

Go ... Tell
Spilman Memorial Baptist Church
Dr. H. Powell Dew, Jr.
April 16, 2033

Text: Mark 16:7, 9-20

Purpose: The message of the angel at the tomb was to go and tell. That message is still vital for us today. We need to go and tell the world the message of God's grace and forgiveness offered in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. It is offered even to the deniers of our world. This story of Jesus is still being written today – it is an unfinished story.

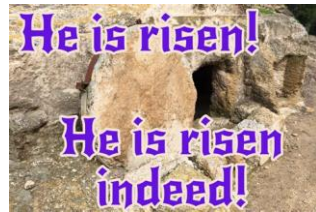
Introduction

On April 16, 2020, on Easter Sunday morning, we didn't have church here in the sanctuary. I don't know if you remember that Sunday, but I do. It was an unusual Easter Sunday! We did not gather in our Sunday best clothes. We did not hide Easter Eggs. We did not sing an Easter Cantata. We did not join our voices together in praise for the resurrection of Jesus Christ. We gathered, each in our own home, to read a private worship bulletin. We may have joined Clay Whittington on Facebook live to hear the songs of faith. But it was definitely a different Easter celebration. I have never experienced such a Sunday in my life and I hope I never do again. The people of God, were scattered due to the highly contagious coronavirus.



Today most people feel this pandemic has passed. But in reality, it is still lingering, and it appears we may continue to deal with it for a long time to come. Even though we were closed down for several weeks, I will not take the gathering of God's people lightly anymore.

Every Easter Sunday morning, I pronounce, "**He is Risen!**" and the congregation would respond, "**He is Risen Indeed!**" We did that last Sunday morning. For many Christians, Easter is the final story of God. For many carnal Christians, they simply go back to living their life as if that's all. They go back to fishing like Jesus' disciples did.



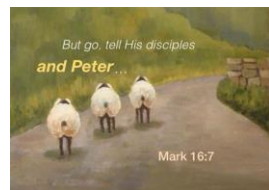
Yes, after Easter Sunday has passed, there is a tremendous sense of completion. The story has been told, the victory has been won, Jesus is no longer dead, and now He is alive, seated at the right hand of God interceding for us.



I believe the church for almost 2000 years has struggled with the idea of what are we supposed to do now?

Go and Tell

The answer to that eternal question is found in our text from Mark 16:7. "*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.*"



These two verbs (Go and Tell) are set in the midst of the announcement of Jesus' resurrection. These two words have been the propelling force behind the perpetual motion of Christianity since that day where a tomb was found empty in Jerusalem.

The compelling necessity to "Go and Tell" is inherent in the good news itself. The high meaning of "*He has risen*" never really gets into a person until it gets into his feet. One fascinating thing about the gospel account of the resurrection of Christ is the way it puts the disciples into motion. Good news simply cannot walk – it runs.



This news of the resurrection of Jesus has propelled thousands of people to abandon the comfort and security of their lives and GO to the uttermost parts of the world and TELL others of the love and forgiveness found only in Jesus Christ. I have a friend serving in an unnamed Asia country today because of the call upon their life to "Go and Tell." I have met people that have served as missionaries to Iran, Turkey, and Africa that heard the compelling call to missions and ministry. God's Spirit moves in the hearts of people that listen to that still small voice and respond, "*Yes Lord.*"



Spilman, along with thousands of other churches, has emphasized the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering which helps support people that have answered the call here in North America to go to regions that still need to hear of the love and forgiveness that can only be found in Jesus Christ. Thank you for your generous support for this mission offering.

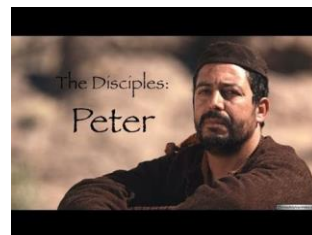
During the Christmas season we raise funds for the Lottie Moon offering that supports foreign missionaries that live and serve in places like China, Europe, Russia, Japan, Australia, and South Africa. Our church also supports the missions work of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. All of these mission opportunities attempt to bring the Good News of Jesus Christ to a lost and dying world. This news of Jesus runs rapidly and spreads quickly when *disciples* become excited and genuinely concerned for their neighbor's salvation. Could it be our church is not growing because the disciples of Jesus associated with Spilman are not excited or don't care about their neighbor's salvation?



