




THIS IS YOUR SPACE TO GROW

REFLECTION POINTS 12 APRIL 2020

Mark 16:1-8 (NRSV)

 When the sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him. 2And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. 3They had been saying to one another, 'Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?' 4When they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had already been rolled back. 5As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man, dressed in a white robe, sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed. 6But he said to them, 'Do not be alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised; he is not here. Look, there is the place they laid him. 7But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him, just as he told you.' 8So they went out and fled from the tomb, for terror and amazement had seized them; and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

"Go tell his disciples and Peter..."

That one phrase says so much. Why was Peter singled out for special mention? Why not James and John or one of the others? They were all loved by Jesus. Just Peter.

Firstly, notice the women were the first ones to hear the news of the resurrection – once again, those who were often overlooked by the society and culture of the time are placed front and centre into the action. Think back to how Jesus brought a voiceless child into the midst of the disciples' discussion on who was the greatest – the message then was to become like a child to learn about God and grow in faith and discipleship. I wonder what the message is here as the women enter the empty tomb – perhaps the last will indeed be first?

Secondly, the naming of Peter. Imagine the women rushing back to seek out the disciples, hiding and fearful, and for good reason, and perhaps some shame and humiliation thrown in too.

And imagine strong Peter, the rock on whom the church will be built, wracked with the agony of guilt having denied his teacher 3 times.

Imagine the women rushing in to where the disciples were staying and repeating those exact words – Go, tell his disciples and Peter...

Imagine Peter hearing his name – he was specifically named in the message. Imagine Peter questioning the women – 'did he say my name, just my name?'

Imagine his confusion, his guilt, but also perhaps the beginnings of God's grace gradually warming him, reaching beyond his rational thought into his heart.

A man who claimed he was the friend of Jesus, a close friend, denies knowing him at his darkest hour not once but three times. A man who is then named specifically to be told that Jesus has risen.

What does this tell us? Surely, at the very least, that God's grace is beyond no-one.

Each of the gospel writers shares a different description of the resurrection story. Each of us will have a different understanding that helps us form a relationship with the God we profess. Come along to the zoom discussion groups on Sunday at 11.30am and 3pm – and remember, no right or wrong answers!