

Mark 16:9-20 “If You Really Believe in Jesus”**

Main Idea: If you really believe in Jesus, it shows. That’s something we learn from the final account in the Gospel of Mark, Mark 16:9-20, a text that involves three post-resurrection scenes.

I. Scene #1: The appearances of Jesus (9-14).

A. Jesus appeared to Mary Magdalene (9-11).

1. She told others about Jesus.
2. She encountered unbelief.

B. Jesus appeared to two others (12-13).

1. They told others about Jesus.
2. They encountered unbelief.

C. Jesus appeared to the Eleven (14).

1. They were rebuked for their unbelief.
2. They learned how difficult it is to believe in someone you have not seen.

II. Scene #2: The assignment from Jesus (15-18)

A. He said to go and preach the gospel (15).

B. He said people should believe and be baptized (16).

1. Baptism doesn’t save a person.
2. Baptism is evidence that a person really believes.

C. He said signs of power would accompany those who believe (17-18).

III. Scene #3: The ascension of Jesus (19-20)

A. Jesus returned to heaven (19).

B. Jesus continues to work with His people (20).

1. Our part is to preach.
2. His part is to provide the power.

Make It Personal: If we really believe, there will be evidence.

1. Are you living in dependence upon Jesus?
2. Are you living in obedience to Jesus?
3. Are you telling others about Jesus?

When I was fifteen years old I learned to recite the following creed. It was part of the requirements to become a “green hand” in an organization that many of my freshman friends in high school were joining, *The Future Farmers of America*. The creed I learned to quote was five paragraphs long. Here’s how it begins:

I believe in the future of farming with a faith born not of words but of deeds - achievements won by the present and past generations of agriculturalists; in the promise of better days through better ways, even as the better things we now enjoy have come to us through the struggles of former years.

I believe that to live and work on a good farm or to be engaged in other agricultural pursuits is pleasant as well as challenging; for I know the joys and discomforts of agricultural life and hold an inborn fondness for those associations which, even in hours of discouragement I can not deny.

I chuckle as I look back. I wasn’t a farmer. Now Joe was a farmer—he raised hogs and planted fields of corn to feed them. So was Kelly—he milked Brown Swiss cows every morning and evening. And Steve, too—he knew how to drive a tractor and back up an attached wagon into a narrow barn lot. Those guys were farmers.

But me, a farmer? No. Oh, I lived in a farmhouse—which means it was a house where farmers *used* to live before my family bought it. And I grew up on a 120 acre farm—yes, there were crops all around us, but I never planted any, except for the garden out back. The facts are, we rented the acreage to a local farmer and he planted the corn, the soybeans, and the alfalfa hay, driving his John Deere tractor in the spring and combine at harvest.

Suppose you’d asked me at the age of fifteen, “Brad, are you a farmer?” I could have told you, “Yes sir! I sure am! I live on a farm. I look at crops out my bedroom window every morning. I can recite the FFA creed. Why, I *believe* in the future of farming with a *faith* born not of words but of deeds!”

And you could have justifiably challenged me. Why? Because living near farmers doesn’t make you a farmer. Nor does claiming to be a farmer. Nor does reciting a creed in an organization made up of real farmers.

It’s so easy to say you believe something. Take it a step further. It’s very easy to believe you *are* something. But *saying* you believe something and *believing* you are something doesn’t necessitate that it’s true. I claimed to be a farmer. I could have convinced myself I was a farmer. Would that make it so?

How can you tell if someone believes in Jesus? “Just ask them,” you say. “If a person says he believes in Jesus, then he does. He is a *Christian*.” But Jesus said in Matthew 7:21, “Not everyone who *says* to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who *does* the will of my Father who is in heaven.”

This is serious. In light of the fact that Jesus, just two verses later, said that *many* will claim at the final judgment to have known Him, and that His response to these *many* individuals will be, “I never knew you. Away from Me,” we ought to take inventory. Jesus’ word *many* suggests that there are individuals sitting in church buildings right now on Sunday morning, saying they believe in Jesus, believing they believe in Jesus, but their claim is faulty, their belief is groundless, and worst of all, their destination is a place of eternal torment.

The question is significant. How can you tell if you really believe in Jesus? I want first to *give* you the answer and then secondly to *show* you the answer in God’s Word. How can you tell? *When you really believe something, it shows*. Specifically, if you really believe in Jesus, it shows. There are many texts in the Bible that substantiate that premise. The one we’ll consider today is the one that ends a journey we’ve been on since 2004, the final account in the Gospel of Mark, Mark 16:9-20.

