

John 20:24-29

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[0 : 00] So let's get into the Bible and find John chapter 20.! We are quickly coming to the end of this study through the Gospel of John.! John chapter 20, and we stopped last week.

We were in verse 22 and 3. And before we move forward, I do want to just do a quick little backtrack statement that I hope can help everybody get a handle on some of the things that you read in your Bible and they can confuse you, especially when you try to get kind of a system and you try to lay some things out and say, Okay, I think I understand where things go and how this fits.

And then there's another line that might throw you off. And so I want you to get one thing. Now, here's the statement was when he breathed on them in verse 22 and said, Receive ye the Holy Ghost.

And then he made this statement in verse 23. Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them. And whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained. Now, he's meeting with the disciples in verse 19 that are shut, where the doors are shut.

They're assembled for fear of the Jews. It's his private occasion where he is appearing to his disciples. They're not all there, but there they are.

[1 : 14] He breathes on them and he said, Receive the Holy Ghost. And this is kind of an odd thing for you and I. It's not something that we have Jesus show up in the room and breathe on us.

And then he tells them something about remitting sins and as if they have the keys or the power to do this. And I showed you last week just briefly in Matthew that in Matthew 16, how this statement is a statement he's already made to Peter about having the keys of the kingdom and about how he's going to have some control and power and governing some things.

I also mentioned in Matthew 19 that those 12 disciples were going to judge the 12 tribes of Israel. So this is a connection to that concept, to that time. It's not really something that we're going to go around today and I'm going to be releasing people from their sins and remitting their sins.

That nonsense that goes on in certain churches where you confess your sins to a priest is baloney. He has no power to remit sins or release sins or to tell you how to get them off of you.

He can't do a thing for you. The trouble is that man himself is a filthy sinner, as I am, as you are, and we need the blood of Jesus Christ to cleanse us from all sin.

[2 : 29] But here he's given these men power to do something, to remit sins or to retain them. This is not something we go around doing in the church today.

So why is this? Now, here's the key I want to get you to understand is, yes, Jesus Christ has resurrected from the dead. So yes, according to Hebrews 9, the New Testament is in force.

Now, it is being applied, is instituted. The New Testament, they are no longer under the Old Testament law where their righteousness comes from their works and obedience to that law, but now their righteousness can come from the Lord Jesus Christ alone.

They are in a new covenant, a new time, a New Testament. Christ informed these men of that New Testament in Matthew when he sat down just before the crucifixion.

This is my blood in the New Testament. He's letting them know this is about the change. So they are in the, quote-unquote, New Testament, but what I want everybody in here to understand is, as you read and study your Bible, is the church, the church, the body of Christ, is not the New Testament.

[3 : 40] Like, we are a separate thing. We are in the New Testament, just as these Jewish men, disciples of the Lord, were in the New Testament or under a New Testament. But don't confuse the New Testament and the body of Christ as if they're identical or the same thing.

Do you know that the body of Christ is a mystery that Paul revealed? It was revealed to Paul, not to these men, not to Peter, James, and John. And so we don't want to confuse the New Testament and the mystery body of Christ as if it's one and the same.

And if you do, you're going to try to plug this verse into the New Testament church of Jesus Christ, and that can be a problem. Now, sometimes I'll say it, I'll just get my terms not thinking too sharply and just say it, and people do it all the time, and it's just, hopefully it won't confuse you if I say, like, we're the New Testament, this or that.

We are under the New Testament. But understand this also. The New Testament started when Christ rose from the dead, with the death of the testator, and it's completed upon his resurrection, and it continues a long way past the church being taken up into heaven.

There's going to be a time of Jacob's trouble, where God comes and does some things, some time is appointed, according to a prophecy of Daniel, upon the holy city and upon the people of God, and there's some things that are unfulfilled that have to take place, and after that, Jesus Christ comes back and establishes a new kingdom.

