

John Ch20v19-23 - Peace Be With You

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[0 : 00] Thank you, Alex. Good morning, everyone. Nice to see you. And look forward to catching up with you afterwards over tea and coffee.! Please turn in your Bibles to Genesis.

We will be looking at John's Gospel as well, but we're going to read some verses in Genesis 1. And then we're going to go to John's Gospel.

So last week we celebrated the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. And over the next few weeks we're going to be looking at how that resurrection continues and goes on to shape and affect our lives today.

So let's hear God's Word. Genesis chapter 1, verse 1. In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.

Now the earth was formless and empty. Darkness was over the surface of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.

[1 : 18] And God said, let there be light. And there was light. God saw that the light was good.

And he separated light from the darkness. God called the light day. And the darkness he called night.

And there was evening and there was morning the first day. Now go to verse 31. As we come to the conclusion of the creation.

Verse 31. God saw all that he made and it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning the sixth day. Thus the heavens and the earth were completed in all their vast array.

By the seventh day, God had finished all the work he had been doing. So on the seventh day, he rested from all his work.

[2 : 29] Now let's go to John's Gospel. Chapter 20. John's Gospel, chapter 20.

And starting in at verse 19. John 20, verse 19.

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. And 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.

[3 : 52] If you forgive anyone's sins, their sins are forgiven. If you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven.

Well, let's pray. And then we'll look at God's word together. Our Father God, just as you spoke into the vast emptiness and brought about the world in which we now live, we pray that that powerful word would speak into our life, speaking truth, encouragement, and challenge.

And most of all, that you would speak into our fears and fill us with joy. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. The most extraordinary event in the history of the world has taken place.

Not Artemis II, who managed to find its way around the moon and back to earth again. No, a much greater event than that.

[5 : 21] The event was the death of the Lord Jesus Christ, his burial, and his resurrection from the dead.

But not everyone is celebrating. Jesus' closest followers, if you see in verse 19, were together with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders.

They had heard about the empty tomb. They had listened to the account of Peter and John who had gone into the tomb and seen the burial cloths left lying there.

They had heard from Mary Magdalene's claim that she had seen the risen Lord Jesus. But instead of being filled with joy, they are filled with fear.

If Jesus had been arrested and crucified, then what's to stop the disciples being arrested and crucified? The doors are locked and for good reason.

[6 : 28] But everything is about to change. The risen Jesus appears and he speaks into their fears. End of verse 19.

Peace be with you. An encounter with the risen Lord Jesus transforms their whole lives. They go from being filled with fear to the end of verse 20 to being overjoyed when they saw the Lord.

Now we all have our fears, don't we? Maybe it's what's happening in the world right now. Escalating wars, the fuel crisis, cost of living.

Or maybe it's something in your own life. Ongoing illness or financial struggles or failing relationships.

[7 : 28] Well, the good news is this same risen Jesus speaks into our fears and brings us joy. And to help us know and experience this overflowing joy, John highlights for us three things about the appearance of the risen Jesus.

In the short verses 19 to 23, we're told when Jesus appears, how Jesus appears, and why Jesus appears.

So when he appeared, how he appeared, and why he appeared. And each one of these has significant implications on our lives today.

So first, Jesus' resurrection guarantees a new creation.

Jesus' resurrection guarantees a new creation. Notice the when. Notice when Jesus appeared.

[8 : 40] Verse 19, on the evening of that first day of the week when the disciples were together. Now, why is the day so important for John to record?

Why doesn't he just say they were meeting together? Why is he telling us about the first day of the week? Well, the first day of the week is a Sunday.

And it's been a full week since the resurrection of Jesus. You see, I think we're to make a connection here.

We're to make a connection between the week of creation and the week of resurrection. Now, let me show you.

You follow carefully with me and we'll see how this is true. First, look back at chapter 20, verse 1. chapter 20, verse 1.

[9 : 43] Early on the first day of the week, so Jesus had died on the Friday, he was raised on the Sunday, which is the first day of the week, and it is still dark.

Now, the fact that it's dark is not just telling us that the sun hadn't yet risen. darkness reflects the hopelessness and helplessness of the disciples.

Death is weighing heavy on them. Darkness surrounds them. Now, think back to the first day of creation week.

We read it just a moment ago. Here's what it says. Now, the earth was formless and empty, and darkness was over the surface of the deep.

And God said, let there be light, and there was light. You see, just as God brought light into the darkness at that creation, so the resurrection brings light into the darkness of our lives.

[10 : 58] But what is this light that comes into our life? Well, look again at chapter 20, verse 19. Chapter 20, verse 19.

