

HE IS RISEN

By

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Unless otherwise stated, all scripture quotations in this booklet are taken from the New King James Version of the Bible.

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Scripture Readings: Mark 16:1-9 & 1 Cor.15:1-20

Mark 16:1] “That they might come and anoint Him.” It never ceases to amaze me that these two women were going to move a big stone. Did you ever think about that?

V6]: “He is risen!” Do you hear me, He has risen! V9] “Out of whom He had cast seven demons.” What do you think of that? Yet there she is, the first woman privileged to see the risen Lord. A woman who was demon possessed; a woman who was ruled by the devil. Seven is the number of perfection and completion - and here was a woman who was sold to Satan. She was a child of Satan and, when Jesus had finished with her, she became a child of God.

He is alive; [1 Cor.15] V1] “I declare to you.” You see the gospel is not to be molly-coddled. Do you understand what that means? You will know whenever you are convicted of your sin and you know you are guilty and you need a Saviour and you know you need to cry out for salvation. V2] “By which also you are saved.” The gospel that I preach saves. It changes lives. It transforms hell-bent sinners into righteous saints - That is the gospel that I preach. That is what Paul is saying. “And that He rose again the third day.” Notice - “Christ died for our sins” “He was buried and... He rose again.” – That is the gospel. A gospel that **doesn't** preach that Christ died for your sins is another gospel. A gospel that **doesn't** believe that Jesus rose from the dead is another gospel and the gospel that **does not** believe that Jesus Christ is coming again is another gospel - and if we preach any other Jesus or another spirit or another gospel; we are accursed the bible says.

V8] “Then last of all He was seen by me also.” Do you remember where Paul saw Him? On the Damascus road. The persecutor was going to persecute and arrest Christians and he that was going to arrest was arrested! Arrested under Section Acts Ch 9 of the Bible Code! V9] “Because I persecuted the church of God.” Paul remembered what he did to the believers. Paul was remembering what he did to the churches. He ransacked them and hurt them and stripped them and beat them and arrested them and held the coats for those who stoned Stephen to death. Paul was a fanatical Jew; a religious maniac who believed he was right. He thought he was doing right until Jesus arrested this man on the Damascus road and his life was turned around. He became irreligious; he became born again and he began to follow Jesus.

V20] “But” There is the swinging of the hinge. The hinge swings from the negative to the positive. .

I believe in the gospel of Jesus Christ; I believe in the whole gospel; I believe in the full gospel; I believe in the virgin birth. I believe that Jesus Christ was born with a heavenly father and an earthly mother - all things are possible for God. I believe in His virgin birth. I believe that when Jesus Christ lived on this earth He was sinless, He was spotless, and He was undefiled. Jesus was crucified on the cross - I believe in the atoning death of Christ. He didn't die for one man - for himself - He died for the sins of all; the just for the unjust; the guiltless for the guilty. He died for your sin brother, sister. No matter how vile it is and how ashamed you are of it - His body took your sins upon it that you might be forgiven. I believe in His atoning death.

I also believe in His bodily resurrection. “He is not here”; “He is risen indeed.” I believe He is alive. I believe He burst the chains of Hell and death and sin and the stone was rolled away and Jesus walked out of that tomb! You see I get excited, why? Because in my life I know what I have been lifted from. I know why I preach the way I preach. Why? Because I am challenging you to give your life to Jesus and if you are backslidden, I am challenging

you to come home to the Father's house. And if you are a Christian, I am challenging you not to hide your faith and play around with church or play around with the gospel. If Jesus Christ is worth living for then get up and live for Him - and don't be ashamed of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

I believe in His meditorial work in heaven. Jesus Christ is my Priest. I don't need Father so and so; I don't need the minister down the road; I don't even need Pastor McKim; I have a High Priest who stands at the throne of grace and He constantly intercedes for me. His name is Jesus. He prays for the saints and He prays for the transgressors.

I believe in the second coming of Jesus Christ. "Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near." [Luke 21:28] "They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." [Math 24:30] The King is coming; He is coming; are you ready? He is going to break the clouds – "Behold, He is coming with clouds and every eye will see Him..., and all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him." [Rev 1:7] If Jesus Christ didn't die - then we have no sacrifice for sins. If Jesus Christ did not rise from the dead and if His resurrection has not happened - then we are lost in our sins. If Jesus Christ did not resurrect or come alive or be raised from the dead - then my preaching, no matter how passionate I am, is actually empty - if He is not alive.

If Jesus Christ has not risen from the dead, our faith is in vain; because we believe in a dead hero. If Jesus Christ is not risen from the dead then our testimony is false and people have a right to laugh at us and make fun of us and say we are crazy and we are 'holy rollers'. If our Saviour has not risen again - our testimony is false; our sins are not forgiven; our loved ones who have died are not in heaven. My father, my grandfather and my grandmother died but they were believers, they were saved. My father was an alcoholic and Jesus Christ saved him and delivered him from the demon of alcoholism. Now he is dead. He is in Christ. He is in heaven. But if Christ has not been raised from the dead then my father is gone forever and there is no hope. BUT v20 of 1 Cor. 15 says, "But now Christ is risen from the dead."

