

And . . . Mark 16:1-8

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Roy Riegals

1. In 1929, the Rose Bowl was the undisputed king of College sports.
2. During the game between the Golden Bears of the University of California, Berkley and the Georgia Tech Yellowjackets –
 - a. Roy Riegals, one of the standouts for Berkley who played both offense and defense,
 - b. picked up a fumble and began sprinting toward the goal, the wrong goal!
3. Just a few yards shy of the goal line, one of his *own players* tackled him.
4. When Reigals realized what he'd just done, he was so embarrassed he didn't know what to do.
5. The entire stadium waited to see what Nibbs Price, the Golden Bears coach would do with Riegals.

B. Today

1. We'll come back to that story later.
2. For now – let's set the scene for today's study.
3. It was late in the afternoon when Jesus' body was taken down from the cross.
4. The sun was setting, & since the Jewish Sabbath begins at dusk, it was *imperative* the body be buried as quickly as possible, for no work would be allowed once the sun had left the sky.
5. Joseph of Arimathea, who'd been given permission to bury Jesus by the Roman governor, received the body from the soldiers & he & Nicodemus carried it a short way to where Joseph's own brand new family tomb was located. Jesus would be its *first* occupant.
6. Because there was so little time & because burial was not typically the work of such wealthy men as Joseph & Nicodemus, they didn't really prepare the body in the proper way, & the little group of women loyal to Jesus who followed them, watched with concern as they fumbled their way through the process.
7. The women decided that as soon as they could, which would be Sunday morning, they would return to the tomb & do a *proper job* of burying Jesus' body.

II. TEXT

A. Vs. 1-7

¹Now when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, that they might come and anoint Him. ²Very early in the morning, on the first *day* of the week, they came to the tomb when the sun had risen.

1. These were the ones who'd followed Joseph & Nicodemus as they took the body of Jesus to the tomb.
2. Just as the sun peeked above the eastern horizon, they arrived with the necessary materials to take care of the body.
3. As the light dawned on them, so did a thought -- they'd seen that massive stone door rolled across the tomb's entrance. How were they going to deal with that?

³And they said among themselves, "Who will roll away the stone from the door of the tomb for us?" ⁴But when they looked up, they saw that the stone had been rolled away—for it was very large.

5. When they arrived in front of the tomb, they found the door had already been rolled aside.
6. Now – they must have rejoiced because the first problem they thought of had already been dealt with.
7. But *then* they realized –
 - a. "Oh no – the tomb's been opened!"
 - b. "What if grave-robbers have defiled the body?"
8. These poor women – think of all they've been through!
 - a. they witnessed Jesus suffering & agonizing death.
 - b. they'd watched while the light of their lives was placed in the tomb.
 - c. when they think it can't get any worse, *it does!*
 - d. their plan to render this last act of tender love & devotion to Jesus looks like it won't be possible because someone's broken into the tomb.
9. But still - they have to go & see . . .

⁵And entering the tomb, they saw a young man clothed in a long white robe sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed.

10. The ladies knew this couldn't be a grave-robber – he wasn't wearing the right uniform!
11. Matthew tells us this man was an angel, while Luke tells us his garment wasn't merely white, it *radiated light*! ^[1]
 - a. the women immediately knew this was no mere mortal.
 - b. this was a heavenly messenger.

6 But he said to them, “Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He is risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid Him.

12. The angel knew why they had come and what they intended to do, but it wasn't necessary.
13. You don't embalm someone who's alive – and Jesus was!
14. The *sweetest words*, the most *surprising* words, indeed – the *best news* ever uttered, were the words of this angel when he said, “He is risen!”
15. The living don't hang out in tombs. And since Jesus had risen, there was no reason to stay.
16. The angel invited them to check it out for themselves.
17. The stone bench that had held Jesus' body was left with nothing but the empty grave-clothes.

7 But go, tell His disciples—and Peter—that He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him, as He said to you.”

18. The disciples would soon be returning north to their homes in Galilee.
 - a. it was there they'd spent most of their time with Jesus.
 - b. the angel told the women to go search out the disciples and tell them that the now risen Christ would appear to them back home.
19. Of course, Jesus appeared to them *that very day* as they huddled together in hiding.
 - a. but this was just a brief encounter meant to encourage them after the ordeal of the cross.
 - b. when He met with them in Galilee, it would be for more teaching & training.

B. V. 8

⁸ So they went out quickly and fled from the tomb, for they trembled and were amazed. And they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

1. A couple things contributed to their fear . . .

First – terror is usually the reaction of a human being when encountering an angel.

- 1) That’s why the first words an angel always says are “Fear not!” But that doesn’t really help a whole lot.
- 2) Like when I stood on the edge of the high dive for the 1st time in jr hi & my friend, who’d never been off the board before, shouted up at me from the pool deck – “Don’t be afraid. Go ahead – JUMP!”
- 3) it’s a nice thought but it doesn’t really help a whole lot.
- 4) this angel was clothed in a robe of light, the glory of which came from heaven itself.
- 5) whenever fallen men & women come face to face with heaven’s glory, they realize with renewed intensity their own sinfulness.
- 6) and in the light of this angel’s radiance, the women couldn’t help but feel a sense of holy dread.

