

Mark's Gospel The Great Commission

- There is a lot of question about Mark 16:9-20.
- Some manuscripts strangely end Mark with Mark 16:8 which a very unnatural ending to this marvelous gospel.

Mark 16:8 They [the women] went out and fled from the tomb, for trembling and astonishment had gripped them; and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

- Many Greek manuscripts contain these verses [Mark 16:9-20] including the Alexandrinus manuscript from the 4th century A.D. This is one the three oldest manuscripts in existence today.
- Some early church writers make reference to portions of Mark 16:9-20 long before the 4th century.
- Many conservative scholars believe these words are genuine and not the work of some later writer or redactor.
- Even many who do not believe this section was a part of the original text believe the words of this passage are in agreement with the other gospels.
- Very little new information is recorded in this ending to Mark's gospel.
- Most of what might be called new is elsewhere recorded in some form in the New Testament.

The Transition

- Mark has just recorded some events of the day of Christ's resurrection, but now swiftly shifts to the day of Christ's ascension into heaven. (Mk. 16:14, 19).
- This was 40 days after His resurrection. (Acts 1:3).
- Mark's account clearly shows the words of the Great Commission were spoken on the day of His ascension. (Mk. 16:19).
- It must be concluded that verses 15-18 were spoken on the day of ascension.
- Matthew's gospel recorded Jesus giving His disciples The Great Commission on the mountain in Galilee. (Matt. 28:16-20).
- Jesus, on the day of His ascension into heaven, repeats The Great Commission with different words.
- It was urgent that the disciples recognized they had a mandate from the Lord to preach "the gospel of all creation." It was once again time to fish for men.
- The time was very fast approaching that they would receive the Holy Spirit and must begin their work of preaching the gospel to every creature.
- They were to remain in Jerusalem until they were given power from on high. (Lk. 24:47-49; Acts 1:7,8).

Lk. 24:47 and that repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem.

Lk. 24:48 "You are witnesses of these things.

Lk. 24:49 "And behold, I am sending forth the promise of My Father upon you; but you are to stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high."

Acts 1:7 He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority; Acts 1:8 but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth."

Mk. 16:15 And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation [to every human being].

- God wants all to be saved. (Jn. 3:16; 1 Tim. 2:4; 2 Pet. 3:9).
- God is not a respecter of persons. (Acts 10:34,35).

Ktisis [**ktee** sis] is used several ways in the New Testament.

1. Creation (Rom. 1:20; Mk. 10:6; 10:19; Col. 1:15; Heb. 9:11; 2 Pet. 3:4).
2. A created thing, a creature (Rom. 1:25; 8:39; Heb. 4:13).
3. A human being (Mk. 16:16).

1. These words were spoken in Judea rather than Galilee. (Mk. 16:19; Acts 1:9-12; Lk. 24:50).
 - a. The place of the ascension was mount Olivet. (Acts 1:12).

Acts 1:12 Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey away.

- b. Mount Olivet was between Jerusalem and Bethany.
2. Again Jesus stressed they were to "go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation."
 - a. Jesus stresses the preaching of the gospel was to be to the whole world.
 - b. It was not limited to a particular nation or race.
 - c. The apostles were able to preach to the known world by about A.D. 62. (Col. 1:23).

Col 1:23 if indeed you continue in the faith firmly established and steadfast, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel that you have heard, **which was proclaimed in all creation under heaven**, and of which I, Paul, was made a minister.

- d. With the help of believers then and throughout the ages the gospel has proclaimed to millions and millions of people in many nations.
 - e. Every generation has the responsibility to proclaim the gospel to the lost world.

- f. Failure to do so means millions or even billions of people will not know Christ and will be lost.
3. The word “creation” denotes human beings, and the words of this command can be translated “to every creature.”
 - a. Literally it can be rendered “the gospel to all creation” or “the gospel to every creature.”
 - b. The lower creation is not a part of the Great Commission.
 - c. The lower creation can neither be saved or lost, but perishes at death.

