

**Christ's Resurrection Solves Everything!**  
**Sermon on Mark 16:1-8**  
**Saint Mark's, Watertown, WI**  
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**Introduction: Life Is a Hassle, and then You Die**

Easter Sunday especially ... *is the day the Lord has made! Let us rejoice and be glad in it!* Amen.

Dear fellow Easter Sunday celebrants:

“Life is a hassle, and then you die.” ...Have you ever heard a statement to that effect? ...Do you agree with it?

There are times in each of our lives when it seems, “Life is a hassle, and then you die.” I mean: think about it; it might even start very early.... You wake up early in the morning – today: very early! – and how often did you really get all the sleep you actually needed? What a hassle! Then you start on your list of tasks, whatever those are in your life. Do you ever really get done with them? No! And then nothing ever really does go very smoothly, does it? Obstacles arise, sometimes insurmountable ones. What a hassle! And then, just when you start to think you might be gaining on things, a loved one gets sick and dies. And most disconcerting, each one of us knows full well: we could be next.

“Life is a hassle, and then you die.” God’s Word to us this morning introduces us to some women who might have been thinking exactly that. But their experience on Easter morning taught them something entirely different, and it will give us hope, too.

**Part One: Our Sinfulness Makes Life a Hassle**

God’s Word to us today is the Gospel according to Saint Mark, chapter sixteen, verses one through eight: *When the Sabbath was over* – on Saturday evening at six – *Mary Magdalene* – out of whom Jesus had driven seven demons – *Mary the mother of James* the Less, an apostle of Jesus – *and Salome* – mother of the apostles James and John – these three women from up north, who had been at the cross of Jesus and at his burial, they *bought spices so that they might go to anoint Jesus' body.* That was considered a proper burial—one with spices, aromatic oils, and perfumery applied.

Then, twelve hours later, and some thirty-six hours after Jesus burial, it says: *Very early on the first day of the week* – the very first Easter Sunday – *just after sunrise* – six in the morning – *they were on their way to the tomb.* It would have been a several-block walk for the ladies, just outside the city gates, to a cave—probably one with a low little front room for the burial stretcher, and with a bigger room further back with eight to twelve niches for bodies, even though to date only one body had been buried there.

Anyway: *They asked each other, "Who will roll the stone away from the entrance of the tomb?"* It was a hassle, a detail they had forgotten about. And on they plowed, hoping somebody – or maybe a few somebodies – might help them. *But when they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large* – hundreds of pounds, at least, if not thousands – that boulder *had been rolled away.*

In short, it was for these women just the way it is for us: sleep-deprived, they had much to do, unforeseen obstacles got in their way, and the whole thing was very sad in the first place, because their friend, one whom they had believed to be God their Savior—that friend had died. In fact, it all was enough for Mary Magdalene that this was the point at which she took off to get the disciples.

But as for the other women: *As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man dressed in a white robe sitting on the right side, and they were alarmed.* Actually, Matthew reports that an earthquake accompanied his arrival, that his appearance was like lightning, that his clothes were white as snow, and that the guards had trembled and dropped like dead men before him! The women, for their part, weren't merely "alarmed" as it's translated here; better: they were *greatly alarmed*, even almost *alarmed out* of their minds!

And that's what happens when sinfulness meets holiness.... See, I'm with the ladies here. Life is a hassle, and then you die, and that's what happens when our sinfulness meets God's holiness. It's our sinfulness that brought sleepless nights. It's our sinfulness that brought interminable "to do" lists and insurmountable obstacles. It's our sinfulness that brought the deaths of our friends and ourselves into this world. And if we're honest, our sinfulness ought to alarm us—greatly even, even out of our minds.

## **Part Two: Christ's Resurrection Solves Everything!**

But get this: *"Don't be alarmed," the angel said.* And why not? *"You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who was crucified."* The fact that this guy knew what the ladies were doing already accredited him as a messenger from God, the rest of whose words would also be true.

