

# Resurrected Mission

John 20:19-23

**B.I.: The resurrection of Jesus is not only proof of our salvation it is the fuel that ignites our mission to the world.**

LTS: Psalm 75

When Jesus came to earth He came as one who was on a divine mission. God the Father sent Him to redeem a people for Himself, a host without number who would worship, and adore Christ for eternity. To accomplish His mission Jesus had to live as a real human being. From his first breath to his last He had to respond to every situation and temptation in life with perfect obedience to the Father. Then, at the end of His ministry, it was necessary for Him to lay down His life; to suffer under the very curse of God's terrible judgment, which was due to sinners like you and me.

Of course you and I know that Jesus promised the disciples that He would not leave them permanently. He explicitly said to them Jn. 14:18–20,

I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. <sup>19</sup> “After a little while the world will no longer see Me, but you will see Me; because I live, you will live also. <sup>20</sup> “In that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.

Furthermore, He promised them that though they would soon experience deep grief and sorrow, all of that would soon turn into joy. But the disciples didn't know what He meant. They were devastated by His death. They were not expecting Him to rise again. When they laid him in the tomb on that terrible Friday evening their happy expectations suddenly and completely evaporated – their hope for the future was dead, their souls knew only sorrow, disappointment, and the deepest possible grief. But then something perplexing and wonderful began to happen.

At first it was only Mary Magdalene. She came and reported that she had seen the Lord and that He had spoken to her and sent her to them with a message. Of course, in their grief they didn't believe her. But then the other women arrived and said they too had seen the Lord and worshipped Him. Then two other disciples who had gone home to Emmaus told an astonishing story about Jesus joining them on the road and how they didn't know it was Him and how He “opened their minds to understand the [OT] Scriptures about the suffering Messiah. They also said that when they arrived at their home this wonderful stranger broke bread at their meal and in the breaking of the bread they suddenly realized it was Jesus. “Did not our hearts burn within us while He talked to us on the road, while He opened to us the Scriptures?” they said. These were the testimonies the disciples were bringing to the upper room that Sunday evening. Moreover, Peter himself arrived with the testimony that He too had seen the Lord.

Well, as the story continues in our text this morning, the disciples are still gathered in the upper room sharing the wonder and joy of knowing that Jesus was alive. But it was a joy mixed with fear because they knew that the same Jewish leaders who had Jesus executed could this very moment be looking for them as well. So they gathered in the house with the doors locked behind them. And that's where our text picks up the story.

Read Jn. 20:19-23

These four verses are pregnant with instruction. So much so, in fact, that I think it's appropriate to divide this message into four (4) points:

- I. The Joyful Reunion (20)
- II. The Universal Mission (21)
- III. The Spirit of Illumination (22)
- IV. The Keys of Administration (23)

## **I. The Joyful Reunion: (20)**

1. You may remember from your studies in the book of Genesis that the Sabbath Day commemorated God's finished work of creation. In the New Covenant area, however, Sunday commemorates Christ's finished work of redemption. "God the Father worked for six days and then rested. God the Son suffered on the cross for six hours and then rested."<sup>1</sup> The Disciples had not yet put all of this together, but here they are on Sunday meeting together on the very day of Jesus' resurrection. And it's worth noting that the next time we see them gathered in the upper room it will be the following Sunday. Apparently, they got the message that the Lord considers Sunday a special day and that became the normal time for Christians to meet together. Then, in the Revelation 1:10 the apostle John reveals that somewhere along the way this special day was given a special name. Not Sunday, but "The Lord's Day."

2. So it was The Lord's, the first day of the week, and the disciples were meeting behind closed (ESV "locked") doors for fear of the Jews.<sup>2</sup> Kostenberger suggests that "doors" (plural) refers to the gate of the house AND the door of the room in which they were gathered.<sup>3</sup> It would seem that John wants us to understand that when Jesus arrived on the scene He appeared miraculously. His resurrection body was apparently able to pass through NOT only grave clothes and a solid stone tomb, but solid doors as well.

3. The disciples were apparently sharing a joyful albeit nervous meal together when Jesus suddenly appeared in the room. You can imagine how this must have startled them! I mean if the authorities were going to come, the disciples would have heard them attempting to get through the front gate and then through the door of their room. It would have been frightening but at least they would have a few minutes to prepare. But Jesus didn't give any warning. One minute no one was standing near the door and the next someone is suddenly standing there having never opened the door! That's not only startling, that's a little creepy!

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<sup>1</sup> Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). *The Bible exposition commentary* (Vol. 1, p. 391). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

<sup>2</sup> The word can mean either "closed" or "locked," but when one is in fear of his life he doesn't merely close the doors but locks them.