My Saviour is not hanging on a crucifix. The cross is empty. Get Him out of the tomb. The stone is rolled away. He is in heaven now but He is also in my heart. He lives in me. Jesus Christ is alive! "But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep." Friend, there is forgiveness **because** Christ died. There is hope **because** Christ rose again; and there is a heaven to gain and a hell to shun **because** Christ is alive and He is coming soon.

How do you know He died? Well, some critics say that He didn't really die and some critics say that He didn't really rise from the dead either in bodily form. But let's check the scriptures. This book is "a lamp to our feet and a light to our path." [Psalm 119:105] The law of the Lord is perfect converting the soul so, if you get this book the Bible and live this book; eat this book; apply this book; follow the conditions and the instructions of this book - you will prosper and have good success. Why? Because this book is all about Jesus Christ. So when you read the word; the word comes alive in you and Jesus becomes real to you. In Luke Ch 23:46 we read these words, "And when Jesus had cried out with a loud voice, He said, 'Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit.' Having said this, He breathed His last." John 19:30 - "So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, 'It is finished!' and bowing His head, He gave up His Spirit."

Jesus Christ literally died. In fact, when the Roman Soldiers came to break the legs of the other two men who were hanging on either side of Jesus; they broke their legs in order to bring suffocation - to make their death quicker. In John 19:31-33, "when they came to Jesus, and saw that He was already dead..." But to make sure, a soldier pierced His heart

with a spear and out came blood and water. Now, if anybody knows anything about medical conditions, blood and water coming from the heart speaks of a broken heart. Jesus died of a broken heart for you friend. You broke His heart. I broke His heart. We broke His heart the day that He died on the cross - but He did die.

Then we read of two men, Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, two 'secret disciples'. Nicodemus came by night; every time you read about Nicodemus – This man came to Jesus by night." The man who was afraid to take a stand publicly for Jesus. Is that you? You are afraid to take your stand; you are afraid to identify; you are ashamed; you are embarrassed. If that is the way you think - then you don't love Him the way that you say you do. *'I love my wife and kids, I love them no matter what. They are mine and I always want to be loyal to them and faithful to them.'* Why? *"Because I love them."* And if you love Jesus you want to be faithful to Him and you want to identify with Him and you want to associate yourself with Him. So we have Nicodemus - the first contrite coward. And then you have Joseph of Arimathea - a believer. That is what it says he was a believer, "But secretly, for fear of the Jews." [John 19:38] These two men had too much to lose - position, popularity and prestige. So they followed Jesus secretly. But the day that Jesus Christ hung on the cross, when they saw Him, their faithful hearts were melted and they came out of the closet and they went to Pontius Pilate and asked to take the body of Jesus down.

So they took Him down and they wrapped Him in a cloth and they put Him in Joseph's tomb. It was a brand new tomb. Notice the tomb was borrowed. The tomb was sealed by Caesar's seal and the tomb was guarded. Matthew Ch 27:62-66; "The chief priests and Pharisees gathered together to Pilate." They said, "You know it has been said that this man was going to do something on the third day. Would you set a seal on the tomb and will you put a guard." So 16 soldiers were around the tomb and the seal of Caesar was upon the tomb - on the stone. The tomb was borrowed; the tomb was sealed and the tomb was guarded - and yet on the third day the stone was rolled away and the tomb was empty! Jesus rose again from the dead. It was an unexpected miracle. It was an unbelievable message; when the women went and told the disciples, it says, "Their words seemed to them like idle tales." They couldn't believe them!

Then Jesus began to appear to them. I believe He is alive. Jesus Christ is risen. The proof of Christ's resurrection is an accepted historical fact - but Satan tried to deny Christ's resurrection immediately - and he is still trying unsuccessfully now. Trying to 'poo-poo' the myth of the resurrection. He is still doing it and even using ministers in pulpits to do it. In the hierarchy of the churches in Scotland and the hierarchy of the churches in England; many have refused to acknowledge the resurrection of Jesus Christ. No wonder the church is falling apart at the seams! But that is not my church. He said, "The gates of Hades shall not prevail against it." [Math. 16:18] That is the difference. We haven't got man made religion - we have a Christ centred relationship - that is the difference.

"On the third day there was an earthquake and the guards shook for fear and became like statues. Math. 28:11 & 15 - The chief priests panicked when the Roman guards went to them and said, *"He is away. We don't know where he is. We don't know what has happened."* And the chief priests - the Reverend so and so and Pastor so and so - decided to say, *"Well, we will give you some money. Take this money and if anybody asks just say that his disciples came and stole him in the night, and we will back you to the hilt!"* It doesn't say that in the Bible but I am giving you my version - that is the Northern Ireland version!