On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, so a full week has passed since Jesus has been raised.

Now, with that in mind, so a whole week has gone, with that in mind, think back to the last day of the creation account. And here's what it says.

It's on the screen for you. By the seventh day, God had finished the work he had been doing, so on the seventh day he rested from all his work.

You see, just as God had finished the work of creation, just as God had rested from all his work, so the risen Jesus appears and he calls us to rest in his finished work of redemption.

[12 : 10] You see, the resurrection marks a new beginning. This is the light that floods into our darkness. Jesus is coming to us and saying, come to me and you will experience a new creation in your own life.

I have come to give you a fresh start and a new beginning. I've died for your sins, I've risen again and I give you new life.

Just as God spoke those words at the beginning of creation into the darkness, bringing light, light. So the risen Jesus comes and stands amongst us and speaks words of new life, of light and hope and fullness.

The Apostle Paul put it like this, Jesus. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, if they are trusting in Christ, the new creation has come, the old is gone and the new is here.

You see, the resurrection of Jesus makes us new. He takes us from darkness, from hopelessness and helplessness and he brings us into the glorious light of life with Christ.

[13:41] But more than that, the resurrection guarantees not just to bring a new creation with our own life, but a new creation of this world, this broken, decaying and destroying world, Jesus will one day renew and bring it to its fullness.

Again, a quote from Revelation, helps us here. No, there we are. Revelation 21, John says, the same author of John's gospel, I saw a new heaven and a new earth.

For the first earth and the first heaven had passed away. And he who was seated on the throne, which is the risen Lord Jesus, said, I am making everything new.

Then he said, write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true. You see, when Jesus appeared is really important.

John is telling us, I want you to make this connection between creation and the resurrection. Just as God spoke words of life, so the risen Jesus comes and speaks words of life.

[15:11] It tells us that Jesus' resurrection guarantees a new creation. resurrection. So that's the when of how Jesus appeared.

Second, Jesus' resurrection declares a new resurrection. So notice here how Jesus appears.

Again, verse 19. On the evening of the 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.

Now isn't that incredible? The doors are locked and Jesus appears in the room with the disciples. A similar event happens a little bit later on.

If you just scan down to verse 26. A week later, his disciples were in the house again and Thomas was with them.

[16:21] Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them. Well, how on earth did Jesus do that?

I mean, it's not your normal everyday today occasion, is it? Every room you went in today, you either opened a door or the door was already opened. You didn't go walking into the wall, did you? That would hurt. Try it out. How did Jesus do it? Well, John dispels any notion of it being an apparition.

He wants us to know that this isn't just the spirit of Jesus, a kind of ghostly figure that's appeared. No, it's the actual physical body of Jesus.

Verse 20. After he had said this, he showed them his hands, where the nails had been, and his side, where the sword had been put into his side.

[17:24] You see, they not only see Jesus, they're not only listening to Jesus talk, they can actually touch Jesus. You see, the resurrection of Jesus was a bodily resurrection.

but more than that, it was a transformed body. He could walk through walls, literally. You see, it's telling us that Jesus didn't just rise from the dead, but that he defeated death.

He is declaring victory over death. He is making a way for us to experience a new kind of resurrection. We'll know from John's gospel that other people were also raised to life.

Go back with me to John chapter 11. John chapter 11. This is the account of Lazarus being raised from the dead.

So, John chapter 11 and verse 43. So, Lazarus has been in the tomb for three days, and Jesus arrives at the tomb where Lazarus had been buried.

[18:47] And we pick it up in verse 43. Jesus called in a loud voice, Lazarus, come out.

the dead man came out, his hands and feet wrapped with strips of linen and a cloth round his face.

And Jesus said to them, take off the grave clothes and let them go. Let's go back to chapter 20.

Now, wasn't that amazing, wonderful experience for Lazarus.

There he was, dead in the tomb, and Jesus calls out, Lazarus, come out. And Lazarus walks out of that tomb. But you know what?

A time would come again when Lazarus would have to die again. Yes, he walked out of the tomb, but a day would come when he would be carried back into the tomb.

[19 : 52] He would die again. But the resurrection of Jesus was different. Jesus wasn't just raised from the dead. He was victorious over death.

He was raised with a new and transformed body. A body that could walk through walls. An immortal body. A body that wouldn't die again.

A body that would live forever. Think of a train tunnel with me. darkness and darkness comes around and darkness comes around until it gets out through to the other side.

Well, here it's telling us that Jesus has entered into the tunnel of darkness of death. But unlike Lazarus who went into the tunnel and came out the same way, Jesus smashes right through and comes out the other side into glorious light.

