

THIS SAME JESUS

Dr. W. A. Criswell

Mark 16:1-8

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And welcome the glorious congregation beyond this sanctuary listening on radio and on television. You are now part of our precious First Baptist Church in Dallas. This is the senior pastor, W. A. Criswell, delivering the message entitled

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This Same Jesus.

In our preaching through the Second Gospel, the Gospel of Mark, we have come to the last and the climactic chapter, number 16. And the first eight verses of that chapter you have just read [Mark 16:1-8].

The same Lord Jesus; in the days of His flesh, resurrected and ascended and interceding for us in glory, and someday in clouds of triumph we will see Him coming again. But whether in the days of His flesh, or glorified and ascended, or interceding in heaven, or coming again—can you believe it? The same Lord Jesus.

It is a phrase repeatedly used in Holy Scripture. In Acts 1, as He ascended, the angels standing by said, “This same Jesus shall so come in like manner as you have seen Him go away” [Acts 1:11]. The same

phrase in the second chapter; Peter standing before the Sanhedrin and the people of Israel: “This same Jesus, whom you crucified, God hath made Lord and Christ” [Acts 2:36]. Look again in [Romans]: “There is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: the same Lord Jesus is rich unto all that call upon Him” [Romans 10:12]. And that wonderful avowal in the Book of Hebrews: “Jesus Christ, the same”—*ho autos*—“the same yesterday, and today, and forever” [Hebrews 13:8]; the same Jesus.

So in this story, when these women came to the tomb, they were, it says, “alarmed” [Mark 16:5]. No, not to me; the King James Version translates it, “they were afraid.” This New King James translated, “They were alarmed,” *ekthambeō*: they were astonished! They were amazed. They were

awestruck. That word is used in verbal form by Mark alone, and he uses it over and over again. When that epileptic boy was healed by the Lord they were *ekthambeō* [Mark 9:15]; they were amazed. When Jesus said that unusual answer, “render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s and to God the things that are God’s [Mark 12:17], *ekthambe*, they were amazed at His brilliant answer. That’s the word here. When they looked into that tomb they were *ekthambeō* [Mark 16:5]. They were amazed. They were awestruck! And this young man dressed in white invites them to come into the tomb and look, see the place where they laid Him [Mark 16:6].

This conclusion of Mark’s Gospel is a fast and furious story. In the fourteenth

chapter, He is arrested [Mark 14:46]. In the fifteenth chapter, He is tried and sentenced to be crucified [Mark 15:15]. And in that chapter, He is nailed to a cross [Mark 15:20-37]. And in chapter 16, He is raised from the dead. “Pause,” says this young man dressed in white, “pause and look and see where they laid Him” [Mark 16:5-6]. These women had come to the tomb to anoint a corpse [Mark 16:1]. “He is not dead. He is not here. He is alive, raised from among the dead!” [Mark 16:6]. What a glorious, marvelous, incomparable revelation!

So this Christ who appeared to the apostles, and they were, as Luke describes it, “They were affrighted and terrified” [Luke 24:37]; this Lord Jesus is the same resurrected as He was in the days of His flesh. They would not have been alarmed

...they would not have been alarmed

and terrified and affrighted at the lowly carpenter of Nazareth [Mark 6:3], or at that sweet precious Savior who held in His arms little children [Mark 10:16]. They would not have been affrighted and terrified as though He were a ghost, a *phantasma*, as he spoke this morning at the early service, a spirit just ministering among the poor; the same Lord Jesus. His form, resurrected, may change, but His heart is just the same, the same Lord Jesus; the same in His compassions, the same in His tender loving care, the same Lord Jesus.

In the days of His flesh, looking at the multitudes, Jesus had compassion upon them, moved with care and concern [Matthew 9:36]. And Jesus, moved with compassion is His ever enduring name; the same heart and

the same compassion [Mark 1:41].

When He was glorified and transfigured on the mount, what a glorious thing when the disciples said, “Let us stay here” [Mark 9:2-5]. Down in the valley was a little boy who desperately needed the touch of a healing hand. And Jesus turned aside from the glory of the transfiguration to minister and to heal that little boy [Mark 9:14-27]. At the tomb of Lazarus, seeing Mary and Martha weep—the shortest verse in the Bible: He also wept. “Jesus wept” [John 11:35]. And when He died on the cross, He did not forget His mother. “John, John, sainted apostle John, beloved apostle John, take her to your own house” [John 19:26-27].

That’s the Lord Jesus in the days of His flesh. Resurrected [John 20:1-16], and ascended into heaven [Acts 1:9-10], He is still

the same, full of compassion and concern and love for us in this weary world.

