



## 2024 3Q The Book of Mark Lesson 13 The Risen Lord

by Stan Baldwin

### Introduction

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I'm relatively new to this community so let me introduce myself, I'm Stanley Baldwin. I graduated from the Seminary at Andrews and for 12 years pastored and then I made a career change and became a Bible teacher in one of our Academies. Three years later I became the Principal and for the next 25 years or so I was a school administrator and by choice I also taught one or two Bible classes each year.

However, I must confess that the last decade or so I have listened to and read Tim's materials and I am changing. I have developed a radically new concept of God the Father and I'm thrilled at the Godhead's plan to redeem their creation, and I joyously await the final conclusion of the Great Controversy.

As we get into the lesson today you will notice that I use a power point presentation to help keep me on track and help you know where I am going! I also use pictures because many if not most people are visual learners.

This week we will be studying the last lesson for this quarter, so, I thought it would be appropriate to take a look back at just who the author of the Biblical book of Mark was and who was the author of our lessons.

In the story of Jesus and then in the Early Christian Church we first meet John Mark, the author of this Gospel, in Acts 12. Evidently he and his mother, also a Mary, had been followers of Jesus for some time and were well known among the disciples for opening their home to them as a place of meeting as well as a place to stay while they were in Jerusalem. Their home may very well have been the "upper room" spoken of in Acts 1:13 where the apostles stayed after the resurrection. So young John Mark must have known Jesus and His Disciples quite well.

After the resurrection John Mark worked with his cousin Barnabas in ministry, and later also with Paul and Peter, constantly growing spiritually and becoming a pillar among the early Christians even though he had quit part way through Paul's first missionary tour.

Early Christian tradition from the 2<sup>nd</sup> century (the 100's) credits John Mark as the author of the Gospel of Mark. But they have an interesting backstory on how and why the Gospel of Mark came to be the first written Gospel sometime between 50 and 70 AD before the destruction of Jerusalem. Eusebius wrote in the 4<sup>th</sup> century and based on Papias and others from the 2<sup>nd</sup> century he says this:

“But a great light of religion shone on the minds of the hearers of Peter, so that they were not satisfied with a single hearing or with the unwritten teaching of the divine proclamation, but with every kind of exhortation besought Mark (whose Gospel is extant) seeing that he was Peter’s follower, to leave them a written statement of the teaching given them verbally, nor did they cease until they had persuaded him, and so became the cause of the Scripture called the Gospel according to Mark. And they say that the Apostle (Peter), knowing by the revelation of the Spirit to him what had been done, was pleased at their zeal, and ratified the scripture for study in the churches.” -- Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, (New York, G. H. Putnam’s Sons, 1926), in the fourth century using Papias from the second century as a source.

Now let’s turn our attention to the author of our SS Lessons: Thomas Shepherd. The Pacific Press biography of him says this: Dr. Shepherd is a senior research professor of New Testament at the SDA Theological Seminary at Andrews University. He also is the pastor of the Eau Claire and Dowagiac SDA Churches in Michigan. He is the author of the forth-coming SDA International Bible Commentary on the Gospel of Mark.

Now just remember that any author of the SS Lessons has their manuscript heavily edited by the GC SS department to meet the format and sometimes the theology of the GC Administration. Not all of what you read in the lessons can be said to be Dr. Shepherd’s. I will be interested to read what the new Bible Commentary will say!

Dr. Shepherd’s view of the Gospel of Mark is based on a literary approach to reading and understanding the gospel recorded by John Mark. Shepherd sees Mark dividing His Gospel into two sections: Mark 1-8 which is focused on who Jesus is (the Messiah) and chapters 9-16 which are focused on where He is going (Calvary and the resurrection). Inside these two sections are the actions and teachings of Jesus that answer those questions of who He is and where is He going.

