

SECOND CHANCE(S)

Mark 16:1-7

- “In what ways would you like to experience a **SECOND CHANCE?**”
- Many people would like to have a *Second Chance* when it comes to restoring a broken relationship, finding the right person to date or marry, selecting a career, pursuing their dreams, getting the most out of life, following God’s will, etc.

Everyone knows and believes that a man named Jesus of Nazareth died on a cross at the end of His life and was crucified between 2 thieves. What everyone doesn’t believe is that Jesus rose from the grave on the 3rd day following His crucifixion.

You and I can know that Jesus rose from the grave because of the:

1. **Great number of witnesses to His resurrection** – Over 10 different times over a period of 40 days, Jesus met with people who observed Him in His resurrection state. At one time, over 500 people met with the Lord.
2. **Transformation that took place in the lives of His disciples** – Prior to Jesus’ resurrection, the Disciples of Jesus were fleeing like cowards. But after meeting with the resurrected Lord Jesus, we find them bravely and passionately proclaiming Jesus as the son of God and the risen savior.
3. **Faith and growth of the early Church** – Secular scholars have said that the only reason the Xn church grew so rapidly/powerfully is because the early Disciples really believed JC had risen from the grave.
4. **Impact He has made on all of history** – No other per has ever impacted the world as J has done – Other great religious, educational, business & political figures have come and gone, but w/out a doubt Jesus Christ has impacted . . .

We also know that Jesus not only rose from the grave, but that **5. Jesus is still transforming lives, circumstances & relationships.** There are 100’s of people in this room like me today whose lives have been dramatically transformed in positive ways because they’ve met the risen/living Lord Jesus. The Easter story is about Jesus having a 2nd Chance, after the crucifixion, to transform the world.

- **The Easter story is about PEOPLE having a *Second Chance* to experience God’s peace, power and purposes in their lives.**

The next evening, when the Sabbath ended, Mary Magdalene and Salome and Mary the mother of James went out and purchased burial spices to put on Jesus’ body. ² Very early on Sunday morning, just at sunrise, they came to the tomb. ³ On the way they were discussing who would roll the stone away from the entrance to the tomb. ⁴ But when they arrived, they looked up and saw that the stone—a very large one—had already been rolled aside. ⁵ So they entered the tomb, and there on the right sat a young man clothed in a white robe. The women were startled, ⁶ but the angel said, "Do not be so surprised. You are looking for Jesus, the Nazarene, who was crucified. He isn't here! He has been raised from the dead! Look, this is where they laid his body. ⁷ Now go and give this message to his disciples, including Peter: Jesus is going ahead of you to Galilee. You will see him there, just as he told you before he died!" (Mark 16:1-7)

THE EASTER STORY REMINDS US THERE ARE 2ND CHANCES FOR:

PEOPLE WHO ARE HURTING

At the beginning of our text, we read about 3 women, Mary Magdalene, Salome and Mary the mother of James who came to the tomb of Jesus to prepare His body for burial in the custom of their day. Because Jesus had died in the hours just before the Jewish Sabbath, a time when no one could do anything but focus on God and family, these women were utilizing their first opportunity during the daytime to come and properly prepare Jesus’ body for burial.

- We know hardly anything about Salome and Mary the mother of James, but we do know a little about Mary Magdalene.

Ever heard the name Mary Magdalene? Tradition has it that she had been rescued from an immoral & ungodly life by Jesus. She first appears in the gospels w/ a list of women who had been cured of various diseases/she herself had been delivered from demonic oppression. After that experience she had become a close follower of Jesus (a close follower & not a lover of Jesus as some God-haters would have us believe). **Mary Magdalene had been rescued from a dysfunctional, depraved and defeated life by Jesus, and had become a devout follower of the Lord.** Someone once said,

- **“Those who have been forgiven most by the Lord seem to love Him more.”** And that was certainly true in the case of Mary Magdalene. She was there when Jesus was crucified/they transported the body of Jesus to the tomb/on that first Easter morning to anoint . . ./grieve . . .

When I think about Mary Magdalene, I think about the fact that she was someone who had so many failures in her life she had been ostracized by society. She would be like a prostitute in our day & time/drug addict or an

alcoholic. She was the type of person that people would say about her, "What a pitiful human being/loser. There is really no hope for her." Sometimes we think that way about people that we know/we've met. We think, "There is no hope . . ."