[5 : 10] All of that is part of this new covenant, New Testament. So we don't want to confuse the kingdom that's promised to Israel with the church, with the body of Christ, and so we shouldn't get it confused here just because Jesus has resurrected.

So I hope that helps you a little bit as you see some of these things and think, what's that mean or why? Well, it could be that it's just not Pauline doctrine revealed to the church, but it's Jesus to his disciples revealing something under their New Testament, which is not necessarily something for us.

If that confused you, just let it be confused. Just let it go. If you got it, good. If not, we'll just carry on. So verse 24, let's start here.

Verse 24, But Thomas, one of the twelve, Thomas we know is one of his disciples. He's mentioned in all those lists previous of the disciples. Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came.

John's the only one that lets us know that Thomas is called Didymus. Three times, once in chapter 11, once here, and then once in chapter 21, verse 2, he refers to Thomas and says, called Didymus.

[6 : 23] Don't know why John's the only one that does that. Don't know why John does it three times, but he lets us know that this guy has another name, probably a name they used more frequently, but the proper name that they wrote with would be Thomas, but they called him by another name often, and that's pretty common here in the Bible.

Thomas is called Didymus. He was not with them when Jesus came. When did Jesus come? Verse 19 says, the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut.

So later that night, after the resurrection, Jesus had not yet appeared to his disciples. Who had he appeared to? Mary and some of the ladies, we saw that last week, but the men had not yet seen him.

They had gone to the grave, and they had seen the stone rolled away. They went in, two of them went in, they saw that the grave clothes were there, but they had not seen Jesus Christ. They went back, verse number 10 says, they went unto their home, and then the Lord shows himself to Mary in that very passage we studied last week.

So here's something I want you to get, is Thomas is going to get rebuked, or he gets a hard, we really get on Thomas, for being doubting Thomas, for just, you didn't believe, and you declared here in this passage that I'm not going to believe unless I see.

[7 : 39] But he's not the only one. He's just the only one that we know that said this. Look at verse 25 then. The other disciples therefore said unto him, we have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails.

He's going to handle with his hands. And thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe. Now it's a pretty rough statement, and he gets a lot on him for that one.

So eight days go by. Verse 26, After eight days again, his disciples were within, and Thomas with them. Then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, just like he did before eight days ago, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you.

Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold that my hands, and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side, and be not faithless, but believing.

Now Thomas wasn't the only one. So look back at Mark chapter 16. Mark chapter 16.

[9 : 00] The disciples we read, when Thomas returned, said these five words, We have seen the Lord. And he says, I'm not going to believe that, until I see him for myself, and I can touch and handle, and know for sure it's him.

So Mark chapter 16, earlier that same day, those very men that had seen the Lord, and had told Thomas they saw him, earlier that same day, they received word, from not one, but two different witnesses, and they didn't believe.

Mark 16, and this is, Mary Magdalene's mentioned, in verse 9. And let's see, verse 9, Now when Jesus was risen early, the first day of the week, he appeared first, to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast, seven devils.

And she went, and told them. So, this is not her coming back, last week we read this, and saying, hey, I don't know where they laid him. Remember, that was her first time, to the tomb, and she didn't see him resurrected, and she didn't believe, he was resurrected.

She said, they took him, and laid him somewhere else. But then he appeared to her, as we studied, and then she goes, and tells them, that he, had been with him, or, them that had been with him, as they mourned, and wept, and they, when they had heard, that he was alive, and had been seen of her, believed not.

[10 : 28] That's the disciples. The men, that had been with him, believed not, when somebody came, and said, he's alive, I saw him. Verse 12, after that he appeared, in another form, unto two of them, as they walked, and went into the country.

That's Luke 24, that story of those two. And they went, and told it unto the residue. That is the rest of the disciples. Neither believed they, them.

So it sounds like, all of these disciples, have a faith problem. They're not believing witnesses. And the Lord Jesus, is not too pleased with that. Look at verse 14.

