

SYMPHONY OF HOPE

MARK 16

Saturday was horrible/after a sleepless Thursday night of groping after the arrest of Christ / a horrifying vigil through Friday's deathly agony... / Saturday lasted forever / doubt, fear, anger, sorrow made one heavy cloud over the eleven who remained / yes, Saturday was horrible for:

- Peter, the thrice convicted failure
- Thomas, the inveterate doubter
- James and John with dashed hopes of grandeur and thrones
- Andrew, the brother of Peter, the failure, loss of second leader
- Matthew's lost government career seemingly in vain
- Nathaniel's good man from Nazareth now dead
- Phillip's fulfillment of Moses and prophets fizzled
- The other three doubtlessly crushed with sorrow

But God had other plans. He always does. He's the forgiving pardoning God!
After the six trials, three denials, countless scourgings.

- Pounded spices
- Gambled garments
- Sneering crowds
- Seven eternal words from Christ on the cross
- the somber inscription
- the scorning robbers
- twenty-eight exactly fulfilled prophecies about His end quickly ticked off
- then 3 hours of clinging blackness
- a cry from the cross "It is finished"
- the 1,800 square feet of hand woven tapestry closing the Holy of Holies was cut from top down
- an earthquake, splitting rocks / throwing open graves
- a centurion's confession and then after a hurried burial...

The long wait, **and then, resurrection morning.**

Out of the gloom of loss...
Despair of dashed hopes...

Anger and fear of defeat.

God chose to write a symphony.

From town, broken and grief-crippled lives, rises hope -- a symphony of hope:
to the most insecure and dependant, He comes first
to the most doubtful, He comes directly
from each (of 10 Resurrection appearances) a note of hope!

Open to Mark 16 and look with wonder at just how touching our risen Master was with three well chosen appearances:

- v. 9 to Mary Magdalene
- v. 12 to two on the way out of town
- v. 14 to the unbelieving disciples

(1) To Mary Magdalene (probably, the presence lost)

- broken life Jesus had repaired
- soiled life Jesus had washed clean
- demon imprisoned life Jesus had set free
- hopeless life Jesus had filled with joy

She sat there numb with fear.

- how would she ever pick up the pieces and go on?
- He was gone
- would those infernal demons return?

To this women of greatest need and greatest love He gave the greatest assurance, Jn. 20:11-18.

Are you crushed, paralyzed, fearful the old ways, the old prison will swallow you again?

Listen to a note of hope and assurance, if you've lost your:

- from the first one rescued
- from despair, listen to Mary Magdalene
- say, He's risen, she only needed His presence.

V. 12 To the two disillusioned disciples (probably, the word forgotten)

- an empty life the Master had filled
- an aimless life the Master had steered
- a purposeless life the Master had completed

And now this?

- why did this have to happen?
- were we wrong all the time?

Lk. 24:13-35.

Listen again to a note of hope. If you've lost your bearings and are slipping. Let Him open your eyes to His Word.

V. 14 To the Apostles (probably lost faith in the plan)

- all left for Him
- 3 1/2 years of strain and struggle
- for what? Why did we follow?

Listen again to this note of hope. It's okay, start over, I'll forgive, forget, cleanse and use you. Just go and obey.

Jesus Christ orchestrated a symphony of hope.

- to the despairing He gave His presence
- to the discouraged He gave His promises
- to the defeated He gave His plan

Whoever, wherever, however you are today, the empty tomb pours forth a symphony of hope.

Come to Jesus

Lay all your guilt on Him

Take His cleansing and forgiveness

Find rest for your soul

Trust in His sure promises

Know you have life eternal.