A Word about the Text: Did Mark write Mark 16:9-20?

If you have an NIV Bible, you’ll note a statement above verse 9 that says, “The earliest manuscripts and other ancient witnesses do not have Mark 16:9-20.” If you’re reading the NKJV you’ll see a footnote that states, “Vv. 9–20 are bracketed in NU as not in the original text. They are lacking in Codex Sinaiticus and Codex Vaticanus, although

nearly all other mss. of Mark contain them.” If you’re looking at the KJV *New Schofield Reference Edition Bible* you’ll read a similar footnote, “Verses 9-20 are not found in the two most ancient mss., the Sinaiticus and Vaticanus; others have them with partial omissions and variations. But the passage is quoted by Irenaeus and Hippolytus in the second or third century.”

What are they saying? This. When God revealed His inspired Word, He used the Hebrew language for the Old Testament (with a couple of places in Aramaic) and the Greek language for the New Testament. As years passed, the Bible copied over and over and eventually was translated into other languages. For instance, in 1611 King James authorized a translation of the Bible into English. But since we no longer use seventeenth century English, the Bible has been translated into modern day English, with the NIV in 1978 and the NKJV completed in 1982. Due to archaeological finds, these recent Bible translations had access to more and older Hebrew and Greek manuscripts than did the KJV in 1611. In the oldest manuscripts, Mark 16:9-20 is not there.

John MacArthur explains that the external and internal evidence both strongly suggest that Mark 16:9-20 were not originally part of Mark’s gospel. He also believes that no doctrines should be established on these verses alone. However, he offers this word of caution, “In spite of these considerations of the likely unreliability of this section, it is possible to be wrong on the issue. Therefore, it is good to consider the meaning of this passage and leave it in the text, just as is done with the other text with a similar history, John 7:53-8:11.”^[1]

If you’d like to know more about this, I invite you to come back this evening. In that message I’m going to address the more fundamental issue, “*How We Got Our Bible*.” I will say at this point, I believe we ought to study Mark 16:9-20 because much of what is stated here appears in other Gospel accounts. And furthermore, as J. D. Jones states: “By whomsoever they were written, these verses were attached to the Gospel from its very earliest days. In the second century they were already recognized as part of the Gospel; and even if they are not Mark’s own workmanship they do not on that account lose their authority and force.”^[2]

Now let’s look at the text. In it we see three post-resurrection scenes, and in it we learn that if you really believe in Jesus, *it shows*.

I. Scene #1: The appearances of Jesus (9-14).

The resurrected Jesus made three appearances in verses 9-14.

A. Jesus appeared to Mary Magdalene (9-11). Verse 9 begins, “When Jesus rose early on the first day of the week.” That’s what we celebrated and studied last week, the resurrection account of Jesus. Early on Sunday morning Jesus Christ, the One killed by crucifixion the Friday before, conquered death and left the tomb. Then what did He do?

Verse 9—“...he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had driven seven demons^[3].” Mark’s account clearly states that Mary had watched Jesus die on the cross (15:40), then saw where He was buried (15:47), then witnessed the empty tomb (16:1), and then met the risen Jesus outside the tomb. If you want to see the fuller account, check out John 20:11-18 where we see Mary crying, then meeting Jesus but thinking He was the gardener until He called her by name. What did Mary do in response to seeing Jesus? Verse 10 tells us...

1. *She told others about Jesus.* “She went and told those who had been with him [the apostles] and who were mourning and weeping.” Go and tell. That’s what the angel told Mary in the tomb. And that’s what she did. Mary told them Jesus was alive! What effect did her testimony have?

2. *She encountered unbelief.* Verse 11—“When they heard that Jesus was alive and that she had seen him, they did not believe it.” Luke 24:11 elaborates, “But they did not believe the women, because their words seemed to them like nonsense.”

You say, “But hadn’t Jesus told these men He was going to rise from the dead?” Indeed He did. Mark records at

least three such predictions (see 9:31; 10:33-34; 14:28).