This would probably coincide, with the second meeting, when Thomas is present. Verse 14 says, afterward, he appeared unto the eleven, as they sat at meat, and abraded them, with their unbelief, and hardness of heart, because they believed not them, which had seen him, after he was risen.

So he gets on the boys, as he should. That's not the only time, he does that. Throughout his ministry, he would do things, and they would fear, or he's, he's, let's see, they're in a storm, a great storm of wind came up, and they're just, carousel, not that we perish.

[11 : 44] And he says, peace, be still, rebukes the wind, the sea calms down, and he looks at those men, that he's training, for the ministry, and he says, how is it, that ye have no faith?

Now I don't get on them, too hard, because I as a man, am prone to the same fears, that they are. But the Lord Jesus Christ, was not accepting that in them. He says, that faith should be out of you, or that fear should be out of you, by now, and faith should have come in, its place, and you should be believing, all the way through.

Now when he resurrects, from the dead, he told them, he would resurrect from the dead. He was gone from the tomb, they saw that. Some people come and say, he's alive, we saw him, and those men still, still, and still, did not believe.

Until he himself showed up, and they saw him with their eyes, now they believed. Thomas was acting, just like the others. He was not any different, than the others, except maybe, for his statement saying, I will not believe.

Declaring, I will not. Unless I see it. So, rightfully we get on him, but I just want him, not to be so, set apart. The only reason he's set apart, is because he missed, the meeting, and he wasn't there, that first time.

[13 : 02] But the others are just as guilty, as their unbelief. Now, let's take a look, at Thomas' response. You know what, let's not do that. Look at Hebrews chapter 3. Let's do this first. Hebrews chapter 3.

Because the Lord Jesus Christ, expects faith. He expects his own disciples, and those that have been with him, and know him, to exercise faith.

And if they don't, the problem, he said back in Mark, was that they have a hardness of heart. But what he expects, is when he speaks, for their hearts, to open up, and receive his word, and to believe it.

Look at Hebrews chapter 3. And start in verse 7. Wherefore, as the Holy Ghost saith, quoting the scripture here, Today, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation, in the wilderness, when your fathers tempted me.

When you hear his voice, the response of the child of God, is to open the heart, to receive his words, to believe his words, and live life from that day forward, according to what his voice said.

[14 : 21] However, some hear his voice, and harden the heart, and resist the word, and don't believe. And what is that? It's an evil heart.

Look a little bit later in the passage. Verse 12. Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you, an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.

But exhort one another daily. The evil heart of unbelief, notice the rest of the verses, says, that any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

Unbelief is a sin. Fear is a sin, when you're supposed to operate, and exercise faith. Now come back to John. The men had a hard heart.

Hardness of heart, that Christ had to upbraid them. He had to scold them, and rebuke them for, because of their unbelief. You would think, sitting where we sit, you would think looking back, okay, those guys, I mean, they had seen something, they had done some things, they've conquered some things, in their own hearts and lives, you know, leaving, forsaking a lifestyle, and an occupation, and following Jesus Christ.

[15 : 36] You'd think, these guys, come on, they would have faith. They're going to move mountains. They're going to do amazing things. And yet, they're the ones that need to be rebuked, because their heart is hard, and they only receive what they see with their eyes.

But Christ expected them to believe, because it was truth. So, they finally come around, and, they see Jesus Christ, and now notice verse number 28.

A very, a very important verse, in your King James Bible. Thomas answered and said unto him, after Christ, one on one's him, says, hey, you want to touch me?

Touch me. Let's see. Let's, let's get this over with. I want you to believe. Thomas answered and said unto him, my Lord, and my God. Now, what is so powerful about this, is that Thomas, a Jewish man, is looking at Jesus, another Jewish man, and claiming him, declaring him, to be his God.

Now, this is, this is a pivotal, pivotal doctrine, that the Bible reveals, is that Jesus Christ is God. The Bible reveals that to us, declares that firmly to us, and we are to, by faith, believe Jesus is God.