My interpretation of these lessons then is that Mark focused on who Jesus was, the Messiah prophesied in the OT. Jesus was a human being like us yet He was what God had originally designed us to be like and then Mark focuses on where Jesus was going, even though He was God with immense creative power. Jesus could dominate weather, demons, illness, and even death, but He chose to allow His creation to torture and kill Him to demonstrate His worthiness to be trusted completely with our lives just as the human Jesus trusted God with His life even unto death. The human Jesus’ total trust in God was vindicated Sunday morning with His resurrection. We are all conceived and born terminally infected with sin but Jesus has provided us with the option to choose adoption into God’s kingdom of love and eternal life by cooperating with God and having our character changed. Now, again, that is my understanding!

## **SABBATH**

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But he said to them, “Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He is risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid him.” Mark 16:6 NKJV

Two pronouns in the first 5 words! Who do they refer to?

Gabriel (DA 780).

Women who came to embalm Jesus. (Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome)

This is the climax to the whole book of Mark. Without this glorious announcement the story of Jesus would be just another story of a reformer rejected. Gabriel has the privilege of making the greatest announcement of all time to these 3 privileged ladies and later to Peter and John. This seems a rather understated way of announcing the greatest victory in human history! In fact it was a universe wide demonstration and vindication of God’s deep, unselfish love of each and every creature He has ever created.

As a SDA Christian I believe we have probably over emphasized Christ’s death and definitely under emphasized His resurrection. You cannot celebrate one without the other. Christ’s death would be valueless unless He was resurrected. So where was the angelic choir like the one at His birth? I believe they were there just unseen and unheard by unappreciative humanity.

However, the empty tomb wasn’t the only evidence that Christ was risen. The angel in the very next verse reminds the three women that Jesus was going to meet the disciples and Peter in Galilee.

## **SUNDAY**

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### **Rejoicing in the Resurrection**

For most Christians the weekend of Christ’s crucifixion is well accepted, however there are those that argue that the Messiah wasn’t crucified on Friday thereby this story does not provide supporting evidence for Sabbath sacredness if Christ didn’t rest in the grave over the Sabbath.

However, the Jews used numerical names for the days of the week, except for the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> days of the week. Friday, which was called the Preparation day and followed by the 7<sup>th</sup> day of the week, the Sabbath. The verses in numbers 1-3 above conclusively, I believe, place Jesus crucifixion over what we call a weekend.

Another timing controversy, a little more widespread possibly, That is how long was Jesus in the grave. Old Testament prophecies and Jesus’ own statements seem to point to the Messiah’s death lasting 3 full days. For example: Mark 8:31 Jesus says, “that He must be killed and after three days rise again.” And Matt. 12:40 even says 3 days and 3 nights! Whereas, the resurrection stories in the Gospels place Jesus in the tomb for 35 hours or so, a few hours on Friday, all day on Sabbath and then

a few hours on Sunday. That is only about half the 72 hours of three full days! However, that does not take into account the Jewish inclusive method of reckoning time since Jesus was in the tomb on parts of three days. Just another of Satan's attempts to discredit the Scriptures and the Sabbath.

Our belief system must be based on evidence. The angels words in the verse after our memory verse teach us that Blind Faith is NOT part of Mark's Gospel. Because the angel tells the women to remind the disciples and Peter that Jesus promised before His death that He would meet them in Galilee and they could see Him there. Ellen White in DA 818 has this to say:

“At the meeting on a mountain in Galilee, **all the believers** who could be called together were assembled. Of this meeting Christ Himself, before His death, had designated the time and place...They made their way to the place of meeting by circuitous routes, coming in from every direction, to avoid exciting the suspicion of the jealous Jews. With wondering hearts they came, talking earnestly together of the news that had reached them concerning Christ.

