

Resurrection Peace

Prayer

John 20:19-23 NIV

On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord.

Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone's sins, their sins are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven."

In the Old Testament there were many prophecies about the coming Messiah. They had the order of Melchizedek and then they had the Law. Now the Law of Moses was the tutor of mankind. It showed us that we could not achieve righteousness on our own. In short, it taught mankind to recognize that we needed a savior.

This week we have remembered Jesus death on the cross and have an understanding of all that his blood shed on the cross has done for us. Today we celebrate the resurrection of our risen Lord!

When Christ took up his commission we have seen him take on the role of the royal prophet culminated in his picking up his kingship clearly on his reentry to Bethlehem. The Old Testament has its purpose, but today I want to talk about the New Testament. This amazing canon of God has 27 books of which 4 are Gospels. There are 21 letters or epistles within it all of which tell us the meaning of Jesus in our lives. Apart from the treatment of his crucifixion, these books describe a living Jesus!

Now we just read what happened when Jesus appeared to his disciples following his crucifixion. In John 20:1-18 he appeared to Mary Magdalene, but I want to pick up here where he appears to his disciples.

Let's take a look at verse 19 again and see what we can discover there...

On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!"

Fact #1 – Jesus rose on the first day of the Week. It is from here, the day of his resurrection that we get our day of the Sabbath.

Fact #2 – The doors were locked and yet Jesus still came and stood among them

Fact #3 – They were afraid, Jesus knew this and brought peace into their midst
Let's think on these for a minute or so...

Have any one of us ever been fearful? Have we ever looked at a situation and said Lord God, what am I going to do, this is bigger than me. I have, recently I was guilty of the sin of worry. I worried about this church. I worried about my daughter who is not leading a Godly lifestyle right now. I worried that I didn't have all the experience or training necessary to be a good pastor. I worried about living in Trail and yet being an effective pastor to Salmo. But in preparation for this Easter, in fact, in putting together this very sermon. I came to understand that real men and women of God do at times suffer from fear, yet it is what we do with that fear that makes the difference.

Do we step out in faith despite our fear or do we cower into useless avoidance and feed our worldly predisposition to be afraid? Do we allow paralysis to stop us from being effective in our worship of Christ?

God has told us to cast our cares on him, to trust him, he never once says: "Go figure it out yourself"

I was reading this scripture and I saw Jesus, my Jesus say: "Peace be with you!"

How many of us will lock down ourselves when we are afraid? Jesus was not bared for being with his disciples even though it was a locked room. He was right there. Jesus can go where no one else is able. He can reach you wherever you are at. In whatsoever state you are... There are no depths of sorrow; grief or despair within you that Jesus cannot reach.

Jesus did not let locked doors stop him from bringing peace to his beloved followers.

What does this mean for us?

It means that Jesus doesn't wait for us to get our act together, to have our plans all worked out, he doesn't wait until we have reached some faith threshold, he comes in to each of us, just as he did for me this week and gives us the faith to overcome fear. That faith is a gift and let me tell you here and now folks that gift doesn't need a gift tag!

Did you notice that Jesus didn't stand outside and wait for an invitation to come in? These were already his children and he had bought and paid for them with his blood. No he came and stood among them. Jesus wants each one of us here today to see him standing with us. When I visualize Jesus standing with me in the midst of the storm, I am at peace, because I actually know he is there speaking those very words into the depth of my soul. "Peace be with you!"

Jesus resurrection from the dead has given us hope, he has shown that he has been given all power and authority just as he said in Matthew 28:18 "Then Jesus came to them and said, *"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me."* Which is immediately followed by his command to us: and said, *"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."*

So... If all authority is granted to Jesus and Jesus says that he is with us always and he has told us to share the good news then we have nothing to fear. Jesus is our peace, our authority and he has clearly given us a purpose.

Now why is this "Peace be with you" so significant to me this morning?

I came to realize that before we jump into action, Jesus establishes peace. He initiates the peace within us; Just as he did with his disciples. Twice Jesus said to them Peace be with you.

What was the lesson here?

We don't establish peace by what we do; Jesus initiates peace with us, when we come to realize we are not alone and put our trust in him. When we accept his peace, we then can move forward in authority and power. Why is it this way? Because when we have peace we have come to the place where our faith isn't in ourselves but it is in him.

Jesus gift of peace was accomplished at the cross... We need fear no longer; his blood covers all of our sins.

Now to be clear, I go back to my point earlier about action. Peace doesn't mean you won't experience fear or that your experiences won't try to shut you down. What it means is that when you experience fear if you give it to Jesus and establish peace through faith in Christ, you will not be paralyzed. Fear will no longer control you, you will overcome it with the gift of faith in Jesus.

His crucifixion bought us peace with him, Peace with the Father, Peace with each others and peace with ourselves.

Now let's again consider verse 21 & 22

Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit.

Jesus poured out his Holy Spirit on all of us when he ascended into heaven. In Acts 2:33 NKJV we read: "This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses. Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the

Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear.”

Jesus told us he would do this in Acts 1:8 “But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

So how do we do this?

First we start with peace and with faith that he who commanded us will never leave us nor forsake us; then we pick up the mantle that he has given to each of us. He said: “As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.”

Jesus gave us the gospel, which is just an old English word meaning “Good News” for us to share. So when we read: “*If you forgive anyone’s sins, their sins are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven.*” We understand that we are walking in peace in with the Holy Spirit so that when we tell them the good news of Jesus and we share the gospel, if they believe the word, Jesus will forgive them as he is walking with us and if they reject the gospel, Jesus will not forgive them. We become the voice of God to the world sharing his good news.

I close with this from Romans 10:14-15: “How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can anyone preach unless they are sent? As it is written: “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!”

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