[17 : 00] That's a, that's an easy thing to do, when you believe the Bible, and you don't change the Bible. But once you start, changing the Bible, or making up a doctrine, that says, no, Jesus, Jesus isn't God.

The Father is God, and the Father created Jesus. And then, Jesus died on the cross, but, he's a created God, a lesser God.

The Jehovah's Witnesses, teach this. They'll show up at your door, and try to, try to, sneak away around, to talk about, do you believe there could be, peace on the earth? And eventually, they're going to get to, what you're supposed to believe, about Jesus, and, who you're supposed to believe in, Jehovah.

As if they're two different ones. I'm not going to take you, down that road today, and show you that Jesus, is Jehovah. But, I'll at least just make this plainer, Jesus is God. Thomas believed it.

Now look at, this is a strong verse, right there, and there's better ones. I want to show you one, if you want to be familiar with any, this would probably be the one. Turn in your Bible, to 1 Timothy chapter 3.

[18 : 04] This is just my opinion, that this would be the verse. If I needed to, to show somebody, or to argue that, Jesus is God, this is the verse, I go to first. It's 1 Timothy chapter 3, and then all the way, to the last verse.

So, last Sunday, a individual, had a question, after the service, and said this, he said, they said, how, I've been talking to somebody, I've been talking about the Lord, to somebody, how do you, tell somebody, that Jesus was all man, and Jesus was all God?

Like, where, where do you show him, from the Bible? How do you, how do you explain that, was the question. And I said, well, let me show you a verse, in the Bible. And, I said, turn to 1 Timothy chapter 3, and the individual, like, oh good, oh good, I'm going to get the answer, like, I'm going to show, this is the place to go, to show somebody, that Jesus was all man, and all God.

And this is what I showed him, was verse 16, without controversy, great, is the mystery, notice that word, it's not in your Bible, that many times, great, is the mystery, of godliness, God, was manifest, in the flesh, and I, told the individual, Jesus was all man, and Jesus, was and is all God, but that thing there, understanding that, the Bible calls it a mystery, and the only thing, we can do, is by faith, receive what the word, of God says, and teaches, that these are truths, God, manifest himself, he was, the Holy Ghost, moved upon, a human, young, fair maiden, and, conceived, in her womb, the Holy Son of God, to be, born, to be, to come forth, of a woman, to look at, an infant baby, a few minutes old, and say, that is God, yeah, that's a mystery, that is something, that our minds, we can believe it, but, understand it, theologians, and scholars, argue, and they come up, with big long terms, and write books, and theses, and theories, about all of this stuff, and they try to come up, with some form of reasoning, and, the best you can do, is just take the Bible, believing the words, understanding it,

I don't know about that, I don't know that I ever will, not in this body anyway, but here's the statement, is that God was manifest, in the flesh, if you have, if you don't have, a King James Bible, then most likely, you don't see the word God, in that verse, and your version, of the Bible, would say, he, was manifest, in the flesh, or your version, will say, he who was manifest, in the flesh, you say, well what's the big deal, it's talking about Jesus, absolutely right, but, how do you know, it says Jesus, that Jesus was God, Jesus was manifest, in the flesh, big deal, so were you, I think so, so are you and I, in the flesh, right now, to just say, Jesus is manifest, or he is manifest, or was manifest, in the flesh, doesn't tell me anything, but if you tell me, that God, almighty, eternal, holy creator, God, was manifest, in the flesh, that tells me, that whoever, that being, that boy was, he's God, turn back, to John chapter 1, we'll, just rewind, all the way back, to the beginning, of our, gospel of John, and it's stated here, pretty clearly as well, yet, with some, veiled terminology, but it's all there, it's verse 14, that gives the declaration, that matches, first Timothy 3, verse 14, and the word, was made flesh, and dwelt among us, the word, was already, in existence, the word, with a capital W, it's a person, it's a being, that's a person, with traits, of personality, the word, was made flesh, the word, became, or appeared, as flesh, was manifest, as flesh, in the human form, born of a woman, now who is the word, well, backing, just going backwards, through the chapter, verse number, 11, he came unto his own, and his own, received him not, that's the Jews, backing up further, in verse 10, he was in the world, and the world, was made by him, so whoever this word is, he's also called, the true light, in verse 9, he's the word, he's the light, he made the world, going all the way back, to the beginning, in verse 1, in the beginning, was the word, and the word, was with God, and the word, was God,