Notice again the little word ‘first’ in verse 9. “Jesus appeared *first* to Mary Magdalene.” Why? Why did the resurrected Jesus appear *first* to Mary and not to the apostles? Or to ask it a different way, why did God orchestrate it so that the apostles first learned about Jesus’ resurrection through *verbal testimony* rather than from *personal observation*? Plummer’s observation is helpful: “The Apostles may have been allowed to hear of the Resurrection before seeing the risen Christ in order that they might know from personal experience what it was to have to depend upon the testimony of others, as would be the case with their converts.”^[4]

In other words, the Lord made the apostles experience the same frustration that everyone with whom they later shared Christ experienced. They learned that Jesus conquered the grave *from the testimony of another*. And what they heard sounded too good to be true, so they didn’t believe it. Did *you* believe in Jesus the first time someone told you?

B. Jesus appeared to two others (12-13). Verse 12—“Afterward Jesus appeared in a different form to two of them while they were walking in the country.”

This seems to be a condensed version of the story in Luke 24 where Jesus met Cleopas and another unnamed disciple on the road to Emmaus and walked with them. They were “kept from recognizing him,” Luke 24:16 states. Mark’s account explains why. The text specifies that Jesus appeared ‘in a *different form*’ (Greek *hetera morphe*, ‘a form of a different kind’). One commentary suggests, “This could mean that He took on a form different from that in which He appeared to Mary Magdalene or, more likely, that He appeared to them in a form different from that in which they had previously recognized Him as **Jesus**.”^[5]

“Hold on,” you object. “Are you saying that Jesus looks different now than He did prior to His resurrection?” Yes. Granted, His glorified body possesses some similarities—His nail prints are still there (John 20:27)—but the differences are staggering. When John saw the resurrected Jesus in Revelation 1, he fell at His feet as though dead, so awesome was the sight.

It’s worth noting that hardly anyone who saw the Resurrected Christ recognized Him at first. Mary didn’t, supposing him to be the gardener. These two travelers on the road to Emmaus didn’t, believing Jesus was a pilgrim traveler. The Eleven in the upper room on Easter evening didn’t, not until He showed them His hands and side. The five disciples fishing on the Sea of Galilee didn’t, not at first, supposing Him to be a passing traveler. When He appeared to more than 500 brothers all at once on the mountain in Galilee, He was so different that even though they saw Him, “some doubted” (Matt. 28:17). J. D. Jones concludes, “It needs a certain preparation of soul and spirit to be able to see Jesus.”^[6]

What effect did seeing Jesus have on the two disciples? Verse 13 tells us, “These returned and reported it to the rest [including the Apostles]; but they did not believe them either.” See the pattern? It’s the same thing Mary Magdalene experienced.

1. *They told others about Jesus.* But unfortunately...

2. *They encountered unbelief.*

Bryan was my best friend when I was in Junior High. I was a young Christian at the time and so excited about my relationship with Jesus Christ! I remember telling Bryan about Jesus one night and about the eternal life he could experience if only he would repent of his sin and believe in Jesus. It was like I was talking about believing in the man on the moon. My friend just looked at me and wanted the conversation to end.

“Why doesn’t he believe in Jesus?” I wondered. “I told him that Jesus died for his sins and came back to life. I told him that Jesus had come into my life and would do the same for him. Why doesn’t he believe me?”

Have you ever had that experience? It’s frustrating, isn’t it? But the fact is, one of reasons it’s so frustrating for us is because we have poor memories. Why did *we* believe? It wasn’t because we were so smart and figured it all out. The Bible says that salvation is by grace so that no one can boast (Eph. 2:8). If we have believed in Christ, there’s

only one reason. God! God opened our blind eyes so we could see! God touched our deaf ears so we could hear! God softened our sin-calloused hearts and gave us the gift of faith so we could believe in His Son! And that's what our friends need.

"If salvation is God's work, then is there anything we can do to help?" Yes! God works through means. He commands us to be witnesses, to tell lost people what we know about Jesus. But since lost people need more than information, namely they need *regeneration*, we must do more than witness. God commands us to *pray*, to ask God the Holy Spirit to do what He alone can do, to open their eyes, regenerate their dead hearts, and give them the ability to believe in His Son and be saved (John 16:8-11)!

If the very men who spent three years with Jesus struggled to believe, why are we so shocked by the obstinate responses we encounter? It's so easy for us to forget, beloved! We too were once hopelessly lost, but someone shared Christ with us and prayed for us. And God, through faith which He bestowed, graciously gave us the gift of eternal life! So keep sharing, and keep praying!

Thus far, we've seen Jesus send Mary and then the two unnamed disciples to the Apostles, but they didn't believe. So what did Jesus do next?

C. Jesus appeared to the Eleven (14). "Later Jesus appeared to the Eleven as they were eating; he rebuked them for their lack of faith and their stubborn refusal to believe those who had seen him after he had risen."