Second – these women have just been handed the most precious & surprising words any ear has ever heard, and they’ve been told to go and share it with the disciples.

- 1) This was a holy mission, a divine charge.
 - 2) But it was also news that would be hard to deliver simply because it *was* so surprising.
 - 3) Would the disciples believe them?
2. Mark says they hurried from the tomb, keeping mum as they made their way back into the City.

C. And Peter

1. It’s v. 7 I want to focus on today; and in particular two words of it.

2. The angels said . . .

“But go, tell His disciples—and Peter—that He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him, as He said to you.”

3. Why did the angel single out Peter? Why wasn’t it enough to just say, “Go & tell His disciples that Jesus has risen?”

4. The angel included Peter's name *specifically* because he knew Peter wasn't identifying himself as a disciple any more.
5. In order for us to understand why, we need to revisit a study we did a few weeks ago.
 - a. remember that a rabbi & his band of disciples was a common feature of life in Galilee at this time.
 - b. but it was only the best & brightest of Jewish young men who were invited *to be* the disciple of a rabbi.
 - c. while *every* young man aspired to be selected, only a tiny handful were.
 - d. the rest went to work in the family business or an apprenticeship.
 - e. it was from the ranks of these *washouts* Jesus selected the 12 that became *His* disciples.
 - f. this is why they went so *readily* at His call.
 - 1) Peter & Andrew dropped their nets at Jesus' invitation.
 - 2) James & John left their father in the boat.
 - 3) Matthew stepped away from his tax-booth.
 - g. these young men, just teenagers really, had all been told by the system they didn't have what it takes *to be a disciple*.
 - h. but Jesus saw what the world couldn't & wouldn't see in them,
 - i. that these washouts, these *rejects* would turn the world upside down & launch a revolution that would ultimately transform *every nation* on earth.
6. As we saw in that previous study, the goal of a disciple was **to be just like the rabbi.**
 - a. this was a passion that was so deep - so intense, the disciple would spend every waking moment watching & listening to the rabbi.
 - b. he wanted to know what the rabbi would do or say in *every* occasion.
 - c. in fact, it was said that the disciples were "dusty men" because they lived so close to their rabbi the dust from his sandals landed on them.
7. Disciples took great *pride* in following their rabbi.
 - a. being a disciple was an *elite* profession -
 - b. and disciples proudly confessed who they had attached themselves to.

- c. no disciple would *ever* deny who & what he was as a disciple.
 - d. he would certainly never deny being attached to His rabbi! That was *unthinkable*.
8. So come with me now to Matthew 26 & the house of the high priest where the trial of Jesus is under way.
- 69 Now Peter sat outside in the courtyard. And a servant girl came to him, saying, "You also were with Jesus of Galilee." 70 But he denied it before them all, saying, "I do not know what you are saying." 71 And when he had gone out to the gateway, another *girl* saw him and said to those *who were there*, "This *fellow* also was with Jesus of Nazareth." 72 But again he denied with an oath, "I do not know the Man!" 73 And a little later those who stood by came up and said to Peter, "Surely you also are *one of them*, for your speech betrays you." 74 Then he began to curse and swear, saying, "I do not know the Man!" Immediately a rooster crowed. 75 And Peter remembered the word of Jesus who had said to him, "**Before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times.**" So he went out and wept bitterly.**
9. Peter had done the *one thing* a disciple did not do – *deny* he *was* a disciple.
10. He disowned his Rabbi & turned his back on his calling – not once, not twice – but *three* times.
11. This is why in Mark 16 Peter doesn't identify himself as a disciple any more.
12. And this is why the angel tells the women they're to carry the news of Jesus resurrection to the disciples, **AND PETER**.
13. Imagine what would have happened if the angel had not mentioned Peter.
- a. the women would go to the disciples & recount what the angel told them,
 - b. that Jesus had risen & that they were to tell the disciples.
 - c. Peter would have listened, then hung his head in utter shame because now, certainly, Jesus would *no longer* want Him as part of His band of disciples.
14. Rabbis do not restore disciples who fall like this – it just isn't

done.

15. At least, not until now.
16. And this is why the angel made certain to add Peter's name.
“But go, tell His disciples—and Peter . . .”
 - a. he knew that because of Peter's failure, he wasn't feeling like, wasn't *identifying* himself as a follower of Jesus.
 - b. so the message of Jesus' resurrection was sent *specifically* to him,
 - c. to let him know that even in the midst of *his* failure, *Jesus remains faithful*.
 - d. and the message of the resurrection is as much for a Peter as it is for the rest of the disciples.