Mk. 16:16 "He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned."

1. Jesus, in an abbreviated way, tells how men to be saved.
 - a. These words do not exclude faith, self-denial, repentance, confession. (Jn. 3:36; Matt. 16:24; Lk. 13:3; Mk. 8:38).
 - b. Jesus insisted these things are all essential for salvation.
2. Jesus taught salvation is for those who believe and are baptized.
 - a. Those who desire to be saved must believe and be baptized.
 - b. Those who do not desire salvation are lost simply by not believing.
 - c. Because of their unbelief they are in state of condemnation. (Jn. 3:18).

Jn. 3:18 "He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

- d. As long as they refused to trust and obey Jesus, they remain in a state of condemnation.
 - e. It is noteworthy to point out Jesus did not say “He who has believed and **has not been baptized** shall be saved.”
 - f. Furthermore, Jesus made it clear that only believers should be baptized.
 - g. It is futile to baptize unbelievers by persuasion or force.
 - h. Only those who trust in the blood of Jesus and are immersed “in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit shall be saved.” As already discussed the word “in” is literally “into” and denotes those who are baptized are submitting to the authority of the Godhead.
3. The New Testament stresses that baptism is for the “forgiveness of sins.” (Acts 2:38; 22:16).

Acts 2:38 Peter *said* to them, "Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Acts 22:16 'Now why do you delay? Get up and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on His name.'

4. It is by faith and baptism that we “put on Christ.” (Gal. 3:26, 27).

5. Many religious people reverse the words of Jesus in Mark 16:16.

Religious World	The Bible
Faith	Faith
Salvation	Baptism
Baptism	Salvation

6. Those who want to be saved will follow the Bible order.

Luke's Gospel The Great Commission

Lk. 24:44 Now He said to them, "These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled."

1. Jesus made it clear that He was fulfilling "the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms."
2. Jesus had fulfilled what the Old Testament had prophesied about Him.
3. He did not fulfill some of the prophecies or most of them, but fulfill all of them.

Lk. 24:45 Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures,

1. The words "opened their minds" are not completely understood.
2. The disciples were slow to comprehend what Jesus attempted to teach them.
3. Their minds were still unsure about many things, but Jesus was now making some of these things clear.
4. Other truths would later be revealed to the apostles by the Holy Spirit. (Jn. 14:26; 15:26; 16:13).

Lk. 24:46 and He said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ would suffer and rise again from the dead the third day,

1. The Old Testament had prophesied the suffering of Jesus. (Psa. 22:1, 16, 18; Isa. 53:4-6).
2. The words "rise again from the dead the third day" do not occur in the Old Testament, but must be deducted.
 - a. His body would not see corruption. (Psa. 16:10; Acts 13:35-37).

Psa. 16:10 For You will not abandon my soul to Sheol; Nor will You allow Your Holy One to undergo decay.

Acts 13:35 "Therefore He also says in another Psalm, 'You will not allow Your Holy One to undergo decay.'

Acts 13:36 "For David, after he had served the purpose of God in his own generation, fell asleep, and was laid among his fathers and underwent decay;

Acts 13:37 but He whom God raised did not undergo decay.

- 1) This implies Jesus was a short time in the tomb.

2) Jesus was in the tomb about 36 hours [part of Friday, all day Saturday, and a part of Sunday].

b. Jesus had also emphasized this fact over and over again. (Jn. 2:19-21; Matt. 16:21).

Lk. 24:47 and that repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem.

- “for” is from “eis” [ace] meaning “in, into, unto, for, in order to.”
 - “in His name” means “by His authority.” (Matt. 28:18).
1. Luke made it plain that “repentance for the forgiveness of sins” must “be proclaimed in His name to all the nations.”
 - a. Repentance was produced and motivated by faith.
 - b. Faith motivates the penitent believer to be baptized for the forgiveness of sins.
 2. We must study all the scriptures, not just one, to learn what is necessary to be saved.
 3. Reading merely one scripture and ignoring the rest of the scriptures will lead to be false conclusion.
 - a. John 3:16 leads the impression that faith alone leads to salvation.
 - b. Mark 8:38 might lead one to think confession only leads to salvation.
 - c. Luke 13:3 might be used to teach repentance only leads to salvation.
 - d. Matthew 16:24 could be used to teach self-denial alone leads to salvation.
 - e. Matthew 28:19 could be used to suggest that salvation is by baptism alone.