Sometimes we think that some people, circumstances or relationships are "hopeless," but there is always hope for people with the living Lord Jesus.

- "Those who become Christians become new persons. They are not the same anymore, for the old life is gone. A new life has begun!" (2 Cor 5:17)

Do you have anyone in your life that you've lost hope for? Someone who has made bad decision after . . . /failed and fallen many times over in life. Let me remind you that just like the Lord changed Mary Magdalene, He can change the hopeless and helpless people that you know as well. Here are Celebration we are constantly seeing people delivered from the struggles & strongholds of their lives as they participate in our worship services/Life Groups/C.R.. They begin to get victory over the hurts, habits & hang-ups of their lives/have their lives – STORY?

- Let me remind you of something else. **Mary and the other women who came to Jesus' tomb were struggling with grief.**
 - "Mary was standing outside the tomb crying, and as she wept, she stooped and looked in. She saw two white-robed angels sitting at the head and foot of the place where the body of Jesus had been lying. 'Why are you crying?' the angels asked her. 'Because they have taken away my Lord,' she replied, 'and I don't know where they have put Him.'" (John 20:11-13 NLT)

Can you imagine the grief that Mary Magdalene was experiencing. . . - All of her hopes and dreams had been shattered w/ the death of J, and now, she couldn't even properly grieve His passing because apparently . There are many peo in our world/room today who are grieving.

Some people experience grief in their lives as a result of:

1. Despair - *because their dreams or hopes have been crushed*
 2. Disabilities - *which hinder their ability to enjoy life - F-in-law*
 3. Division between former friends and loved ones - *which leaves them feeling hurt and bitter*
 4. Divorce - *which brings strife and loneliness to their lives*
 5. Death - *which brings anguish and sorrow to their lives*
- We've all exper tragedy & sorrow which leads to G in our lives/ all will exper . - *Probs? - Everyone either . - Same is true with G - Everyone . .*
 - **Grief often robs people of joy, peace and hope in their lives.**

"She glanced over her shoulder and saw someone standing behind her. It was Jesus, but she didn't recognize him. 'Why are you crying?' Jesus asked her. 'Who are you looking for?' She thought He was the gardener. 'Sir,' she said, 'if you have taken Him away, tell me where you have put Him, and I will go and get Him.' 'Mary!' Jesus said. She turned toward him and exclaimed, 'Teacher'! 'Don't cling to Me,' Jesus said, 'for I haven't yet ascended to the Father. But go find my brothers and tell them that I am ascending to my Father and your Father, my God and your God.' Mary Magdalene found the disciples and told them, 'I have seen the Lord!' Then she gave them His message." (John 20:14-18 NLT)

- What does that passage of Scripture teach us? It teaches us that **When we're hurting, we need to encounter Jesus Christ, because He will drive away our sorrow and fill our hearts with joy and hope!**
- *"I was overcome by trouble and sorrow. Then I called on the name of the Lord . . . The Lord is gracious and righteous, our God is full of compassion. . . . You, O Lord, have delivered my soul from death, my eyes from tears, my feet from stumbling, that I may walk before the Lord in the land of the living." (Psalm 116:3-9 NIV)*
- *"The Lord will be your everlasting light, and your days of sorrow will end." (Isaiah 60:20 NIV)*
- Today, if you're struggling with grief, you need to have a personal encounter/life-changing encounter with the living Lord Jesus. We're going to give you the opportunity to do that in just a few moments.

THE EASTER STORY REMINDS US THERE ARE 2ND CHANCES FOR:

PEOPLE WHO ARE STRUGGLING

- Jesus said in Mark 16:7, *"Go and give this message to My disciples" / tell My disciples that I've risen from the grave. Why did Jesus say that?*
- **The Disciples of Jesus were struggling with anxiety & fear in their lives**

In John's Gospel we discover that the disciples of Jesus sequestered & secluded themselves/hidden behind closed doors – Afraid because of what had happened to Jesus – Now their fear was compounded by fact that Jesus' body was missing & they were afraid they would be blamed. Their doors were bolted, windows locked, talking in hushed tones/trembling w/ fear and worry – Can you imagine? But then, they heard from Mary and the others

that Jesus had risen from the grave, & all of a sudden their worries and fears were gone.