[23 : 33] God, in verse 3, all things, were made by him, in verse 4, he has, generative power, to give life, because in him, was life, how do you get life, apart from God, how do you get life, apart from something, that's living, you don't, something living, had to produce, had to reproduce, or whatever the case, so, nevertheless, the word, that was made flesh, was God, so when Thomas declares, my Lord, and my God, stating that Jesus Christ, is God, that's already a Bible doctrine, that's established, and understood, but here, it's being confessed, from Thomas's lips, and it's a strong verse, in your Bible, to show what we call, the deity, or the divinity, of the Lord Jesus Christ, Jesus, the name of a man, but he's the Lord Jesus Christ, Christ being the Messiah, the deliverer, promised, the promised one, the holy one of God, so back to John chapter 20,

Thomas answered, and said unto him, my Lord, and my God, a very beautiful display, in your King James Bible, of disciples, worshiping, the Lord Jesus Christ, as deity, as if, as he is, in fact, as he's God, now the Jews would say, that's blasphemy, every good Jew, would say, that is a blasphemous statement, for him to receive worship, and for someone to declare, that he's God, because they did not believe, that he was God, others will say, other religions will say, well, Jesus was a good teacher, he really was, a good, he was a prophet, sent from God, a good one too, and he said a lot of beautiful, good things, about being peacemakers, and loving neighbors, and what a wonderful person, so yes, follow him, follow Jesus, and that's such a cop-out statement, that you could only, it only works on the surface, if Jesus was a good teacher, but not God, then he was a horrible teacher, why is that, because he said, that the father is in me, he declared himself, to be the son of God, so is that a good teacher, if he's not God, he's a liar, he's a fool, and a deceiver, if he's not in fact God, you can't call him, a good teacher, it just, you can't do it, only on the surface, does it sound good, read and study his teachings, and you find out, that if he wasn't God, he was a wicked man, and of course, we would never, go that direction, so he was God,

Jesus in fact was God, and to call him, just a good prophet, or a good teacher, is a cop-out, and it's hiding, behind a pretty phrase, but they don't believe, that he's God, when they say that, so all right, moving on, verse 29, Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, this is a category, thou hast believed, a category is, belief by sight, we do that, every day of our lives, this is how we operate, in this world, we see it, we believe it, we know it's there, it's all good, that's a category, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed, blessed are they, separate category, that have not seen, and yet have believed, there's a blessing, upon the one, who does not operate, in sight, who can believe, some doctrinal, spiritual truth, and they don't have to see it, and hear it, and feel it, and touch it, and examine it, but they can believe it, now Peter says something, really remarkable, that references our faith, look at 1 Peter chapter 1, it's a great cross reference, to this statement, that the Lord says, you may have this, as a note in your Bible, if you have notes, this would be the one, 1 Peter chapter 1, and verse number 8,

I'll back up to verse 7, when you get there, verse 7, 1 Peter 1, and verse number 7, that the trial of your faith, being much more precious, than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise, and honor, and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ, whom having not seen, ye love, Peter's writing this, Peter saw him, Peter was in that room, both times, Peter saw him, he does not fall into the category, of having not seen, and believing the blessing, Peter's the category of, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed, but Peter then writes to others, and saying, whom having not seen, ye love, in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy, unspeakable, and full of glory, rejoicing in manifold temptations, and trials of their faith, they're rejoicing, because there's somebody, that they've never seen, that they believe in, there is a blessing, on that people, right there,

