**“EYES ON JESUS” JOURNEY THROUGH THE GOSPEL OF MARK**

**“FINAL INSTRUCTIONS”**

***We are concluding our 10-month journey through the gospel of Mark.***

We end our Journey of Mark with the final chapter of Mark, Chapter 16, verses 9-20.

In some versions, this is considered the “2nd Ending” of Mark.

The reason for this is that some of the earliest manuscripts of the New Testament that were discovered did NOT contain these verses in Mark, and ended at Mark 16:8.

These are; Codex Vaticanus and Codex Sinaiticus (c. 326-360AD)

HOWEVER, The majority of ancient New Testament manuscripts, that were written shortly after these, DID contain these verses (and others that were omitted by Codex Vaticanus and Codex Sinaiticus).

Most modern Bibles that contain the longer version of Mark 16 are based upon the *Textus Receptus*, a translation built largely upon the “*Latin Vulgate*” by Jerome of Stridon, who was commissioned in 382 to translate the *known Greek texts* into Latin.

*[ Harvard course; “Christianity Through Its Scriptures” There are many reasons why the debates about ancient manuscripts continue, many more manuscripts and fragments than most common studiers know about.*

*The most impressive thing about the study of ancient Christian scriptures is how congruent and consistent they are with each other and with the entire Word of God. Offering incredible harmony and agreement without any strategic man-made plan for synchronization. (Truly Divinely Inspired).]*

It’s possible that Peter, who likely dictated this gospel to John Mark felt the need to add some details of the post-resurrection Jesus, which may have been written at a later date.

Either way, the last chapter is inspiring and powerful, just like the rest of the gospel, so we include in our study of Mark.

As with all scripture, we read with understanding but learn from illumination as the Holy Spirit teaches us the Word of God.

That’s how we’ll approach the final chapter of Mark as we conclude our Series; “Eyes On Jesus”;

**Mark 16:9-20 “**When Jesus rose early on the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had driven seven demons. **10**She went and told those who had been with him and who were mourning and weeping. **11**When they heard that Jesus was alive and that she had seen him, they did not believe it.

**12**Afterward Jesus appeared in a different form to two of them while they were walking in the country. **13**These returned and reported it to the rest; but they did not believe them either.

**14**Later Jesus appeared to the Eleven as they were eating; he rebuked them for their lack of faith and their stubborn refusal to believe those who had seen him after he had risen.

They most likely refused to believe Mary Magdalene. They were succumbing to the doubt that they were tempted with. Not only did they doubt Jesus who had clearly told them this would happen, they doubted Mary, probably because of the reasons stated in v. 9 “*out of whom he had driven seven demons”.*

**15**He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. **16**Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.

This is Mark’s version of the “Great Commission” which is more popularly known in Matthew’s gospel;

**Matt 28:19**Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, **20**and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.

Here is where it gets wild.

The next details of the next verses don’t necessarily correspond with the other gospels, as much as they do with the book of Acts;

 **17**And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues; **18**they will pick up snakes with their hands; and when they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them at all; they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well.”

List of signs;

1. Drive out Demons
2. Speak in new tongues
3. Pick Up Snakes
4. Drink Deadly Poison – not be hurt
5. Place Hands on Sick people and heal them

LET’S LOOK AT EACH OF THESE;

**Drive out Demons** – We see this in both the gospels and Acts, as Jesus drove out many demons, and so did Paul in Acts 16 and 19

**Speak in new tongues –** Evidenced in both the miracle of languages ion Acts Chapter 2, and “speaking in tongues” in Acts 10 & 19, and 1st Cor .12,13,& 14

**Pick Up Snakes –** Paul in Malta (Acts 28) as he was throwing some brush into the fire a poisonous snake fastened itself to his arm, he threw it into the fire and continued unharmed, (the locals thought he must be a god).

**Drink Deadly Poison and not be hurt** – [No Biblical record of this?]

**Place Hands on Sick people and heal them –** Many instances of this in Acts and beyond;

* Ananias layed hands on Saul in Acts 9 and healed his blindness.
* Back in Malta, Paul layed hands on the father of the Chief of the Island and he was healed.
* Sometimes people were healed or delivered in other ways or all at once, like in the case of Philip;

**Acts 8:5-7** “Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ to them. **6**And the multitudes with one accord heeded the things spoken by Philip, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did.  **7**For unclean spirits, crying with a loud voice, came out of many who were possessed; and many who were paralyzed and lame were healed.”