If you want to see the full account of this encounter, check out John 20:19ff. Notice what happened to the eleven apostles (Judas is gone).

1. *They were rebuked for their unbelief.* Jesus isn't pleased with their refusal to believe the testimony of the three witnesses He'd just sent them. They should have responded differently. They learned something important in that room...

2. *They learned how difficult it is to believe in someone you have not seen.*

Apparently, Peter did. Thirty years later Peter wrote these words to second generation Christians in 1 Peter 1:8, "Though you *have not seen him*, you love him; and even though *you do not see him* now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy." Could Peter say that of you? You've never seen the risen Jesus either, but do you *love Him* and *believe in Him*?

So ends scene one, the appearances of Jesus. Now scene two...

II. Scene #2: The assignment from Jesus (15-18)

In this scene we hear the words Jesus spoke to the Eleven, the charge we call the Great Commission. Apparently, the Lord gave the Great Commission to His followers more than once and with different emphases each time (see also Matt. 28:19-20; Luke 24:47-48; John 20:21; Acts 1:8). In Mark's account Jesus told the Eleven three things regarding their assignment.

A. He said to go and preach the gospel (15). "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation." Let the weight of each word sink in...

Go—don't wait for lost people to come to you; you go to them.

Into all the world—not just to Israel where you live; start there but then leave your comfort zone and go to *all* the world. My salvation begins with the Jews but it's not restricted to the Jews. I have the whole world in mind.

And preach—*kerusso* is the Greek word, meaning announce, make known as a herald, proclaim. Please note that

preaching is the means the Lord chose to reach sinners. Today so called church growth experts are saying, “If you want to reach lost people, by all means *don’t preach to them*. Preaching doesn’t work any longer. We live in a visual society. People’s attention spans are too short. Use drama. Use music. Use artistic expression. That’s what works today.”

But the issue isn’t whether we think something works or not. The issue is what Jesus said. Frankly, from a communication standpoint, preaching (which is one way monologue) may not be the best means of communication to get a human response. But we’re not after a human-initiated response. We’re after a God-produced response. And preaching is the God-ordained means by which His Spirit produces that response (Rom. 10:17 “Faith comes from *hearing* the message, and the message is *heard* through the word of Christ”). Apparently, God has chosen to work through preaching because it’s the means through which He receives the most glory.

Just what is preaching? J. I. Packer defined preaching as “the event of God bringing to an audience a Bible-based, Christ-related, life-impacting message of instruction and direction from Himself through the words of a spokesperson.”^[7]

Now, can we use drama or music or art in gospel ministry? Yes, as long as we view them as servants of preaching and use them, not to replace but to create a platform for preaching. *Go into all the world*, Jesus said, *and preach*. Preach what?

The good news—the *euangelion*, the gospel. The gospel is the good news that God saves sinners! It’s the message that Jesus Christ, the Son of God became a man, lived a perfect life, died a substitutionary death for sinners, conquered the grave and returned to heaven. God now offers forgiveness and eternal life to all who will repent and believe in His Son. Preach that message. To whom?

To all creation—in other words, the good news is for all. Don’t leave anyone out!

Answer this. Has everyone heard? No. That means we’ve got a job to do.

J. D. Jones penned these words in 1914. “Every nook and corner of the world has a right to hear it. We have not to pick and choose. Some lands are difficult. Mohammedanism in Africa, Hinduism in India seem to oppose almost impenetrable barriers. But the Christian Church must not neglect India and North Africa because of their difficulty. Some lands are dangerous. But danger must not daunt us. It never has daunted the Church. The Gospel has entered into possession of nearly every land by a living way. Palestine by the blood of James and Stephen; Europe by the blood of Paul and Peter; the South Seas by the blood of John Williams; Africa by the blood of Bishop Hannington; New Guinea by the blood of James Chalmers. And still we must go in spite of danger. To the barbarians of Central Africa, and the untamed savages of New Guinea we must ‘go and preach.’”^[8]

Jesus addressed a second fact about our assignment in verse 16.

B. He said people should believe and be baptized (16). “Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.”

Some read this and conclude a person must be baptized to be saved. But notice carefully the contrast here. Jesus says that a person who believes and is baptized will be saved, indicating that a person who believes in Him will want to be baptized to give public testimony of his faith. On the other hand, according to the second part of the verse, who will be condemned? Not the person who isn’t baptized but the person who *does not believe*. In other words, if a person doesn’t *believe* he isn’t saved, even if he has been baptized.^[9] That’s because two things are true of baptism.

