

Jesus Is Alive!

Mark 16:1-8

One of the saddest statements in the whole Bible is Mark 14:50. Jesus had poured himself into the 12 disciples for three years. But when he surrendered to the authorities, “everyone deserted him and fled.” Jesus, the Son of God, was left to face an agonizing and undeserved death alone.

Fortunately, the story doesn’t end there. Easter changed everything!

The first question skeptics ask about Jesus’ resurrection is “Why do the Gospel writers all tell different stories?” To answer that question, think about an exciting event in your life at which several people were present. If you asked them to tell about the events of that day, would all their versions of the story be exactly the same? Of course not. We all see things from different perspectives and remember different details of what we see. That’s exactly what happened with the Gospel writers’ telling of Jesus’ resurrection. All seeming contradictions arise out of their slightly different views of events and can easily be resolved when one accepts that truth. In fact, if all the accounts were exactly the same, a critic would say that the authors had collaborated to make up the story. And, thanks to these different viewpoints, the accounts we have—as orchestrated by God—give us a more nearly complete picture of what happened than if only one Gospel had been written.

The angel’s proclamation “He has risen!” was the most wonderful news anyone could have given to Jesus’ followers. He was alive, and they were to meet him! Why did the angel mention Peter specifically? Peter—the bold one—had fear-

fully denied Jesus three times the night of his trial and then had broken down and wept (Mark 14:66-72). Now that Jesus was alive, Peter would likely wonder if Jesus would accept him. The angel left no doubt of Jesus’ forgiveness by telling the women at the tomb, “Go tell his disciples and Peter.”

Why do we celebrate Easter? The Apostle Paul eloquently tells us, “If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins. The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Corinthians 15:17, 56-57). What more could we ask? “Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!” (2 Corinthians 9:15).

Devotion for Teachers

The One Thing: We don’t serve a dead leader like most other religions. Jesus is alive! Because he lives, we can each have a dynamic and growing relationship with him!

Weaving Faith Into Your Life: How can you thank God for the indescribable gift of Jesus and the world-rocking, sin-shattering, life-revolutionizing power of his resurrection? Make this Easter Sunday special. Turn aside from distractions like bunnies and eggs, and focus instead on the *real* gift of Easter: new life through Jesus’ death and resurrection. And don’t be timid; tell others “He is risen!”