No wonder Jesus could now say to his disciples who were in fear, end of verse 19, peace be with you. Jesus has not only established a new creation, he has defeated death utterly and completely so that we too can experience a new kind of resurrection.

[21 : 24] And that's what the resurrection of Jesus has achieved. Jesus declares an irreversible victory over death. He's gone through the tunnel of darkness and death.

He has pioneered a way through the grave so that when we die we too will be raised with a new body a transformed immortal body a body that will never ache or struggle again a body that will never die but will live forever in God's new creation.

So when Jesus appears is important and how Jesus appears is important.

He appears with a physical body. It's telling us that Jesus' resurrection declares a new resurrection for his people.

So when Jesus appeared how Jesus appeared is important and in this we think about why Jesus appeared.

[22 : 46] Jesus' resurrection establishes a new mission. So notice here why Jesus appears.

Verse 21 again Jesus said peace be with you. As the father has sent me I am sending you.

Now why did the father send Jesus? Well listen to what John has already said. John 3 17 for God did not send his son to condemn the world but to save the world through him.

You see Jesus was sent to save the world people like you and me from the condemnation we deserve and he did that by taking our sins on himself and dying in our place.

The work is now completed. He cries from the cross it is finished. The proof and the evidence that it is finished is the resurrection.

[24 : 01] So our new mission today is for us to go into the world with the message of the resurrection. The message that Jesus guarantees a new creation, a new beginning and a fresh start and the hope of a new creation to come.

He promises a new kind of resurrection where death has been defeated and the promise of a new transformed body never to die again.

This is our mission. We have been sent by the risen Jesus to proclaim that Jesus is risen and it's a good news message.

And thankfully we're not left on our own to do it. Verse 22 And with that Jesus breathed on them and said receive the Holy Spirit.

You see it's the Spirit who comes alongside us. The helper, the comforter, the advocate, the one who comes to us to help us speak the truth about the resurrection.

[25 : 26] You see it's not easy for us to go into our workplace, our college, amongst our friends and talk about the resurrection. People will think you're cuckoo for believing it.

It's not easy. Well the Spirit himself has been given the very power that raised the Lord Jesus from the dead is the same power that is at work in those who believe.

And so he, by his Spirit, will help us to faithfully declare the good news that Jesus lives. fear. You see, people are living in fear.

Talk to your friends this coming week. People fear the present. They fear the future. And most of all, people fear death.

People are frightened to die. And our mission is to come into the midst of that and speak of the hope of resurrection.

[26 : 36] But not only do we speak of the hope of resurrection, we can speak of sins being forgiven. Look at verse 23. At the heart of our message is this.

If you forgive anyone's sins, their sins are forgiven. forgiven. If you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven.

Now, there's a lot of confusion around this verse. It doesn't mean to say that you or I decide who's going to be forgiven. So, well, I like Kirsty.

After all, she's my wife, so I'll forgive her. But I don't say to Alex, I don't particularly like Alex today, so I'm not going to forgive him.

And he's going, oh no, he's going to turn off something else. That's alright. That's not what it means. When someone hears the gospel message that Jesus died for our sins and had defeated death, and if that person who hears it responds in repentance and faith, we can say to that person, with absolute certainty, your sins are forgiven.

[27 : 59] Eight people are going to be here next week and are going to be baptized because they've heard the good news of Christ and they've trusted him and we will say without any doubt whatsoever, your sins are forgiven.

But if someone rejects the risen Jesus and says I don't want anything to do with him, we can also say with complete authority, your sins are not forgiven.

It will be separation from God, not in the new creation, but something far, far worse, hell itself.

so if you are here this morning and you have not yet experienced forgiveness, repent, place your faith in Jesus today because when we do, what good news, we experience a new creation and the promise of a new kind of resurrection.

resurrection. But if you are here today and you are forgiven, then go with the power of the Holy Spirit, speaking the hope of resurrection into people's fears so that they too may be filled with joy, overjoyed because they have met the risen Jesus.

[29 : 42] When Jesus appears is important. How he appears and why he appears is deeply significant for us all.

He brings about a new creation, a new resurrection and a new mission. Let us go with hope and confidence filled with joy.

Let's pray together. Father, help us to see that life isn't about looking into the past, but looking back to the historical fact of Christ risen from the dead and how that continues to shape and change and affect our life today.

Father, speak into our fears. Fill us with joy. May we go with the help of your Spirit, speaking of the wonder of your resurrection to others.

In Jesus' name, Amen. Amen.