“At the time appointed, **about five hundred believers** were collected in little knots on the mountainside, eager to learn all that could be learned from those who had seen Christ since His resurrection...**Suddenly Jesus stood among them.** No one could tell whence or how He came. Many who were present had never before seen Him; but **in His hands and feet they beheld the marks of the crucifixion**; His countenance was as the face of God, and when they saw Him, they worshiped Him.” – Desire of Ages, pp 818, 819, emphasis mine

**Evidence!** NOT blind faith!

Real, hard, evidence that the man Jesus who had really died on a cross really was alive! The Disciples had No question. Jesus was the Messiah foretold in Scripture.

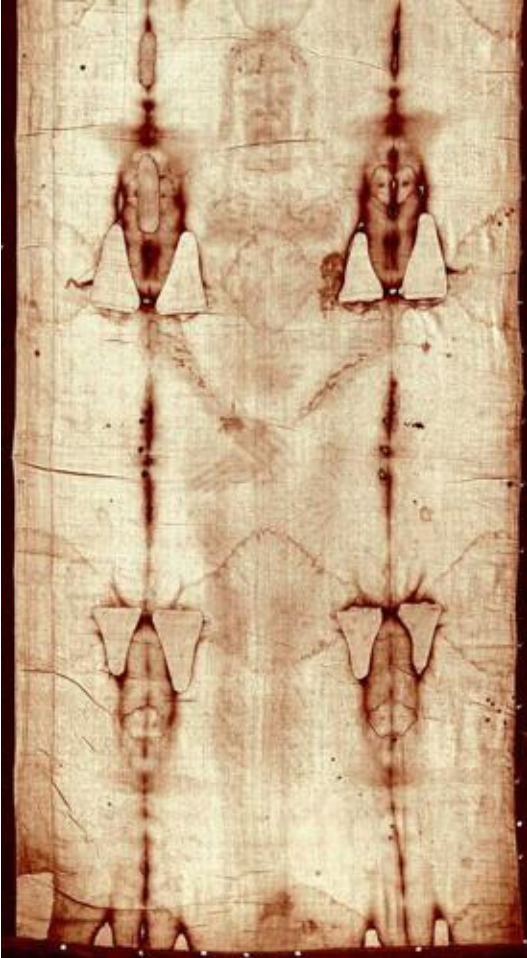
Have you heard of the Shroud of Turin?

In the last month or so the shroud of Turin has been in the news again. Supposedly a new more accurate method of dating the linen could verify its authenticity--or not. So far dating it is somewhat inconclusive, it has moved the time frame in which the linen was made, so, it is possible that the shroud comes from the time of Christ's death.

Our “faith” in His resurrection isn't based on some highly technical, “scientific,” data! It is based on evidence. Is the shroud of Turin conclusive evidence? No. We don't need it! Satan will do anything to “disprove” the resurrection in our minds.

The Shroud of Turin, a linen cloth revered by many as the burial shroud of Jesus Christ, has mystified scholars and believers alike for centuries. First unveiled in the 1350s, the shroud displays a faint image of a man, which has been the subject of intense debate regarding its origins and authenticity.

When it was initially presented, the Shroud was heralded as the actual burial cloth used to wrap the body of Christ after his crucifixion. The image on the shroud, depicting a bearded man with his arms



First recorded appearance was in the 1350's. Claimed to be the cloth Jesus' body was wrapped in at His death.

crossed, was believed by many to be a miraculous imprint of Jesus himself. However, scientific research in the 1980s cast doubt on this claim, dating the fabric to the Middle Ages, long after Jesus lived.

[Recent studies](#) by Italian scientists, employing cutting-edge techniques involving x-rays, [have reignited the debate by dating the shroud's material to around 2,000 years ago](#), a timeline consistent with the era of Jesus. This finding supports the theory that the bloodstained pattern on the shroud could indeed have been left by Jesus' body after his crucifixion.

In the latest study, researchers from Italy's Institute of Crystallography of the National Research Council applied a technique called wide-angle X-ray scattering (WAXS) to date the shroud. This method analyzes the natural aging of flax cellulose, converting it into a timeline from the fabric's manufacture. The team examined eight small samples from the Shroud of Turin, using X-rays to reveal intricate details of the linen's structure and the breakdown of its cellulose over time.