1. *Baptism doesn’t save a person.* A person is saved by believing in Christ.

2. *Baptism is evidence that a person really believes.* If a person truly believes in Christ, he will want to make it known. If he doesn’t, it’s an indication that his faith is deficient.^[10] Again, if you really believe in Jesus, it shows!

That’s not all. Listen to verse 17, “And these signs will accompany those who believe.” What did Jesus say?

C. He said signs of power would accompany those who believe (17-18). Jesus identifies five signs. It's worth noting that every one of these 'signs' appears in the book of Acts except for one (see if you can spot it): "In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues; they will pick up snakes with their hands; and when they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them at all; they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well (17-18)."

They will *drive out demons*—that's what verse 9 just said Jesus did with Mary Magdalene. Paul did the same with a servant girl in Philippi (Acts 16:18). They'll *speak in new tongues*—like the apostles did in Acts 2 when the Spirit enabled them to speak in foreign languages. They will also *pick up snakes*—perhaps like Paul did on the island of Malta, not by choice but when a viper sunk its fangs into his hand (Acts 28:5-6; see also Luke 10:19). [\[11\]](#) And *when they drink deadly poison it will not hurt them*—there's no mention of this in Acts; the prediction seems to be that although persecutors will try to kill believers by forcing them to drink poison, the Lord will protect them, and apparently that happened in the first century. And the fifth sign—*they will place their hands on sick people and make them well*—which is what Peter did with the cripple in Acts 3:7.

What are we to make of these spectacular 'signs'? Let's not miss the obvious. This is what Jesus said *would* happen—that these signs would accompany those who believed. And that is what *did* happen in the early church. These signs did accompany those who believed, specifically, these were signs of an apostle (see Heb. 2:3-4). The Holy Spirit used them in the early church to authenticate the preaching of the gospel, yet as the history of the church progressed and the gospel advanced, the appearances of these spectacular gifts decreased.

Should we expect to see such signs today? Granted, God can do whatever He desires, but I don't think these sign-gifts are for today, for this reason. The sign gifts have *already fulfilled* their purpose. As J. Vernon McGee observes, "If someone maintains that they are injunctions for today, then one must accept them all, even the drinking of a deadly poison. Even before the end of the first century, the sign gifts were no longer the credentials of the apostles. The test was correct doctrine (see 2 John 10)."[\[12\]](#)

Mark's Gospel concludes with one final scene...

III. Scene #3: The ascension of Jesus (19-20)

Verse 19—"After the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, he was taken up into heaven and he sat at the right hand of God." Here we learn the first of two very encouraging truths about Jesus that end the story.

A. Jesus returned to heaven (19). The One who suffered on earth is no longer suffering—now He's in heaven. And He's *seated* there, indicating His redemptive work is done. He's at His Father's right hand, a place of honor and authority. Yes, He's back home in heaven! But that's not all, for in reality He's not just *there*.

B. Jesus continues to work with His people (20). "Then the disciples went out and preached everywhere [in other words they did what Jesus told them to do], *and the Lord worked with them* and confirmed his word by the signs that accompanied it [in other words, He did what He said He would do!]." Notice the divine-human cooperation here.

1. *Our part is to preach.*

2. *His part is to provide the power.* If He didn't provide the power, we could never fulfill our mission, as Charles Spurgeon observed, "You might as well expect to raise the dead by whispering in their ears, as hope to save souls by preaching to them, if it were not for the agency of the Holy Spirit."[\[13\]](#)

We may not see our Lord, but He's with us. "Lo, I am with you always," as He said in Matthew's final verse. He, by the abiding presence of His Spirit, provides the power necessary so that the message we preach results in changed lives!

Make It Personal: If we really believe, there will be evidence.

I'm not a farmer. Spending time on a farm didn't make me a farmer. Learning the future farmers' creed didn't make me a farmer. The evidence wasn't there.

Answer this. Are you a believer in Christ, a Christian? Spending time in church doesn't make you a Christian. Learning the church's creed doesn't make you a Christian. If you really believe in Jesus, there will be evidence. "Like what?" you ask. I see three evidences that grow out of this passage. I'll put them in the form of three questions.

1. *Are you living in dependence upon Jesus?* Have you trusted in Him for salvation? You may already call yourself a Christian—that matters not. The issue is, have you placed your faith in Jesus alone for your salvation? If not, I invite you to do so now. And if you have—be honest with yourself—are you living in dependence upon Him day by day? If you really believe in Jesus, it shows! So take a look. Is there evidence that you are living in dependence upon Him? Take it a step further...