I think one of the most unusual things you'll read in the Bible is in the twenty-first chapter of the Gospel of John, when those seven apostles had toiled all night long and caught nothing—cold and weary and hungry [John 21:3]. Coming to the shore, Jesus had prepared for them a breakfast. He did it. There were coals of fire and He invited them to come and dine; same Lord [John 21:9-13].

Or again, resurrected, He appeared to His brothers in the flesh, James and Jude and Joseph, and won them to the faith [Acts 1:14].

I don't know of a more meaningful avowal in all Holy Scripture than in that closing verses of the fourth chapter of Hebrews:

We have not a High Priest who cannot be moved with the feeling of our infirmities, our weaknesses; but was in all points tried as we are, though He without sin.

Wherefore . . . come boldly to the throne of grace, that you may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of trouble.

[Hebrews 4:15-16]

He hasn't changed. The same Lord Jesus, compassionate, loving in the days of His flesh [Matthew 9:36], just the same in heaven; again, the same Lord Jesus in His tender love for us [Hebrews 7:25].

Chuck Colson, God love you, listen to me. When the Lord Jesus ministered in the days of His flesh, He ministered to the

publicans and the outcast and the sinners [Luke 15:1]. He in the days of His flesh sought out those who were prostitute and desperate, unwanted and uncared for. That's the ministry of our Lord Jesus.

It was He who took time to lead that Samaritan woman to the faith; had five husbands, and the man she was now living with was not her husband [John 4:18]. Jesus took time out to win that desperate, decadent, destroyed woman to the faith [John 4:7-29]. That's Jesus in the days of His flesh.

It was Jesus who refused to condemn that woman taken in adultery, guiding her to a new life in Him [John 8:1-11]. It was Jesus who said to that thief on the cross, "Today you will be with Me in Paradise" [Luke 23:43]. In the days of His flesh, loving the prostitute, and the prisoner, and the outcast, and the

and the prisoner, and the outcast, and the unwanted, and the condemned, and the damned; that's Jesus, and up there in glory He is just the same [Romans 8:34]. It's remarkable to me that in the days of His flesh He so loved these people that we despise and pass by. And no less marvelous is it to me that He cares for them just the same resurrected from the dead.

Tell me, to whom did He first appear raised from the grave? It was to a prostitute. It was to a woman damned, out of whom he had cast seven demons [Luke 8:2]. It was to Mary He first showed Himself raised from the grave [John 20:11-18].

I want to point out something to you here that means so much to me. Here in this verse the angel says to those women, "You go to His disciples and Peter." "And

Peter.” “You go tell His disciples and Peter” [Mark 16:7]. That’s a most unusual thing: “and Peter.” Matthew writes the Gospel; he never mentions that. John writes the Gospel; he omits that. The informant who is telling Luke of the life of our Lord omits that. Not one of them mentions that. Mark does. He’s the amanuensis of Peter, and that was the turning point in Peter’s life.

For you see, the last time you see Peter in this Gospel, he’s cursing and damning the Lord [Mark 14:66-72]. You remember, a little maid came up to him as he warmed himself by the fire when Jesus was being tried for His life. The little maid points to him and says, “You were one of His, because you talk like Him. You are a Galilean and you talk like Him.” And Simon Peter says, “You think I talk like Him? Then

listen to this.” And he cursed a blue streak. “You think I talk like Him?” That’s the last time you have Peter here in the Gospel. He never forgot.

When the Lord sent the women to tell the disciples that, “I am raised from the dead,” the Lord said, “and tell Peter, especially” [Mark 16:7]. Oh dear! It was like the bursting into the glory of a light from above when Peter heard that word: “The Lord remembers me, and forgives me.” O God, what kind of a Lord we have! And Peter; out of the darkness of despair, into the glorious light of the blessing of God.

I remember one time I got on a plane in Tokyo, Japan, to return to the United States. And after we were over the Pacific just a little while, we ran into a terrible typhoon an oceanic hurricane. And for

typical, an oceanic hurricane. And for three solid hours that plane was like a leaf, up and down, back and forth, over and over. I never experienced anything like it in my life. For three hours, and then suddenly, just as you would snap your finger, we burst into the light of the sun and the blue of the sky. That's exactly what happened to Simon Peter, having cursed the Lord and going out and weeping bitterly in despair for three days [Luke 22:56-62]. On that third day, those women came to tell the disciples and Peter—and Peter [Mark 16:6-7]. The more we need Him and the more in despair we ever fall, the more certainly Jesus is close by remembering us.

I must hasten. This same Jesus in remembrance; it was up there in Galilee that He ministered in the days of His flesh.

Raised from the dead, He called them together on a certain mountain in Galilee and there revealed Himself to them [Matthew 28:16-20].