**FINAL VERSE OF MARK:**

**Mark 16:19-20**“After the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, he was taken up into heaven and he sat at the right hand of God. **20**Then the disciples went out and **preached everywhere**, and the Lord worked with them and confirmed his word by the signs that accompanied it.”

They **preached everywhere**, and **the Lord worked with them** and **confirmed his word by the signs** that accompanied it.”

Just like Jesus used these methods and *many more* to heal people or deliver them, so did the apostles after Him. There was not one set method for signs, wonders and miracles .There still isn’t .The Holy Spirit does it WHEN he wills and HOW he wills. It’s not up to us, it’s up to Him. Our job is to Preach the gospel and let God do the miracles.

In Jesus’s final commission(s), his marching orders are to;

 Make Disciples, be my Witnesses, and Preach the Gospel

* Matthew: “go and make disciples of all nations””
* Mark: “Go into all the world and preach the gospel”
* Luke: “repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations”
* Acts 1:8 “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

**Signs and Wonders**

Should we follow signs and wonders or should they follow us?

“And these signs will follow those who believe…” (Mark 16:17 - NKJV)

Many Christians get that backwards.

They seek signs and wonders, they look for them to solidify their faith, to galvanize their belief in God’s favor and His power, and never see enough of them to satiate their appetite for proof of God’s presence, so they begin to doubt and struggle with unbelief.

(Final Verse of Mark – KJV)

**Mark 16:20** “And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs *following*.”

 *“Go and preach everywhere”, then Let the Lord do His work.”*

We all want to see God move mightily in our time. We want to see the miraculous signs that accompanied (followed) the apostles as they walked in the commission that Jesus prepared them for.

The problem is, if we seek the signs, we won’t find them.

Sometimes people get confused between, “Signs and wonders” and “Supernatural gifts”, they are not always the same.

But doesn’t the Bible say to “seek” Spiritual Gifts?

No, it’s a common misquote of 1st Cor. 14:1 which says;

“*desire* spiritual gifts”

“Desire” is different than “seek” or even “Pursue”.

In fact the actual verse says;

**1st Cor. 14:1** “*Pursue* Love, and *earnestly desire* spiritual gifts….”

If you want to *pursue* something, *pursue Love.*

If you want to *seek* something, *seek Jesus!*

and if those things are true in you…

You will love people enough, and seek Jesus so much, that you will find yourself preaching the good news to those he loves and wants to save.

And as you focus on these things, perhaps signs and wonders will follow.

Famous Quote by; AW Tozer about AB Simpson regarding seeking spiritual gifts

(which can also be applied to signs and wonders);

“seek not, forbid not”

Which means, let’s not *seek* anything other than Jesus,

But let’s not *forbid or reject* anything that He may be doing among us, particularly the supernatural.

As we live our lives, God will put us in situations where, *if* we are obedient to follow His simple leading, and willing to take a few steps of faith…

*Where He will do* ***amazing things*** *among us and through us,*

…sometimes even miracles!

***[Michael Matt (video – testimony) ]***

*AMAZING!*

I believe that God wants us to amaze us as we humbly and obediently do His will.

He is an Amazing God and wants to do Amazing things in us, around us and through us!

In fact; “Amazement” is a common theme Gospel of Mark;

* In Mark 1:22 the people are “*amazed* by his teaching.”
* In 1:27, they reiterate their *amazement* at his teaching *and* at his command of unclean spirits.
* 2:12 shows the people *amazed* at the healing of the paralytic.
* In 5:20, “All were *amazed*” after Jesus healed the Gerasene Demoniac.
* 6:2 shows the people *amazed* again at his teaching.
* 6:51 the disciples are *amazed* at Jesus’ walking on the water,
* 7:37 the crowd has gone back to being *amazed* at Jesus’ curing of a deaf man.
* In 11:18 and 12:17 they stand *amazed* at his teaching.
* 15:5 there is a new subject who is amazed: Pilate is *amazed* at the lack of a reply from Jesus in his own defense at his trial.
* 16:8 – (The final verse in Mark’s first ending) “So they went out quickly and fled from the tomb, for they trembled and were *amazed*.”

**Conclusion of “Eyes on Jesus”:**

**Mark 16:20** “And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen!”

**Let’s keep our Eyes on Jesus,**

**Let’s Make Disciples, Let’s be His Witnesses, Let’s Preach the Gospel**

**And prepare to be Amazed…**