2. *Are you living in obedience to Jesus?* If you really believe in Him, it will show. You will want to obey Him. People will see His commands being lived out in your life. And here's one in particular, the one we've seen today...

Jesus said to *go and preach the good news to all creation*. Have you been doing that? Who have you told about Jesus recently? This isn't optional.

At the age of 24 Adoniram Judson was gripped by Jesus' command, and so in 1813 he left America and took his wife of 17 months, Ann, to Burma preach the gospel. The price they paid was incredible. When Great Britain declared war on Burma, Adoniram was accused of being a British spy, arrested, and thrown in a rat infested prison. For seventeen months, his beloved Ann who was pregnant walked eight miles every day to go to the prison and plead with the authorities to free her innocent husband. She ended up losing the baby. In fact, they had three children and they all died. And then Ann died.

Eight years later Adoniram married Sarah, a missionary widow. They had eight children, five of which survived childhood. Then Sarah became sick and they set sail for America (Adoniram had not been home to America in 33 years), but Sarah died on the ship. Then he married Emily and they had two children, the second of which died at birth. Adoniram himself died before he ever saw that child. Yes, *the price he paid was immense*.

But by God's grace he persevered. He told the people of Burma about Jesus. He translated the Bible into their language. And God blessed. Today there are 3,700 congregations in the Baptist Convention with 617,781 members. John Piper observes, "Of course there were others besides Adoniram Judson - hundreds of others over time. But they too came and gave away their lives. Most of them died much younger than Judson. They only serve to make the point. The astonishing fruit in Myanmar (Burma) today has grown in the soil of the suffering and death of many missionaries, especially Adoniram Judson."^[14]

If you really believe in Jesus, *it shows*. It did for Adoniram, Ann, Sarah, and Emily. And so we must face up to a third question...

3. *Are you telling others about Jesus?* Go, Jesus said. Preach. To all creation.

Supplemental Material: Other observations about the inclusion of Mark 16:9-20

Harry Ironside: "I do not dwell on the critical question as to the authenticity or otherwise of the last part of this chapter, verses 9 to 20. It is not found in two of the most ancient manuscripts, but it bears the stamp of inspiration, and the book of Acts and the history of Missions attest its credibility, so that I see no reason to assume that it is

other than a part of that God-breathed Scripture which is for our instruction and blessing.”^[15]

William Barclay: “Mark’s gospel really stops at verse 8. We have only to read the passage to see how different it is from the rest of the gospel and it appears in none of the great manuscripts of the gospel. It is a later summary which replaces the ending which either Mark did not live to write or which at some time went astray.”^[16]

J. Vernon McGee: “Now we come to the section that is not included in all the manuscripts but which we believe is the Word of God.”^[17]

****Note:** This is an unedited manuscript of a message preached at Wheelersburg Baptist Church . It is provided to prompt your continued reflection on the practical truths of the Word of God.

^[1] *MacArthur’s Quick Reference Guide to the Bible*, p. 188.

^[2] J. D. Jones, p. 680.

^[3] Luke 8:2 also gives us this detail.

^[4] Plummer’s quote, taken from Wessel, p. 789.

^[5] *Bible Knowledge Commentary*

^[6] J. D. Jones, p. 687.

^[7] Taken from *Handbook of Contemporary Preaching*, p. 19.

^[8] J. D. Jones, p. 704.

^[9] Observation by W. Wiersbe, p. 167.

^[10] Walter Wessel explains, “Belief and baptism are so closely associated that they are conceived of as virtually a single act. The inward reception (belief) is immediately followed by the external act or witness to that faith (baptism). The result is salvation..” Wessel, p. 790.

^[11] I chuckled when I read one commentator’s observation, “Superstitious use of this verse has given rise to the snake-handling and poison-drinking sects of Appalachia .” Wessel, p. 790.

^[12] J. Vernon McGee, p. 202.

^[13] Taken from *Handbook of Contemporary Preaching*, p. 18.

^[14] John Piper, “*Suffering and Success in the Life of Adoniram Judson: The Cost of Bringing Christ to Burma* ” www.desiringgod.org

^[15] H. A. Ironside, *Mark*, p. 251.

^[16] W. Barclay, p. 370.

[\[17\]](#) J. Vernon McGee, p. 200.