Has the Easter message gotten to us? Are we moved and stirred enough to "Go and Tell"? Has the message gotten into our hearts as well as our heads? These verbs are in the present imperative mood – "*Go and Tell.*" We are to go to the ends of the earth, to the ends of our country, to the ends of our state, to the end of our county, to the end of our town, to the end of our street. We are instructed to "Go and Tell," not to sit in silence. This call to "Go and Tell" is valid for us no matter our situation in life! We may not be able to go like we once did, but we can still be about our Father's business and "Tell" others of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

And Peter

In this same verse, I also find a unique phrase that is only found in

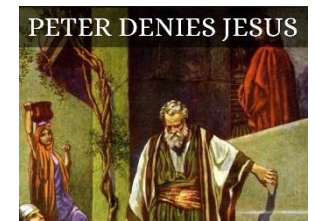


the book of Mark. That phrase is "*and Peter.*" If we were to read this text quickly, we may not even notice this small phrase inserted in the midst of the angelic instructions. Yes, it is true that the faithful disciples were instructed to "Go and Tell," but what about those that had betrayed Jesus? What about the ones that had abandoned Jesus at the most critical time in His ministry? This was also a word for the one – Peter - that had turned his back on Jesus.

Peter was the disciple that was always ready to do something NOW. Peter immediately left his father's fishing business and followed Jesus. Peter, James, and John, were the three that seemed closest to Jesus. They went up to the Mount of Transfiguration and wanted to build three memorials of the event. These three were also closest to Jesus as He prayed in the garden the night of His betrayal.

Peter was the rash disciple that wanted to call fire down from heaven on a city that refused to believe and accept Jesus. During the Last Super, Peter refused to allow Jesus to wash his feet. When Jesus explained the importance of it to Peter, Peter then insisted to be fully washed. Peter even bragged that if Jesus were to die, then he would die with Jesus. Peter was an ALL or NOTHING kind of guy.

On the night of Jesus' betrayal, Peter denied Jesus three times stating he ever knew this man from Galilee. That night of betrayal, Peter became a NOTHING. I am sure that once Jesus' body was placed in Joseph of Arimathea's tomb, Peter's sorrow and grief was multiplied. He knew that he had



promised to stick with Jesus until the end, but instead denied ever knowing Jesus.

That is what is so amazing about the news from the angel. This message of going and telling also applies to Peter. Jesus understood the weak nature of Peter and even foretold of his betrayal. But Jesus still loved Peter.

Jesus and Peter by the Sea of Galilee

In the Gospel of John, there is a wonderful encounter that we see Jesus has with Peter. Peter and several of the disciples had gone out to fish one day after the resurrection of Jesus. I have been there on the Sea of Galilee and thought about that moment in time as Jesus encountered His seven fishing disciples. There is even a church built on the spot where Jesus supposedly baked the fish for these disciples.



Jesus was standing on the sea shore watching these men toil without results. He called out to them, “*Have you caught anything?*” “NO” they replied. Jesus then told them to try their nets on the other side of the boat. Maybe they thought that the person on the shore could see a ripple in the water that they couldn’t from their view so they cast the net on the other side.

Almost immediately, their nets were filled! John, the beloved disciple, recognized that the person on the shore was Jesus. Peter immediately grabbed his outer garment, and jumped into the water. He HAD to see Jesus. Peter is our passionate follower. He was willing to die with Jesus,

but when the time came, he just as passionately cursed ever knowing Jesus. Finally, the boat came to shore with the nets almost bursting.