<sup>3</sup> Andreas Kostenberger, *John*, (Grand Rapids, Baker Academic, 2004), 458

4. No doubt Peter and others jumped to their feet to confront the intruder, but they were stopped by the power of Jesus words: “Peace be with you” (shalom ’alekem). This is the common Jewish greeting and is even used today among devout Jews. Commenting on Jesus’ words, one author expounds,

Never had that ‘common word’ [Shalom] been so filled with meaning as when Jesus uttered it on Easter evening... His ‘Shalom!’... is the complement of ‘it is finished’ on the cross, for the peace of reconciliation and life from God is now imparted. ‘Shalom!’ accordingly is supremely the Easter greeting. Not surprisingly it is included, along with ‘grace,’ in the greeting of every epistle of Paul in the NT.<sup>4</sup>

5. It seems appropriate that Jesus would say something to alleviate their fears, but behind this greeting is a depth of theological meaning.

- Luke. 2:14, When Jesus was Born the angels sang, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men with whom He is pleased.” (Peace with God).
- Luke 19:38, When Jesus made His triumphal entry into Jerusalem as God’s King, the people shouted, “Blessed be the King who comes in the name of the Lord!; Peace in heaven and glory in the highest! (Peace with God).
- Luke 19:41-42, when Israel was rejecting Him as their king, Jesus wept saying, “If you had known in this day, even you, the things that make for peace! But now they have been hidden from their eyes.” (Peace with God).
- Acts 10:36, Peter testified that God had sent them to the nations to preach “Peace through Jesus Christ.” (Peace with God).
- Rom. 3:17, As Paul was describing the spiritual condition of the unbeliever, one of his descriptions is, “The path of peace they have not known.” (Peace with God).
- Rom. 5:1, Paul identifies this peace explicitly when He says, “Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have Peace With God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”
- Eph. 2:17, Paul teaches that Jesus came and preached Peace to those who are far away (gentiles) and those who are near (Jews).
- Eph. 6:15 Paul calls His message the “gospel of peace.”
- Col. 1:20, Jesus made peace through the blood of His cross.
- And Repeatedly throughout the N.T. God is referred to as the “God of peace” and the “Lord of peace.”

6. Peace became kind of a code word for the Gospel. Jesus came to make peace between God and sinners and He did it by the blood of His cross. Whereas we were formerly enemies of God because of our sin, now we are friends of God and children of God because Jesus paid all our debts and made peace. Peace is what reconciliation is all about.

- Do you know this peace? Do you have peace with God? You can’t get it on your own. You can’t pay for it with money or earn it with good works. All you can do is admit that you, because of your willful sins (which are many), are an enemy of God deserving His judgment. You can come to Him and offer your surrender. And you can come with every

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<sup>4</sup> Beasley-Murray, quoted in Tom Constable, “Notes on John,” *Dr. Constable’s Notes*, Sonic Light, <http://www.soniclight.com/constable/notes/pdf/john.pdf>, (accessed Apr. 7, 2016), 365

confidence that those who surrender to Him receive NOT punishment but peace. Not some kind of negotiated peace, or a temporary peace that happens at the end of war, but peace like the kind that comes to a hopeless orphan child who gets adopted by the strongest, wisest, richest, most loving and faithful Father you can imagine.

- Jesus came into the world to achieve this peace For You. Do you have it? You can, and you will if you ask for it by faith.

7. Back in the upper room, one of the things that startled the disciples when Jesus appeared was the thought that He might be a ghost. (Read v. 20). Luke says (24:37), “They thought they were seeing a Spirit.” At first they thought Jesus only experienced a spiritual resurrection. But they should have known better, so Jesus continued (24:38-40), “Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? See my hands and my feet, that it is I Myself; Touch me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have.”

8. It must have been difficult for the stunned disciples to take it all in because in v. 41 Luke says, they still couldn’t believe it because of their joy and amazement! So Jesus says to them, “Do you have anything to eat? Now I just have to believe that had to make some of them chuckle and smile. They gave Him some broiled fish and He ate in front of them.

9. When I read this I can’t help but think how patient and kind of the Lord to approach His disciples like this. He could have burst into that room and rebuked them for their fear, for locking themselves in like a group of scared children instead of confronting the world with the truth of the resurrection, but He was gracious and patient with them. He knew this had been a sore trial with so many unanswered questions and so much disappointment. What they needed was patience and kindness and grace, and Jesus supplied it in abundance. Instead of a lecture He gives them tangible evidence. He shows them His scars. In invites them to touch Him. And He eats a piece of fish. Let there be no doubt. Standing before them is none other than the crucified sacrifice, their Messiah,<sup>5</sup> their Lord, their friend.