To validate their findings, the researchers [compared the shroud's cellulose degradation with that of other linens discovered in Israel](#) dating back to the first century. They found that the data profiles were consistent with linen samples dated between 55 and 74 AD, such as those found at Masada, Israel, Herod's ancient fortress overlooking the Dead Sea.

Conversely, when the shroud's degradation was compared with linens from the medieval period (1260–1390 AD), no similarities were found. <https://www.thearchaeologist.org/blog/new-findings-reinforce-the-authenticity-debate-of-the-turin-shroud>

Another note from Sunday's lesson. If we don't memorialize the resurrection by worshipping on Sunday, the first day of the week, the day Christ was resurrected, then when or how do we recognize, memorialize, or celebrate the pivotable basis for our beliefs?

Romans 6:3 and 4 is where Paul succinctly says: *"[we] were baptized into His death. We were therefore buried with Him through baptism into death in order that just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life."*

Paul here explicitly says baptism is that celebratory memorial. However I like the text in Colossians that the Quarterly refers to, but let's read it in the Remedy:

“...and through Him you have been given the character of Christ who is the supreme Lord over all other powers and authorities. By trust in Him, your hearts have been cut away (circumcised) from everything that destroys, so the selfish motives no longer control you. This cutting out of selfishness (circumcision) did not come about by human effort or by works, but by the cutting (circumcision) power of the truth brought by Christ. Having been immersed (baptized) into the truth of Christ Jesus, you have been immersed (baptized) into selflessness and have died to selfishness, and through trusting in the power of God who called Christ back from the dead, you are renewed with His character and principles.” -- Colossians 2:10-12 (Remedy)

Baptism is only the public acknowledgement that you want to cooperate with the Holy Spirit in changing your character, that you want to be adopted into the Kingdom of God and reflect His character of unselfish love contrary to the sinful, selfish character that all of us are born with.

Every time we witness a baptism it reminds us of our public commitment we made at our baptism AND every time Satan tempts us or we notice the Holy Spirit at work in our lives it should remind us of our baptismal commitment, our death to selfishness and resurrection to selflessness. Too bad we don't celebrate one another's spiritual growth and praise God for the results of the resurrection in each growing Christian.

We have already mentioned the empty tomb which was evidence enough for Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome (according to Mark 16:1) who went to anoint the body of Jesus. And we have already talked about the 500 believers who met Jesus in Galilee and confirmed that it was

really the resurrected Jesus. Even so there were and still are some doubters. Notice what EGW says about doubt:

**“God never asks us to believe, without giving sufficient evidence upon which to base our faith.** His existence, His character, the truthfulness of His word, are all established by testimony that appeals to our reason; and this testimony is abundant. Yet **God has never removed the possibility of doubt.** Our faith must rest upon evidence, not demonstration. Those who wish to doubt will have opportunity; while those who really desire to know the truth will find plenty of evidence on which to rest their faith.” Steps to Christ, pg 105 (emphasis mine).

I almost didn't include this quote because of just two words that bother me. "Our faith must rest upon evidence, NOT DEMONSTRATION." Wasn't it part of the mission of Jesus to demonstrate the character of the Trinity? Don't Biblical stories demonstrate how God deals with sin and sinners as well as with all His creation?

Then I saw an episode of AGT. A young Korean magician—20's—did some very amazing magical things up close, demonstrations of removing his little finger or his thumb from his hand and then putting them back on--no blood! Just because he apparently removed a finger doesn't mean it really happened.

Satan, the ultimate magician, will appear as Christ, and we cannot believe in him just because of this visual and auditory demonstration! Scripture, personal experience, the testimony of others, and "science" rightly understood, all must agree before we can know the truth. Satan has attacked all of these lines of evidence and that is why each of us must study and decide for ourselves what we will believe.