God honors that, because, why, because there's faith, without faith, it's impossible, to please him, he upbraided them, for their unbelief, and their hardness of heart, but when we exercise faith, this is, spilling into Wednesday's, months of study, with Hebrews 11, when we exercise faith, God honors that, God says, oh that's what I want to see, in this people, I just want them, to believe me, I don't want to have to, show them everything, I want this relationship, to be a faith one, right now, it'll end in sight, but the one he wants, right now, is a faith one, look at, first John chapter one, John also saw him, he's in that category, of having seen, and believed, but he wants us, to believe, without seeing, first John chapter one, and let's notice, how he, introduces, this epistle, in verse one, that which was, from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen, with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands, have handled, just like Thomas did, of the word, of life, for the life, was manifested,

[30 : 25] God was manifest, in the flesh, and we have seen it, and bear witness, which by the way, that was their job, to bear witness, of the things they saw, and to show unto you, that eternal life, which was with the father, and was manifested, unto us, that which we have seen, and heard, declare we unto you, that ye also, may have fellowship, with us, and truly, our fellowship, is with the father, and with his son, Jesus Christ, and these things, write we unto you, that your joy, may be full, do you notice, that both Peter, and John, even though they fit, into that category, of belief, because of sight, they both write, about having your joy, full, or rejoicing, because of exercising, faith, and belief, so I'm going to, just take that statement, and not make a doctrine, out of this, but at least say, it looks as if, when you exercise faith, and take God, at his word, that built into that, is something, that can emerge, or a fruit, that can grow, only, when you walk, by faith, and that is, a joy comes with it,

I bet you, we could probably, study this out, and find peace, comes with it, all these things, start to emerge, inside of you, God puts it in there, when you exercise faith, when you believe him, and take him, at his word, look at, let me see, there's another place, I want to go to, look, come back to, 2nd Corinthians, chapter 4, 2nd Corinthians 4, this thing, really goes pretty far here, here, the idea, the idea, of not being able, to see, yet believing, and, the Jews, have their minds blinded, looking back, into chapter 3, and verse 14, they wouldn't believe, so it's as if, they couldn't see, and then in chapter 4, and verse 3, and 4, the devil, is blinding, the minds of them, that believe not, to, spiritually speaking, keep the light, from getting in, to keep them, from spiritually, seeing, and understanding, so he is actively, trying to keep those, from believing, without sight, that's a ministry, of his, and there's a blessing, in that, the category, and he's active, against it, but let's look, at the end of this chapter,

I'll start in verse 16, verse 16, for which cause, we faint not, but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man, is renewed day by day, for our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us, a far more exceeding, and eternal weight, of glory, while we look not, at the things, which are seen, but at the things, which are not seen, for the things, which are seen, are temporal, but the things, which are not seen, are eternal, and just let that, carry right down, into the next chapter, in verse number 7, we walk by faith, not by sight, there's a blessing, in that, God honors that, God desires, to see that, in his children, is a, a walk of faith, just believing him, the greatest, probably example, and illustration, of this, in the human world, is just a child, seeing a young child, just trust their parent, trust their mom, or dad, or just have, complete confidence, in them, they don't have to know, how the world works, if they say jump, or they just, they just love it, they just trust you, they go to bed, without fearing, about the financial situation, or the gas prices, they didn't watch Fox News, and let all that, get into their head, before they go to sleep, they just, conk out, they don't have, that fear, they just, have complete, innocent faith, and it's a great illustration, of what God wants, to see in us,

I'd like to finish, the chapter here, but I think we're gonna, run into some stuff, I want to run, a few more verses, on something else, so, we'll just, we'll close it right there, at about quarter of, and, we'll come back, next week, and finish the chapter, with the, again, reinstating the purpose, for John writing this book, for you to believe, not because of what you saw, but because of what you read, and so, there's faith in that as well, so we'll stop right there, we'll take a break, and come back in 15 minutes, enjoy some time together, there,