

## THE APPEARANCES OF THE KING

Wednesday, September 6

Reading: Mark 16:9-14

**Mark 16:11** *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.*

The last 12 verses of Mark are one of the biggest textual problems in the New Testament. The earliest Greek manuscripts we have do not contain these verses. The style of Greek used in these verses does not match the rest of the book. The early Church Fathers were split in their opinions as to the authenticity of these verses. These and other technical details have brought many to conclude that Mark did not write these verses and that they were added later by another author. I tend to agree with this view.

It appears that very early on a scribe added verses 9-20 to “complete” the story. This addition was accepted very quickly as a reliable witness by Christian leaders such as Justin Martyr (c. AD 148) and Tatian (c. AD 170). Whatever the opinion on these final verses, they are consistent with the rest of the New Testament and relate events that are given in more detail in the other gospels. We may therefore read them with confidence.

Mark 16:9-14 contrasts the testimony of those who saw Jesus with the unbelieving disciples. Jesus’ appearance to Mary Magdalene is recorded in John 20. His appearance to the two on the road to Emmaus is found in Luke 24. To the disillusioned disciples, this testimony seemed like fairy tales. Finally, Jesus appears to the Eleven Himself (Judas has hanged himself) and rebukes them for their lack of faith.

### POINTS TO PONDER:

1. “When They Heard They Did Not Believe It.” Sorrow and grief can cloud our minds to the truth. Despite multiple witnesses to Jesus’ resurrection, the disciples will not believe. But when Jesus finally appears and gets a hold of their hearts everything changes. They had been in despair and unbelief, hiding for fear of their lives. Then suddenly they are boldly preaching in the Temple and facing prison and death at the hands of the same men who had condemned Jesus. They were now willing to die for Christ. What happened? The only answer is they had been changed by the resurrection of Jesus Christ! In what substantial way has Jesus changed your life? Are there differences between who you were before getting saved and who you are now? What evidence can others see of the difference Jesus has made in your life?
2. “He Rebuked Them for Their Lack of Faith.” Jesus had told them He would meet them in Galilee after His resurrection (Mark 14:28). The angel at the tomb confirmed this message (Mark 16:7). But the unbelief and stubbornness of the disciples forced Jesus to come to them in their “hideout” in Jerusalem first. How often does our own fear and lack of faith stop us from doing what Jesus has commanded? Do we sit around in “hiding” when Jesus wants us to get up and go? Does Jesus need to rebuke us for failing to carry out His word?