminding us that truth begins with God's word.

Today, we face similar challenges - being anxious about what happens after death. Indeed, ignorance of God's word results in error.

Vine's Expository Dictionary explains the Greek word, "*anastasis*", as rising of the dead, particularly referring to the resurrection of Christ and of believers.

As we explore Mark's account on the Resurrection, may we experience the power of His resurrection.

1. What did Jesus reveal when questioned on resurrection?

In *Mark 12:18–27*, the Sadducees - who denied the resurrection - posed a hypothetical scenario to trap Jesus. They asked about a woman who had married seven brothers, attempting to ridicule Jesus. Jesus responded with a sharp rebuke, exposing their ignorance of God's word.

His response reveals key truths:

a) Ignorance of God's word results in error

- Ignorance of Scripture leads to false doctrine
 - Anyone with no knowledge of God's word have no way to know the truth.
- Is resurrection true? The Sadducees denied it. (*Mark 12:18–27*).
 - Jesus rebuked them for their question was based on a flawed understanding: *"Are you not in error because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God?" (Mark 12:24).*
 - Jesus used *Exodus 3:6* to show that God is *"the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob"* - not of the dead, but of the living (*Mark 12:27*). This means the patriarchs were alive. Therefore being alive after physical death showed that resurrection is true.

b) Limiting God's power distorts spiritual truth

- The Sadducees assumed resurrection life would mirror earthly life, revealing their ignorance of God's power in raising the dead.
 - When we underestimate God's power, we see human limitations.

- Jesus teaches that resurrection life is different - no marriage, but eternal communion with God. (*Mark 12: 25*)
- Jesus spoke of the future resurrection. He says: “*When the dead rise...*” (*Mark 12:25*)
 - This is the resurrection to eternal life: Believers will rise to eternal life and inherit the kingdom prepared for them (*Matthew 25:31-46*).
- It affirms the power of His resurrection
 - Jesus teaches that resurrection life is similar to that of angels: “*They will be like the angels in heaven*” (v. 25).
 - What does this mean?

(c) The Lord showed us what the resurrection looks like.

The resurrection of Jesus (*Mark 16:1–14*) was a historical event - it is the fulfilment of His plan which He had told the disciples at least 4 times before His death.

- The resurrection confirms God’s covenant with David:
 - “*I have made a covenant with my chosen one... I will establish your offspring forever.*” (*Psalms 89:3–4*)
- It fulfills the promise of redemption and eternal life for His people:
 - “*What God promised our ancestors He has fulfilled for us... by raising up Jesus.*” (*Acts 13:32–33*)
- Jesus’ resurrection is not a surprise - it is the realization of Scripture and His word.

2. Evidences on the Resurrection of Jesus (*Mark 16:1–14*)

Mark highlights three key evidences of Jesus’ resurrection: the empty tomb, angelic testimony, and eyewitness appearances. These are presented to affirm the reality of the resurrection and confront initial disbelief - even among Jesus’ closest followers.

The evidences that Jesus truly rose from the dead as revealed by Mark are:

(a) The Empty Tomb (*Mark 16:1–6*)

- Women (Mary Magdalene, Mary mother of James, Salome) came to anoint Jesus’ body after the Sabbath but found the tomb open and Jesus’ body missing.
 - Why it matters: The empty tomb is the first physical sign that Jesus is no longer dead. It sets the stage for divine revelation and challenges assumptions of finality in death.

But sceptics say they may have gone to the wrong tomb

- We know the women went to the right tomb because:
 - They had witnessed Jesus’ burial. (*Mark 15:47*)
 - The tomb was clearly marked and guarded but the stone covering the tomb was rolled away - it was a new tomb cut out of rock, owned by Joseph of Arimathea. (*Mark 15:46*)

(b) Angelic Testimony (*Mark 16:5–7*)

- A young man in white (an angel) announces “... *He has risen! He is not here.*” (*Mark 16:6*) and invites them to see the place where Jesus was laid.
 - Why it matters: This divine messenger confirms the resurrection with authority. It’s not just an empty tomb—it’s a fulfilled promise. The angel also gives instructions to tell the disciples, showing that resurrection demands proclamation.