But even with all the evidence there will still be doubters.

## **MONDAY**

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This lesson mentions three other lines of evidence although there are others. First Dr. Shepherd mentions "Creation." The Creation story of Gen. 1 and 2 is the bedrock of Christianity. Evolution does away with creation and in so doing does away with God, Sin, Heaven and hell! However, if you believe in Creation then you believe in the mighty creative power of God which would include His ability to raise the dead.

Shepherd then mentions the explanation of the Pharisees for the empty tomb—the Disciples had stolen the body! That was patently impossible since that was the very reason the Roman Guard had been sent to secure the tomb! The presence of the Guards and their testimony in reality supports the resurrection of Jesus.

The third additional evidence Shepherd mentions is the meteoritic rise of the Christian Church with thousands of people who have been martyred for their belief in the resurrection of Jesus, including 10 of the 11 original faithful Disciples.

And then it is interesting to note Paul's argument for the reality of the resurrection in 1 Cor. 15:

### **Paul's Evidence for the Resurrection**

#### **First the Positive Evidence**

1 Cor. 15:3, 4 "...of **first importance**: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that He was buried, that He was raised on the third day **according to the Scriptures.**"

1 Cor. 15:5-8 "...and that **He appeared**...to more than five hundred of the brethren."

#### **Then the Negative Evidence**

1 Cor. 15:17 "And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins."

1 Cor. 15: 29, 30 "Now, if there is no resurrection...why are people baptized for them (the dead)?"

You will notice that the Resurrection of Christ is of "First Importance" to Paul. His first point is that Christ's resurrection is in fulfillment of prophecy in the O. T. Secondly, Jesus was seen by some 500 people some of whom were still alive about 25 years later when Paul wrote 1 Cor. Implication is that you can go and ask them for yourself!

Please understand, negative evidence is not conclusive only supportive. If Christ was not resurrected then He was still dead and had failed in His mission to reveal the true character of the Trinity and to rescue their creation. If so, then the whole Gospel message was false, and as Implied in vs. 32 we might as well "eat, drink, and be merry for tomorrow we die" because at death it is all over, no after-life, no heaven, no hell--atheism. BTW that reflects one of Satan's gospels!

1 Cor. 15:29, 30 is Paul's last argument and it seems pretty weak to me. Evidently being baptized for the dead was widely known if not widely practiced in Paul's day. He was just saying that belief in life after death was not unique to Christians. It was probably much like our Mormon friends today who baptize for the dead. NOTE: I am NOT suggesting we baptize for the dead! Paul is just using a well known activity to support his preaching of the resurrection since if there is no resurrection from the dead then being baptized for them is pointless!

Now we come to Mark 16:8.

Most scholars agree that Mark 16:8 is the last original verse in the book of Mark. The two oldest manuscripts containing the full book of Mark including chapter 16 are, the Sinaiticus and the Vaticanus which come from the 4<sup>th</sup> century (300s), they do NOT include verses 9-20. Verses 9-20 don't begin to show up until the manuscripts coming from the 5<sup>th</sup> century (400s) and after that most manuscripts contain them. These last few verses portray events all of which show up in the other Gospels and so have been included in most modern Bibles, often with some kind of note regarding their late addition.



When we leave vs. 9-20 out, it leaves us with a very awkward ending.

“Trembling and bewildered, the women went out and fled from the tomb. They said nothing to anyone, because they were afraid.” -- Mark 16:8 NIV

This may reflect Peter’s style of preaching or it may represent Mark’s style of writing. Anyway, Dr. Shepherd elsewhere points out that like Jesus’ parable of the Parodical Son which has a similar ending, leaving us hanging about the older son, was he going into the celebration or remaining outside? Here we are left hanging with the question, if the women told no one then who is going to spread this the greatest news in all the history of the universe?

Of course the answer is... I’ll leave it to you to make the application!