- Do you ever struggle with worry or fear? Over 700 diff kinds of "phobias" listed in the dictionary - *Acrophobia/Claustrophobia/ Ergophoa (work)/ Ablutophobia (washing/bathing) Anuptaphobia (staying single)/ Arachno-phobia (spiders)/ Aviophobia (flying)/ Cibophobia (food)/ Didaskaleino-phobia (going to school)/ Ecclessiophobia (church)/Homilophobia (sermons)/Mageirocophobia (cooking)/Pentheraphobia (mother-in-law) /Triskadephobia (#13 - All kinds of phobias . . . "Ever grappled with fear in your life?" - Fear is a terrible thing - Edgar Wallace, "Fear is a tyrant, more terrible than the rack, more potent than any poisonous snake" - H. P. Lovecraft, "The oldest & strongest and most terrible emotion is fear" - Frank Herbert, "I must not fear. Fear is the mind-killer. Fear is the little death that brings total obliteration." - Old German proverb, "Fear makes the wolf bigger than he is" - Ever struggle with fear? Some peo fear losing their health/wealth/friends/family members/ marriages/position/ power/jobs /sanity /salvation - Many here have been discouraged, dominated & defeated by fear and worry.*

- **Worry and fear robs us of joy, peace, faith and hope in our lives.**
- **Question – “What causes me to be anxious or fearful in life?”**
- *“Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”* (Philippians 4:6-7 NIV)
- *“The LORD is my light and my salvation— so why should I be afraid? The LORD protects me from danger— so why should I tremble?”* (Psalm 27:1 NLT)

- **The Disciples were struggling to find purpose in their life.**

They had given up everything to follow Jesus, but because Jesus had died they didn't know what to do with their lives/felt completely purposeless. Do you ever feel like that? There were people in the Bible who felt like their lives had no purpose.

- *“Why was I born? Was it only to have trouble and sorrow, to end my life in disgrace?”* (Jeremiah 20:18 TEV)
- *“My work all seems so useless! I have spent my strength for nothing and for no purpose at all.”* (Isaiah 49:4 NLT)

And there are many people today who feel like their life has no purpose. They wonder, “Why am I here/What am I supposed to be doing in life/Does life have real meaning?” That's not a good place to be in life. *What is the meaning of a Red light/green light/yellow light/Street sign/Road # - Ladies driving 22 mph on hwy – 5 old ladies (wide-eyed/white as a sheet) – Stopped by a police officer – “I was doing the speed limit, what's the problem?” – “22 is the route # - “Are the other ladies okay?” – “Yes, we just got off of Route 119”* - Now, here's the point - if you don't know something's purpose, it is likely to be missed or misused. You want to know why there are so many people missing out on life or misusing life today? Because they don't know their purpose in life. The only way to know the purpose of something is to talk to its Creator or to read the Owner's Manual. Throughout this 2nd Chance series we're going to be learning how to . . .

- **When we're struggling to have peace and purpose in our lives, we need to rely on the promises of the Lord.**
 - *“God is our refuge and strength, an ever present help in trouble. Therefore, we will not fear . . .”* (Psalm 46:1 NIV)
 - *“For God has said, ‘I will never leave you nor forsake you.’”* (Hebrews 13:5 NKJV)
 - *“‘For I know the plans I have for you,’ declares the LORD, ‘plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.’”* (Jeremiah 29:11 NIV)
- Little boy who received a bicycle for Xmas. “I always keep my promises.”

THE EASTER STORY REMINDS US THERE ARE 2ND CHANCES FOR:

PEOPLE WHO ARE FAILING

- **Peter struggled greatly with the fact that He had failed the Lord Jesus.**
- *“‘Tonight all of you will desert Me,’ Jesus told them. ‘For the Scriptures say, God will strike the Shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.’ But after I have been raised from the dead, I will go ahead of you to Galilee and meet you there.’ Peter declared, ‘Even if everyone else deserts You, I never will. ‘Peter,’ Jesus replied, ‘the truth is, this very night, before the rooster crows, you will deny me three times.’ ‘No!’ Peter insisted. ‘Not even if I have to die with you! I will never deny you!’”* (Matthew 26:31-35 NLT)
- *“As Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard, a servant girl came over and said to him, ‘You were one of those with Jesus the Galilean.’”*

