

**Growth Group Lesson April 17/18**  
**The Resurrection of Jesus Mark 16:1-8**  
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**Chapter Context**

After the mandatory time of rest, several of Jesus' female followers approach His tomb intending to anoint the body. Their primary concern is who will open the tomb for them so they can honor Jesus' remains. They arrive to find the tomb open, empty, and watched over by angels. After hearing from these beings (Luke 24:4–7), the women leave in fear, speaking only to the disciples. This ends the original text of the Gospel of Mark.

Verses 9–20 are corroborated by other Scripture with the exception being vs.18, but were not part of the earliest manuscripts (initial writings) so they are not taken as scripture by everyone. The Earliest Manuscripts of Gospel of Mark and writings from the earliest church fathers indicate that Mark ended at the end of verse eight and in a most unusual way.

What do we know and do about the verses 9 through 20?  
*Not in the style of Mark. Probably added later. And all parts are taken from other places in scripture.*

**So what are we to do with these verses?** Especially 18 which is not corroborated with the other scriptures.

**Can we trust our Bibles?**

**Early manuscripts (hand written copies) of ancient works:**

- Aristotle's work has 1000 manuscripts dated 1200 years from the events, written 384-322 B.C., with the earliest copy dated A.D. 850
- Plato's work (Tetralogies) has 210 (previously 7) manuscripts dated 1200 years from the events, written 427-347 B.C., with the earliest copy dated A.D. 900.

**In second place** is Homer's *Iliad*, the history of the Trojan War, has 1757 manuscripts, dated 400 years from the events, written 800 B.C., with the earliest copy dated 400 B.C.

**In first place is the Bible's New Testament!**

The total count for early New Testament Manuscripts available today is over 25,000! (previously 24,000).

-Josh McDowell has recently claimed that we have closer to 66,000 with the advent of many discoveries in artifacts, like mummy wrappings, that contain Biblical manuscript fragments.

Numbers include:

- 5795 (up from 5366) Greek Manuscripts dated 30 to 150 years from the events, written A.D. 49-95 with the earliest copy dated A.D. 117 (and a few that are possibly dated first century still under review).
- Over 7974 manuscripts in other languages (Armenian, Coptic, Gothic, Ethiopian, Syriac, Georgian and Slavic) dated early second century and on (100-150 years)
- Over 10,000 manuscripts in the Latin Vulgate dated from the third century and on (300-350 years)
- The Bible, and the New Testament in particular, has only primary source authors who were eyewitnesses or who were alive at the time of the events.
- The New Testament autographs were complete and in use by 100 A.D. and has surviving manuscripts and fragments dated within 25 to 150 years of the events.

We can know what has been changed by the numbers of manuscripts we have and therefore know the what the originals autographs said.

Watch this as a group: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1REkRe9Mg-4&t=3s>

**So the question remains, why end on verse 8? Did the last page of Mark's original get destroyed somehow? Or is there a purpose in ending it this way?**

**Who were the three women recorded here?**

**Why do you think Jesus first entrust the message of his resurrection and then reveal his resurrected body to the women?**

**Why say, "Go tell the disciples and Peter..." Why single out Peter?**

**What does this ending say to those who are living in the first century? To us today? How are we like the women and Peter?**