

The Law of Cause and Effect

The end of Mark, the beginning of Christianity

The existence of Christianity demands an explanation. What is the cause that set the movement in motion?

The Death of Jesus

Jesus died

Vs. 43 – asked for the body

Vs. 44 – Surprised to hear that he died

Vs. 45 – When he learned he was dead, he gave the corpse to Joseph

Eyewitnesses

Mary Magdalene – a woman released from severe demonic oppression

Mary, the mother of James and Joses – James and Joses were well known in the early church

Salome – the wife of Zebedee, and mother of the disciples James and John

Impossible to make up

Because of the women

Because of the post resurrection disbelief of the disciples...

On the road to Emmaus

(Doubting) Thomas

Matthew 28:17 “When they saw him, they worshiped him, but some doubted.”

Because of vs. 44!

The point: the authors of Scripture were concerned not with making up a convincing story. They were concerned with the truth.

The Burial of Jesus

Why the burial is important

It is a part of his humiliation

It is a fulfillment of prophecy, Isaiah 53:9 “They made his grave...with a rich man in death.”

All the ancient creeds go out of their way to specify that he was buried, because it highlights the historical nature of what happened

About the tomb

The Empty Tomb

Two (actually three) Interpretations of the Empty Tomb

The human interpretation

The angelic interpretation

“History can declare that Jesus’ body disappeared, but this baffling fact fails to communicate the gospel. The event of Jesus’ resurrection is open to understanding only through a word of revelation received in faith. The focus of Mark’s account falls, therefore, upon the presence of the divine messenger and the disclosure of truth.” – *William Lane*

Peter’s interpretation

The ending... is the beginning

Note on the “Long Ending of Mark”

Mark 16:9-20 was probably not written by Mark. We know this because of an academic discipline called textual criticism. Text criticism is a very precise science by which the original words of an author are determined, and no book has been more thoroughly investigated by text critics than the Bible. When this discipline is properly understood, it strongly reinforces that indeed we have a reliable reproduction of the original words of Paul, Peter, Mark, etc. If you are interested in researching textual criticism, or specifically the long ending of Mark, I would point you toward www.gotquestions.org (which is run by a graduate of Dallas Theological Seminary). Search “what is textual criticism” and “Mark’s long ending” and you will find articles which you can read to your heart’s content. -*Pastor Brian*

Questions for Personal Study

1. How does this passage show us that the writers of Scripture were concerned with the truth?
2. Why is it important to know that the Christian faith is rooted in solid, historical fact? What would change if it was just an opinion or a possibility?
3. What do you think of the women’s response?
4. Imagine being Peter. Would Jesus wanting to talk to you be good news or bad?