There on the shore, Jesus had prepared a meal for his hungry friends. He had prepared a fire in which to bake the bread and roast some fish. This is only the second time that a fire of coals is mentioned in the New Testament. The other time was when Peter had warmed himself beside the fire on the night, he betrayed Jesus.

As they were sitting around the fire, Jesus turned to Peter and asked him, “*Peter, do you love me?*” This word that Jesus used for love was *agape* or a pure Heavenly kind of love.

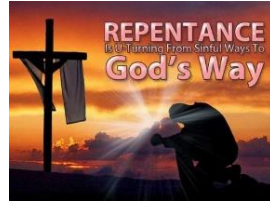
Peter responded, you know I *philēō* you, or love you like a brother loves a brother. Jesus asks the question again. Peter responds in the same way. Jesus asks a third time, Peter, do you even love me like a brother? Peter was grieved, but responded that yes, you know all things, I do love you like a brother.

I believe the reason Jesus asked Peter the same question three times was to counter Peter’s denial of Jesus three times on the night of his betrayal. Jesus instructs Peter after each of his responses, to “*feed the lambs, feed the sheep, feed the sheep.*”

Yes, Peter had let Jesus down, but in this encounter by the sea shore, Jesus is recommissioning Peter to return and be a fisher of men.



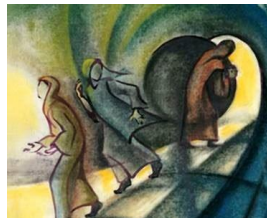
This is a word for someone that has rejected Christ time and time again. The good news is that there is restoration for wayward followers of Jesus. I have heard some individuals say, “I have done something awful and God will never forgive me for what I have done.”



Our God is a forgiving God – He always accepts those that come back to Him. No matter what wrong has been done in the past, God’s grace and forgiveness is available to all. The only unforgivable sin is one of unrepentance. When we fail to come to God and ask His forgiveness, we grieve the Holy Spirit.

This message to Peter is for all who have rejected Jesus at one time or another.

It is also a recommissioning of faithful followers of Jesus that have wandered from the path. Jesus is calling his faithful ones to step up and hear the call once again, “Go and Tell.”



Our Text

In our text this morning, we read the last portion of Mark chapter sixteen. If you look at the footnotes in your bible, you will find some references that say verses 9-20 are not in some older manuscripts. Maybe your Bible ends at Mark 16:8.

Throughout the years, biblical scholars have debated about the inclusion of these 12 verses. It seems as if Mark ends abruptly at verse eight where the three women are fleeing from the tomb in fear and terror. Some have speculated that

there was once a last page and it is now lost. Others have speculated that the remaining 12 verses were added later since the vocabulary and word choice is different than in other places in the book of Mark.

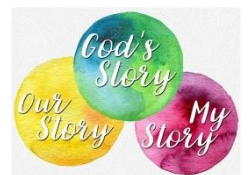
The remaining 12 verses do not add any contradiction to the other gospel accounts. Jesus appeared to Mary. He appeared to the ones on the road to Damascus. He appeared to the remaining eleven disciples. He gave them the great commission that is also present in Matthew. There is a brief account of the ascension of Jesus back into heaven similar to what we read in Acts. The last verse (20) in Mark ends with an affirmation that the disciples believed what they had seen and were now going out and preaching the good news of Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection.

The Unfinished Story



In some ways the Book of Mark is an unfinished story. As you read the other Gospel accounts of Jesus’ life, they too are somewhat incomplete. When you read the book of Acts, you realize that the gospel story continues even beyond Acts 28. If the truth be known, the book of Acts is still being written today.

My story of salvation and service is being written into **God’s story** of salvation and forgiveness and it has become **Our story**. Likewise, your faith story is being joined to God’s story and it is becoming a part of the ongoing story of faith. We belong in Acts chapter 29.



The gospel of Jesus Christ is still being written today. It is a continuing story, to be carried on in individual lives. There is an unwritten page left for each of us to write our record of what Jesus has said and done in us.

May God give us the courage to **“Go and Tell”** our Story to a world in desperate need of what Jesus has to offer.

LET US PRAY