And the last avowal, the same Lord Jesus, in His body, the same Lord Jesus resurrected from the dead [Luke 24:1-7]: in the twenty-fourth chapter of the Book of Luke, the concluding chapter, He suddenly appears to them, and they, as I mentioned a moment ago, they were terrified and affrighted, supposing they had seen a ghost [Luke 24:36-37]. And our Lord said, “Do not be afraid. Behold My hands and My side, that it is I, Myself. Handle Me and see that I am He, your Friend and Savior and Lord. Handle Me and see.” And then He asked, “Do you have anything here to eat? Do you have any meat?” And they gave Him a

piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. And He did eat before them [Luke 24:37-43]. God's Book says it; the same Lord Jesus.

Or turn again to the twentieth chapter of the Book of John. The disciples came to Thomas and said, "We have seen the Lord. He is alive. He is risen from the dead" [John 20:25]. And Thomas said, "You believing idiots! Dead people don't rise. Nor will I believe that He has risen. Unless I put my finger in the nail prints in His hands and put my hand in His side, I will not believe" [John 20:25]. And the next Sunday night, Jesus appeared to the apostles in that upper room, Thomas being present [John 20:26]. And the Lord turned to Thomas and said, "Thomas, reach hither your finger; behold My hands. Reach hither your hand and thrust it into My

REACH UNDER YOUR HAND AND TRUST IT INTO MY side; and be not unbelieving, but be believing” [John 20:27]. And Thomas cried, “O my Lord and my God!” [John 20:28]. It’s the same Lord Jesus.

Mark points out in a following verse, He appeared to His disciples in another *morphē*, in another form [Mark 16:12]; the same Lord Jesus in another form. Even though He had a body raised from the dead, He could go through a door, and it was shut [John 20:19]; the same Lord Jesus, only in another form.

Mary thought He was the gardener and recognized Him only when He pronounced her name [John 20:15-16]. The two, Cleopas and another, on the way to Emmaus thought that He was a pilgrim at the Passover [Luke 24:13-16]. John, not

seeing Him, saw He was raised from the dead by the way He folded a napkin [John 20:3-8]. And when we're told in Matthew that He appeared to five hundred and above in Galilee, the little pericope closes: "But some doubted" [1 Corinthians 15:6; Matthew 28:16-17]. Even looking at Him, some doubted.

There has to be preparation of heart and spirit to receive the living Lord Jesus. Isn't that a strange thing? It's like that woman looking at a glorious painting of a sunset by the incomparable painter, Turner. And she said to the great artist, "I never see a sunset like that." And the artist, replied, "But madam, don't you wish that you could?" That's the way with the Lord Jesus. He appears in different forms, but it's always the same Lord Jesus.

Matthew looked at Him. and He

looked to him as though He were the Messiah, who filled all of the prophecies of the Bible. “That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet” [Matthew 1:22]. And that was Jesus to Matthew. When you turn to Mark, He is the glorious miracle worker. “Immediately”—the word “immediately”—just one after another, the marvelous ministry of our Savior: the same Lord Jesus. When Luke looked at Him, listening to an informant, he described Him as the great humanitarian. And when John looked at Him, he said, “This is the Son of God” [John 20:31].

But no matter how, He is just the same Lord Jesus, just the same. Like John whispered to Simon Peter when the Lord in the dim of the dawn of the morning stood on

the shore, John said to Simon Peter,
“Simon, that is the Lord. That is the Lord”
[John 21:7]. We meet Him in many different
ways, in many different providences of life,
but it’s always that same blessed Lord
Jesus.

He may be standing on the right hand
of God when Stephen looks upon Him [Acts
7:55-56]. He may be standing on the
Damascus road when Paul meets Him [Acts
9:1-5]. Or He may be standing in the midst of
the seven-branched candelabra when John
sees Him [Revelation 1:12-13], but always it is
the same Lord Jesus.

O God, thank You for a Savior like
Him. Take our prayers. Take our hearts.
Take our souls. Take our families. Take our
children. Take our everything, and ask You
for the blessing and the guidance and the

direction. And He never fails us.

And to the great mass and throng of people in this sanctuary this sacred hour, in the balcony, in the balcony round, down one of these stairways; in the press of people on this lower floor, down one of these aisles, “Pastor, God has spoken to my heart today and I’m answering with my life. I am accepting Him for all that He promised to be” [Romans 10:9-13]. To put your life with us in this sweet Christian family called the First Baptist Church of Dallas, bring your children and come. If you have a child you would like to dedicate to Jesus, what a beautiful moment thus to offer and present that child to the Lord or to answer any call of the Spirit of God in your heart, welcome. May angels attend you as you respond with your life while we stand and while we sing

