Question: Between Simon Peter and Mary Magdalene, who was the first to see the risen Lord Jesus? Luke 24:34 says Jesus appeared first to Simon Peter, but Mark 16:9 says Mary Magdalene was the first. How can these two statements be reconciled?

Biblical Examination

Luke 24:33-34 states:

> “They got up and returned at once to Jerusalem. There they found the Eleven and those with them, assembled together, saying, ‘The Lord has truly risen and has appeared to Simon!’”

This passage highlights that Jesus appeared to Simon Peter (also called Cephas).

On the other hand, Mark 16:9 records:

> “When Jesus rose early on the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had driven seven demons.”

This clearly identifies Mary Magdalene as the first person to see the risen Jesus.

Sequence and Significance

There is no contradiction here because the passages emphasize different moments and theological meanings.

1. Mary Magdalene as the First Witness:
   Mark 16:9 and John 20:1-18 emphasize Mary Magdalene’s role as the first human witness to the resurrection. Theologically, this is significant because Mary represents the marginalized and forgiven sinner (Luke 8:2), demonstrating that the resurrection is a message of hope for all, not just the religious elite.
2. Peter as the First Apostle Witness:
   Luke 24:34 stresses Jesus’ appearance to Simon Peter, who was the leader of the apostles (Matthew 16:18-19). Theologically, this establishes Peter’s authority in the early Church and affirms apostolic witness, crucial for the foundation of the Christian faith (Ephesians 2:20).
3. Sequence of Appearances:
   Mary Magdalene’s encounter happened early, immediately after Jesus’ resurrection, as recorded in Mark and John. After informing the disciples, Jesus appeared to Peter (1 Corinthians 15:5), validating Peter’s role as an eyewitness and leader.

Supporting Scripture

John 20:14-18
Mary Magdalene weeps outside the empty tomb and is the first to see Jesus after His resurrection, highlighting the personal, relational nature of the risen Christ calling His follower by name.

1 Corinthians 15:3-8
Paul summarizes resurrection appearances:

> “...that he appeared to Cephas, and then to the Twelve. After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers and sisters at the same time...”

This passage emphasizes the historical reality and communal testimony of Jesus’ resurrection, foundational for Christian faith.

Have you personally encountered the risen Jesus? The resurrection promises victory over death and eternal life (John 11:25-26). As we live in the last days (Hebrews 1:2), the question

remains: where will you be when Jesus returns? The gospel is the power of God for salvation (Romans 1:16)—don’t reject it as foolishness.

May the grace of our risen Lord Jesus Christ empower and guide us always.

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