But Peter denied it in front of everyone. 'I don't know what you are talking about,' he said. Later, out by the gate, another servant girl noticed him and said to those standing around, 'This man was with Jesus of Nazareth.' Again Peter denied it, this time with an oath. 'I don't even know the man,' he said. A little later some other bystanders came over to him and said, 'You must be one of them; we can tell by your Galilean accent.' Peter said, 'I swear by God, I don't know the man.' Immediately the rooster crowed. Suddenly, Jesus' words flashed through Peter's mind: 'Before the rooster crows, you will deny me three times.' And he went away, crying bitterly. (Matthew 26:69-75)

Why did Peter cry? He knew that he had failed the Lord/felt . .

- Question - "Have you ever felt like a failure?"
 - Every person has experienced the agony of defeat in their lives/ felt like a failure. Some people have failed in:
 - 1) Business/Careers - fired from a job/invested in a business - worked hard . & yet . . collapsed - felt like a failure
 - 2) School - maybe when attending high school or college they dropped out/didn't complete their education, & since then . . .
 - 3) Parenting - Determined to be a very good parent, & yet when you look at where your kids are you feel like a failure
 - 4) Marriage - At one time on top of world, but . . .
 - 5) Christian walk/life - I believe that all of us at some time or another have failed as Xns/fallen away . . /made some grave mistakes/involved in great sin, and many . . failures

We've all experienced failures in life - and many of us have felt like failures!

- **Failure robs us of joy, peace, faith and hope in our lives.**
- **Question – “What failures in my life have hindered my relationships with God and others?”**

We need to understand that failure is not final/ that God can use even our failures to make us better & stronger individuals/greater blessings to other in the future.

- “God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to His purpose for them.” (Romans 8:28)

That means regardless of how we've failed in life, God can turn around our failures and use them for our good, for others good, and for His glory.

- And by the way, **“Failures” aren't people who fall down, but those who won't get up and get going after their fall.**

Casey Stengel – Yankees & Met's Manager – Rookie right fielder missing every ground ball & every fly ball. “Let me show you how to play right

field.” Stengel missed every ground ball & fly ball. As he ran into the infield Stengel said to the rookie, “You've messed up right field so much that no one can play it anymore.” Listen, neither you nor anyone else has messed up your life so much that you can't overcome those failures.

- By the way, we learn from Peter's story that **We can overcome any & every failure in our lives when we rely on the power of the Lord.**
- Jesus – “When the Holy Spirit has come upon you, you will receive power and will tell people about Me everywhere.” (Acts 1:8 NLT)

Shortly after meeting with Jesus by the Sea of Galilee (John 21), and after experiencing the empowering of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2), Peter bounced back from his failures. He stood before the same people in Jerusalem that he had cowered before in the Courtyard, and preached a great message about the Lordship of Jesus. Remember, in the Courtyard, Peter had denied that he knew Jesus Christ, but on the Day of Pentecost he stood before the people and said, *So let it be clearly known by everyone in Israel that God has made this Jesus whom you crucified to be both Lord and Messiah!*” (Acts 2:36) And on that day Peter was able to lead 3000 people to receive Jesus as their Savior and the Christian Church was birthed. Listen, just like Peter was able to bounce back from his failures, we can bounce back from our failures when we learn to rely on the power of the Lord in our lives.

- **Mary Magdalene, Peter and the other Disciples had their circumstances, relationships and lives turned around as a result of receiving a *Second Chance* from the Lord, and so can we.**
- **Another person who experienced a *2nd Chance* as a result of the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus was Barabbas (Matt 27:15-27).**

Tell Barabbas' story/Play the Video. We don't know what happened to Barabbas. We don't know if he took advantage of his 2nd chance. If he did, then he was able to experience the forgiveness, freedom, fulfillment of the Lord and the future of heaven like thousands of people here at Celebration have experienced. If he didn't, he will spend eternity apart from God and the purposes and plans that the Lord had for his life.

- **Question – “What are you going to do with the **SECOND CHANCE** the Lord is offering you today?”**

- **This Easter I'm going to:**

_____ **Receive Jesus as my Savior and Lord**

_____ **Commit to start attending Church regularly=**

_____ **Demonstrate my commitment to Jesus by being baptized**