III. CONCLUSION

A. And You

1. We all have our own story here today.
 2. Everyone of us has our own unique testimony of how we got to where we are right now.
 3. But I suspect that someone here can identify with Peter.
 4. You made a *start* in the Christian life at some point, but you fell away.
 5. Maybe you were even deeply involved in church & had a ministry of some kind.
 6. But one day you found yourself on the outside, feeling alienated & alone.
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7. When Peter was following Jesus, he was something of a *leader* to the rest of the guys.
 - a. oh – and he had such high hopes for Jesus.
 - b. I mean, it was obvious Jesus was the *greatest* of all the rabbis
 - c. and the more Peter followed, the more convinced he became that Jesus was the One they'd all been waiting for – the Messiah & King of Israel.
 - d. when He told Jesus this is what he'd come to believe, Jesus commended him for his amazing insight!
 - e. but from that point on it all seemed to kind of spin out of control & everything Peter had planned for Jesus' rise to power went south.
 - f. in a matter of just a few hours, all of his hopes & expectations

- were dashed to smithereens!
- g. it wasn't all that hard to jump ship, the disciple-ship, when challenged because it seemed kind of like Jesus had abandoned him!
8. When word reached Peter that Jesus had risen from the dead, just as He said He would, hope sprang anew inside him.
9. What made that hope all the more real was the word of the angel to the women, "Go, and tell His disciples – and Peter . . ."
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10. Maybe that's you. You had high hopes but God didn't come through as you planned or expected. It seemed like when you needed Him most, He wasn't around.
11. So you bailed, turned your back on Him like Peter did in the courtyard of the high priest.
12. I talked to a man recently who'd just been released from prison.
- he was really angry at God & blamed him for all his troubles.
 - this guy had asked God to do something for him years before & when God didn't come through, he threw himself into a life of crime.
 - I asked what it was he'd asked God to do - it was something totally illegal!
13. I doubt your disappointment with God was as obviously misplaced as that, but the lesson is still the same –
14. The only expectations God will *disappoint* are those which are poor & weak & fall short of the *better things* He has planned for us.
15. And here's what this passage teaches us – *that plan* is still in force, still in play.
16. What the angel said to the women to tell the disciples, AND PETER, I say to you – Jesus is Risen and it's not too late for you!
17. As long as you draw breath, the door is open for you to *come back to God*.
18. Yes, you've fallen away. Yes, you've denied the Lord.
19. But you are no worse than Peter – and Jesus welcomes you back.

B. The Prodigal Son

1. Jesus told a story one day to show people just how *eager* God is to forgive His erring kids.
2. He told about a young man who grew up in a loving & wealthy

family.

3. One day, he went to his father and said, "I can't wait for you to die. Give me my share of the inheritance now."
4. His father did as asked & the guy took off for a life of wanton & reckless living.
5. After he'd squandered his entire fortune & dragged the family name through the mud, he ended up in the gutter & realized his only options were to die in misery or go home & ask for a job as a servant in the family fields.
6. He knew his father's servants fared far better than what he was getting there in the gutter, so he began the trip home.
7. While he was still a long way down the road, his father saw his son off in the distance & went running to him.
8. He threw his arms around him, put a change of fresh clothes on him, a ring with the family crest on his finger, & then gave the word that a feast was to be held in honor of his son's return.
9. The *reason* Jesus told that story was to convey just how *eager* God is to receive those who repent & turn *back* to Him.
10. It was the erring *SON* who returned, *not a stranger*.
11. The father's excitement was due to the fact that it was his *CHILD* who repented.

C. Riegals Reprise

1. I began the message today with the story of Roy Riegals, the Golden Bears football player who picked up a fumble in the 1929 Rose Bowl & ran it to the wrong goal line.
2. Though Riegals was the standout on the Cal team, playing both offense and defense, no one on the team or in the stadium knew what the coach, Nibbs Price, would do with Riegals after such an embarrassing mistake.
3. As the team sat in the locker room during halftime, the only sound was that of the All-American Riegals crying in the corner like a baby.
4. Coach Price was silent for a long time. As the end of halftime approached, he finally said, "The same team that started the first half will start the second half."
5. Roy Riegals blurted out, "Coach, I can't do it. I've ruined you. I've ruined the University of California. I've ruined myself. I couldn't face that crowd in the stadium to save my life."

6. The coach extended his hand and said, “Roy, get up and go on back; the game is only half over.”
 7. Roy Riegals went back out onto that field to play one of the most inspiring games of football in Rose Bowl history.
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8. As you sit here in this spiritual locker room this morning, embarrassed because you realize you’ve been running toward the wrong goal in life,
 9. Remember that it’s only half-time & there’s a lot more game left to play.
 10. Don’t *sit in defeat* – don’t *camp in regret* –
 11. Return to the Lord & let Him make you & your life inspiring with His love & forgiveness.

[\[1\]](#) Matthew 28:5 Luke 24:4