Read v. 20

10. Don’t miss the subtlety with which John expresses their response. He says (20), “Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord.” What an understatement! The NAS probably expresses it better with, “The disciples Rejoiced!” The typical human response would have involved laughter and tears, and questions, and “we missed you so much!” They rejoiced! And isn’t that what Jesus said they would do?

- John 16:20 “Truly, truly, I say to you, that you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice; you will grieve, but your grief will be turned into joy.”
- John 16:22 “Therefore you too have grief now; but I will see you again, and your heart will rejoice, and no one will take your joy away from you.”

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<sup>5</sup> D. A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John* (Grand Rapids, William B. Eerdmans, 1991), 647

11. Jesus promised them joy, and now they had it! Now they rejoiced! Now they believed without doubting. And no one could take away their faith or their joy. We know that because from this moment on the Disciples would never be the same.

12. This is The Joyful Reunion! But there's more. Next we see...

## II. The Universal Mission: (21)

1. Notice Jesus repeats His benediction, "Peace be with you" ("shalom 'alekem"). However, the emphasis here is not on calming their fears. There wouldn't be much time for fellowship with the resurrected Christ. He had come to accomplish the mission the Father had given Him and now He would send His disciples out on mission as well.

Read 21

2. There is a sense that Jesus was revealing the apostolic mission. After all, the word "apostle" simply means "sent one," or one who is sent for a specific purpose. But this mission was not given only to the apostles. It was given to all of the disciples in the upper room. Now that He had proven His bodily resurrection, Jesus would immediately send them on mission. His mission was wrapping up. Theirs was about to begin.

3. What was Jesus' mission? Yes, it was to redeem a people for His own possession. This we cannot do. But much of what Jesus did is exactly what we are to do.

- John 3:32–34 "What He [the Son] has seen and heard, of that He testifies... For He whom God has sent speaks the words of God." (Jesus ministered the word of God)
- John 7:16 "My teaching is not Mine, but His who sent Me." (Jesus was sent to teach God's word)
- John 12:49 "For I did not speak on My own initiative, but the Father Himself who sent Me has given Me a commandment as to what to say and what to speak."
- John 14:24 "...the word which you hear is not Mine, but the Father's who sent Me."
- Jesus prays to the Father: John 17:18 "As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world."
- Now He says to the disciples (20:21), "as the Father has sent Me, I also send you."

4. Jesus was sent to the world on a mission, and now He sends us into the world on mission. Remember, back in chapter 17 Jesus was praying not only for these disciples but for "those who would believe in Me because of their word" (17:20). Jesus was sending this small group of disciples out to proclaim the message (the WORD) of the risen Messiah so that many would come to believe in Him through their testimony. This is why He left us here.

5. Jesus' commission upon the believer's life is not "Go therefore, on Sunday morning and worship and have fellowship." No, He called us to go and testify about the risen

Christ and make disciples of all nations. In fact, this is precisely what Matthew recorded as Jesus' last words as He ascended into heaven (Matt. 28:19-20),

And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. <sup>19</sup> "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup> teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.

6. Beloved, these are our marching orders. As Dr. Ernie Backer often says, "Let's make Jesus' last words our first concern." We are not here simply to learn more and more about Jesus (though we should be doing that). We are not here merely for fellowship and prayer. Jesus has given us a mission. He has called us to live life on mission. As we like to say around here,

"We exist to proclaim the excellencies of Christ in all things to the glory of God in the joy of all peoples."

7. This is our mission. We proclaim the risen Christ in order to make more disciples of Christ who will glorify God by making more disciples of Christ.

- This is why Calvary Bible Church is passionate about Discipleship. (Are you discipling or being disciple?)
- It is why we invest so much time, money, and effort in training for discipleship and Biblical Counseling. Are you growing in your ability to bring God's word to bear on people's problems?
- This is why we offer evangelism training and send so much money overseas to our ministry partners who are taking the message of the resurrected Christ to the ends of the earth. (Have you considered the possibility that God might be calling you to overseas ministry?)
- Christians are people on mission! Are you living on mission? Are you investing in people NOT merely to meet their needs but to deliver the message that all of their sin can be forgiven because of the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ? His resurrection proves He accomplished that and you have the privilege of telling them and inviting them to find peace with God in Him.

8. Of course, if we are going to be fruitful in fulfilling our mission we will need the Holy Spirit to empower us. And Jesus touches on that in the next verse. But you will have to come back next time to hear about it.

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