And what had happened to Jesus, the crucified Nazarene? The angel announces, and I quote: *"He has risen!"*

*"He has risen!"* And nothing like it had ever happened before that time in the history of the world, and nothing like it has ever happened since. Granted: others had risen from the dead—but always only with the helping hand of one of the true God's servants, pulling them out of the grave. For example, Jesus himself raised the widow of Nain's son and Jairus' daughter and his friend Lazarus from the dead.

But no one helped Jesus himself out of the tomb. Jesus himself took on death and – independently – he beat it! Jesus himself took on sin, the cause of death, and Satan, the causer of death—and he beat them! on his own!!

And he did it for us!!! In fact, Christ's resurrection solves everything for us! Really!

Our sinfulness, which had us beside ourselves with alarm – *"Christ has risen!"* – and he left that sinfulness buried in his tomb. The Bible says: *We were buried with Christ through baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.*

Our death, which we face after the hassles of life – *"Christ has risen!"* – and so he put death to death. The Bible says: *God made us alive with Christ; God raised us up with Christ.*

And how about our hassles? Now admittedly, our hassles are small things, compared to our sin and our death which the risen Christ has resolved. But: does Christ's resurrection also solve all the little hassles in our lives? Yeah, really it does....

*"Christ has risen!"*—and he rose also to govern your alarm clock. Well-slept or sleepy, you're getting up with the noble purpose of serving the Risen Christ each day.

*"Christ has risen!"*—and he rose also to govern your "to do" list. What the Risen Christ wants you to accomplish for him each day—you will accomplish that for him each day, even if it isn't everything you expected to get done.

And: *"Christ has risen!"*—and he rose also to manage the obstacles that face you each day. Either the Risen Christ will enable you to overcome them, or your obstacles will serve as his messengers to direct your life along the path he wants you to follow.

## Conclusion: Life Is an Opportunity, and then We Live with Jesus

So, sometimes it seems to each of us that, “Life is a hassle, and then you die.” But because Christ has risen, that’s not true. Instead, “Life is an opportunity, after which we live with Jesus!” And that’s one way to summarize the rest of this account—the rest of the words of the angel, and the reaction of the women.

Just make it clear to the women, the angel reiterates: **“Jesus is not here.”** And the angel gives eyewitness proof: **“See the** – empty! – **place where they laid him.”**

But then the angel gives these ladies a mission: **“Go, tell his disciples and especially Peter,** who needed the encouragement, because of his denial: **‘Jesus is going ahead of you into Galilee—Galilee, where they had spent so much good time with Jesus in the past, Galilee, which might also seem safer to them now. There you will see him, just as he told you.’”**

So, the women had a plain promise: *Don’t be afraid*, and a clear commission: *Do go and tell*. That’s not the way it worked out, however. **Trembling and bewildered** – better: *beside themselves with astonishment* – **the women went out and fled from the tomb**. It turns out these ladies would shortly meet Jesus himself. But for now: **They said nothing to anyone** – literally *to not one person not one thing did they say!* – **because they were afraid**.

Fortunately, the women got over that. They did eventually speak to the disciples. And fortunately, the disciples also got over initially being afraid. By the power of the Holy Spirit, poured out at Pentecost, the apostles eventually spoke to many others about the Savior—even at the cost of their own lives.

So, how about us?

I mean: We’ve got the same promise the women had. *“Don’t be afraid!”* Christ has conquered your sin, your death, and hell itself! *“Don’t be afraid!”* Christ really does love you, and he really is powerful enough and present enough to walk with you throughout your day.

We’ve got the same promise the women had. And we’ve got the same commission: *“Go and tell!”* So, really: *Go and tell* this message to your loved ones. *Go and tell* your family that their sins are serious, but their Savior is even greater, and he has buried their sins forever. *Go and tell* your friends that their death is certain, but their deliverance from death is just as certain, because the Risen Christ beat death for them.

After all: Why else did God give us such good news on Easter Sunday, if not also to share it with others every day?! Amen.

The Psalms sum up Easter’s message this way: *I will not die, but live! I will proclaim what the Lord has done!* Amen.