(c) Eyewitness Appearances (*Mark 16:9–14*)

- Jesus appears to Mary Magdalene, then to two disciples, and finally to the Eleven.
 - Why it matters: Eyewitness testimony is critical in affirming historical truth. Mark emphasizes that even those closest to Jesus initially refused to believe - making their eventual conviction more powerful and credible.

3. Why does the Resurrection of Jesus matter?

The resurrection of Jesus is a historical event - it is the cornerstone of Christian faith. It confirms the truth of God's word, reveals His power over death, and secures the hope of eternal life for all who believe.

The Resurrection:

Reveals the truth of God's word

- Jesus Himself foretold His resurrection. (*Mark 8:31, Mark 9:31, Mark 10:33–34*)
- It validates Jesus' teachings. If He had remained in the grave, His claims would be false. But the resurrection proves He is who He said He is (*1 Corinthians 15:17*).
- The resurrection fulfils both Old and New Testament prophecies about the Messiah's suffering and rising again. (*Psalms 16:10; Jonah 1:17; Matthew 12:40; Acts 2:25–28, 31; Acts 13:35*)

Identifies Jesus as Lord and Son of God

- The resurrection is the ultimate proof that Jesus is the Son of God:
 - "...appointed the Son of God in power by His resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord." (*Romans 1:4*)
 - God raised Him up, validating His divine mission. (*Acts 2:22–24*)
- It demonstrates His power over sin and death (*1 Corinthians 15:3–4*).

Secures our hope of eternal life

- Because He rose, we too shall rise:
 - "*The one who believes in me will live, even though they die...*" (*John 11:25–26*)
 - Jesus is the firstfruits of the resurrection (*1 Corinthians 15:20*), guaranteeing the future resurrection of all who believe.
 - His victory over death assures us of our own. (*Romans 6:8–10*)
 - Believers can now live with confidence beyond the grave, anchored in the promise of eternal life.

Ends the power of death

- Death is no longer the final word. Jesus' resurrection breaks its power:
 - "Death has been swallowed up in victory." (*1 Corinthians 15:54–57*)
 - It inspires hope and courage in believers in the face of mortality, knowing that death has been conquered.

Nurtures faith and Empowers the church

- The resurrection is the foundation of Christian faith and the fuel for mission:

- Without it, our preaching and faith are in vain (*1 Corinthians 15:14*).
- It energizes believers to live boldly, serve faithfully, and proclaim the gospel with joy.
- His resurrection is proof of God's promises and the anchor of our eternal hope.

4. The Resurrection demands a response

God's word urges us to respond to the resurrection of Jesus with faith, live transformed life in His Spirit, and proclaim the power of His resurrection.

- Strive to *"know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead."* (*Philippians 3:10-11*)

(i) Believe in the Power of God

- Trust that God is not bound by human limitations
 - God is able raise the dead and transform lives (*Mark 12:24*).
- Recognize that Jesus' resurrection affirms God's authority over life and death.

(ii) Live with Eternal Perspective

- Understand that this life is not the end (*Mark 12:25*)
- Embrace the new life offered through the risen Savior
 - Let the hope of resurrection shape your values, relationships, and priorities (*Mark 12:26–27*).
- Walk in resurrection power—with courage, joy, and purpose (*1 Corinthians 15:58*).

(iii) Proclaim and Respond to the Risen Christ

- Share the good news boldly, like the women at the tomb proclaiming that Jesus is risen (*Mark 16:6–7*)
 - The angel told the women, *"Go quickly and tell his disciples: 'He has risen from the dead!'"*
 - The apostles gave powerful witness to the resurrection, and great grace was upon them all. (*Acts 4:33*)
- Be faithful in testimony, even when others doubt (*Mark 16:10–11*)
- Respond personally—Jesus seeks relationship, as seen in His appearance to Mary Magdalene (*Mark 16:9*)
- Let your encounter with Christ fuel your witness and devotion.

Application

1. Does ignorance of Scripture matter? ☐
2. How will you raise the issue as to why the resurrection matters? ☐
3. **"Go and Tell":** What 3 things regarding Jesus' resurrection comply with Scripture? ☐