Lk. 24:48 "You [My disciples] are witnesses of these things.

1. The apostles had been with Jesus for about three years and had witnessed His character, His teachings, His miracles, His death, His burial and resurrection.
2. They would later receive “power” when the Holy Spirit came upon them. (Acts 1:8).

Acts 1:8 but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and **you shall be My witnesses** both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth."

3. The Holy Spirit would empower them with God’s truth and give them the power to confirm the word with miracles..

Lk. 24:49 "And behold, I am sending forth the promise of My Father upon you; but you are to stay in the city [of Jerusalem] until you are clothed with power from on high."

1. Jesus instructed His disciples to remain “in the city” [of Jerusalem] “until you are clothed with power from on high.”
2. The apostles would soon be baptized in the Holy Spirit. (Acts 1:5).
 - a. Jesus had promised the Holy Spirit would guide their teaching and reveal to them all truth. (Jn. 16:13).

- b. They would soon receive “power” from the Holy Spirit. (Acts 1:8).
- c. They had had the power to heal the sick, cast out demons, heal the lepers, raise the dead, but evidently they had lost that power. (Matt. 10:8).

Matt. 10:8 "Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons. Freely you received, freely give.

- d. There is no record of the apostles performing miracles after Gethsemane where Jesus was arrested until the book of Acts. (Acts 2:43).
- e. Their power would soon be restored and expanded on Pentecost.
- f. The apostles would be empowered to speak in tongues [languages] they had never studied, and impart the power to perform miracles to others. (Acts 2:4-11; 8:17; 19:6).
- g. The Holy Spirit would also give them complete knowledge of saving truth. (Jn. 16:13).

Jn. 16:13 "But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come.

Great Commission In John’s Gospel

John 20:21-23

Jn. 20:21 So Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you; as the Father has sent Me, I also send you."

Jn. 20:22 And when He had said this, He breathed on them and *said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit.

Jn. 20:23 "If you forgive the sins of any, their sins have been forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they have been retained."

1. This commission was given to the disciples before the **Great Commission** recorded in Matthew, Mark and Luke.
2. It was given to the ten disciples the day Jesus was resurrected from the tomb. (Jn. 20:19-28).
 - a. Thomas was not present, but the other gospels make it clear he was not excluded from the responsibility of carrying out The Great Commission.”
 - b. Jesus appeared to him the following Sunday (Jn. 20:24-28), and was present when Jesus gave The Great Commission” as recorded in the other three gospels.
3. Jesus indicates, as He had been sent from the Father, He was going to “send” them. (Jn. 20:21). “I also send you.”
4. Jesus “breathed on them and said to them, Receive the Holy Spirit.” (Jn. 20:22).
 - a. One might think the apostles received the Holy Spirit right then, but other revelation indicates they did not actually receive the Holy Spirit at that time.
 - b. Jesus breathing on them was symbolic of what they would soon receive.
5. Once they had receive the Holy Spirit they would declare the conditions by which men would be forgiven.
 - a. These conditions were not conditions that originated with them.
 - b. When they declared that one to have forgiveness of sins, the sins of that person had already been forgiven.

6. Salvation was the result of obeying the gospel. (Rom. 1:16).

7. The following table sets forth the combined teaching of the four accounts of The Great Commission.

The Great Commission

Matthew 28:18-20	Make disciples, teach			Baptize	
Mark 16:15, 16	Preach	Faith		Baptize	Salvation
Luke 24:46,47	Preach		Repentance		Salvation
John 20:21-23	Preach				Salvation
Combined	Teach (preach)	Faith	Repentance	Baptize	Salvation

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