

Fear to Peace

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²⁰After He said this, He showed them His hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord. ²¹Again Jesus said, “Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.” ²²And with that He breathed on them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven.”
 - John 20:19-23*

In this Series, We Will Learn That...

There is a beginning and ending to everything. We need to welcome changes and look for the opportunities they provide.

The Background

1. This story happens later on the same day that Jesus arose.

“On the evening of that first day of the week...” - John 20:19

2. This story takes place in a house.

“A week later His disciples were in the house again...” - John 20:26

3. The disciples are together in the same place but they are afraid for their lives.

“On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jews...” - John 20:19

“A week later His disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked...” - John 20:26

What changed the disciples from fear to boldness?

4. Jesus has a new body and it is quite amazing!

Why didn't Jesus appear to the doubters and enemies instead of to His followers?

What was Jesus' new body like?

“But someone may ask, ‘How are the dead raised? With what kind of body will they come?’” - 1 Corinthians 15:35

“So will it be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable; ⁴³it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; ⁴⁴it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body.” - 1 Corinthians 15:42-44

“When He was at the table with them, He took bread, gave thanks, broke it and began to give it to them. ³¹Then their eyes were opened and they recognized Him, and He disappeared from their sight.” - Luke 24:30,31

“Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself! Touch me and see; a ghost does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have.” - Luke 24:39

“...He asked them, ‘Do you have anything here to eat?’” ⁴²They gave Him a piece of broiled fish, ⁴³and He took it and ate it in their presence.” - Luke 24:41,42

The Message from the Resurrected Lord

1. You now have peace! This peace was foretold.

“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom His favour rests.”
 - Luke 2:14

“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.” - John 14:27

“I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace” - John 16:33

This peace was between God and mankind for the first time since Adam.

“Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ...” - Romans 5:1

“...and through Him to reconcile to Himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through His blood, shed on the cross.” - Colossians 1:20

Jesus had never said this to the disciples before and now says it three times in two brief meetings. This is new!

“Jesus came and stood among them and said, ‘Peace be with you!’” . . . ²¹Again Jesus said, “Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.” - John 20:19,21

“Jesus came and stood among them and said, ‘Peace be with you!’” - John 20:26

2. You are to share this peace with others.

“Again Jesus said, ‘Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.’” vs. 21

3. You are to receive and utilize the power of the Holy Spirit.

“And with that He breathed on them and said, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit.’” - John 20:22

Some believe that the disciples received the Holy Spirit then.

Others believe that the disciples were told of *what* was going to happen and *how* it would happen exactly 50 days later.

- Note that they did not receive power or courage here.

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”
 - Acts 1:8

- Note that although He said He was sending them in the previous verse, they were not actually sent for another 50 days.

4. You are to declare the forgiveness of sins.

“If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven.” - John 20:23

Some believe that this verse gave the Apostles and possibly other church leaders the right to forgive sin.

“Who can forgive sins but God alone?” - Luke 5:21

Others believe that Jesus was speaking of the work of salvation that had just been accomplished. We can now confidently share with people that if they truly believe, they are forgiven!

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