They concocted a conspiracy – *"Tell them the disciples stole the body."* Just think about this for a minute; They said the disciples broke through the Roman Guard; they broke Caesar's seal; they rolled the stone away quietly; and they stole the body - but before they left they took the clothes off Him; wrapped them up and set them down in the tomb - because when

Peter went in he saw the grave clothes folded and sitting there. He is alive He is more alive than some of us!

The proof of His resurrection; His Person - because he is the Son of God demands that He be raised from the dead, His Promise - He said He would be raised from the dead on the 3rd day [Math.16:21] His People - Christ's resurrection has eye witness accounts. Mary Magdalene, the women, the two on the road to Emmaus, the ten disciples in the upper room; Thomas the doubting disciple; 500 and then James, His own step brother, who thought He was mad at one point! Yet after Jesus rose from the dead James became a Christian - and so did Jude and both of them wrote epistles. That was the Lord's step-brothers. 500 people and then Paul the apostle.

One of the greatest evidences that Jesus Christ is alive is in the transformed sinners that He has reached and the lives He has changed. The families He has reconciled. The people He has lifted from the gutter of society. "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me." [Gal 2:20] I have a living relationship with a living Lord! Do you? Is your relationship alive? Is Jesus Christ everything to you? Christ's resurrection proves Paul's conversion. This fanatical Jew, this man who was so headstrong; he says it himself in 1st Timothy 1:12, "I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who has enabled me, because He counted me faithful, putting me in the ministry, although I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man,... but... I did it ignorantly in unbelief." Here was man-on-the-road-to-no-town, thinking he was right. The bible says, "There is a way that seems right to a man but its end is the way of death." [Prov. 14:12] Saul of Tarsus thought he was right until he met Jesus.

I thought I was right in Northern Ireland; "for God and Ulster"; but I was wrong and only Jesus Christ, who took the scales from my eyes, showed me I was wrong. He mercifully forgave me and transformed my life. Christ's resurrection is proved by the existence of the New Testament; written by transformed sinners; lives changed.

You have heard me saying this story many times in the past. Frank Morrison was a barrister and he was a critic and a sceptic of the gospel; he detested the gospel; he detested Christians and he got so up tight about it, he decided to write a book about the "myth" of the resurrection. He bought a bible and he went to Israel, and he followed the footsteps of Jesus; collating all the information he could get in order to discredit the resurrection and prove it a myth. After his investigative studies Frank Morrison was saved. The evidence, for the barrister, was beyond doubt and he became a Christian. Instead of writing a book against it, he wrote a book for it and the book was called 'Who moved the stone.' It is a barrister's view of the resurrection truth.

Lou Wallace, also a critic and a sceptic, was asked to write a book against Christianity and the resurrection. That book was "Ben Hur" and Lou Wallace became a Christian! When it was made into a film, my friend in the Maize prison became a Christian through watching 'Ben Hur' You see friend, I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ for it is the power of God unto salvation to those who believe.

The risen Lord Jesus Christ gives me hope. Why? Because He tells me that, because He is alive, we shall live also - and not only that - when He comes 1st Thessalonians Ch4 tells me that when Jesus comes, "The dead in Christ," - my father, my grandmother, my grandfather and those who have died before us - "And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words." In other words because Jesus is resurrected, our resurrection will be real too.

One day we are going to rise. One day we are going to meet Him. One day we are going to meet those who were saved and gone before us. I am going to meet my dad in the clouds – John McKim - the converted alcoholic - the wee man who couldn't walk up the stairs on his own. The wee man who was wasting his life and cried for mercy and Jesus Christ stopped him drinking alcohol and who lived a sober man for the last 16 years of his life. That is the resurrection power of Jesus Christ. He takes heroin addicts and He makes them clean. He gives them a new life. He gives them the power to say no to the devil, no to the demon of heroin. *"We don't need that."* Why? *"Because we have a power greater than any addiction."* You don't need to be an addict or an alcoholic to become a Christian. You just need to realise that you are a sinner and you are lost.

So I say to you – 'He is risen' and if 'He is risen' He is ready to raise you up too. Will you give Him your life? Would you trust in the gospel? Would you acknowledge that you are a sinner on the road to hell and would you acknowledge that when He died on that cross, He did it for you? Your sin will take you to a lost eternity but you don't have to go there. Christ died for sinners. Will you trust Him now? I am asking you not be ashamed of Him. Jesus Christ became your sin that you might live a new life - that you might have hope. That you might be cleansed; that you might be washed anew and, if you put your trust in Him, He will give you something to get up for every morning. He will give you a purpose for living and He will give you a hope for your future. But you have to trust Him and you have to turn from your sin and you have to confess Him as your Saviour.