



Life Guide

applying God's Word to life

Jesus Gives Peace April 10-12, 2021

John 20:19-31

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!" ²⁰ After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord.

²¹ Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." ²² And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³ If you forgive anyone's sins, their sins are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven."

²⁴ Now Thomas (also known as Didymus), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. ²⁵ So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord!"

But he said to them, "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe."

²⁶ A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" ²⁷ Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe."

²⁸ Thomas said to him, "My Lord and my God!"

²⁹ Then Jesus told him, "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

³⁰ Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. ³¹ But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

1. When you picture "peace" in your mind, what do you see? What is the opposite?

Answers will vary. To help answers along, ask "When is the last time you felt peaceful and where were you?"

Sunny day vs. a thunderstorm

Mountain cabin vs. crowded office

Still waters vs. furious squall

2. Are you feeling more like peace lately or more like the opposite? Why is that?

Answers will vary.

3. Consider all that the disciples had experienced from Maundy Thursday until Easter Sunday. What things might have contributed to their fear? (v. 19)

They claimed they would never fall away from Jesus. They ran away from Jesus when he was arrested. Some of them saw Jesus stand trial. Some saw him after he was beaten by Pilate's soldiers. John saw Jesus die on the cross. They knew he was buried in a tomb. They had not heard from him since then.

Women and Peter claimed to see Jesus alive. Peter and John verified that the tomb was empty on Sunday morning.

They were afraid they may be tried and executed like Jesus was. They were ashamed of their infidelity to Jesus. They were scared someone may have stolen Jesus' body. They thought Jesus may be a ghost.

4. Agree or disagree: When Jesus said, "Peace be with you." he addressed the disciple's fears.

Agree: He gave them peace of mind that he was alive. He gave them peace of conscience that he was not mad at them for abandoning him on Maundy Thursday. His presence had often saved them (like when he calmed the storm on the Sea of Galilee) so they may have found comfort in his presence. Even their fear of the Jewish leaders would be lessened by knowing that Jesus would bring them safely to heaven if they should ever be killed. Jesus' words

always do what they say, so even saying “Peace be with you” does give, by God’s power, some of their fears.

Disagree: They were afraid of the Jewish leaders, and Jesus did nothing to protect them from the Jewish leaders. He certainly did not guarantee that they would never face hardship or threats in their life. Jesus often does not directly remove the fears of his people.

Resolution: Jesus calmed the fear in the hearts of the disciples without removing the cause for those fears.

5. Give an example of how forgiveness can give you peace in your heart even if you don’t have peace in the world around you.
The example for the disciples would be that they endured all the hardships they feared such as the persecution of the Jewish leaders, but forgiveness allowed them to face those fears with the certainty that Jesus had not abandoned them, was not punishing them, and would stand by them through it all. If the worst would happen, Jesus would take them safely to heaven. He truly works all things for the good of those who love him.
As you try to connect the dots between fears and forgiveness in your life, think of how forgiveness and God’s love make your heart react differently while going through scary or stressful situations.
6. What are some ways Thomas is like the other disciples? What are some ways he is different?
They all disbelieved Jesus at first. They all heard reports of his resurrection—the 10 from the women, and Thomas from the 10. They all got to see and touch Jesus wounds before they believed. Thomas is different because he doubted longer than the others, and more vehemently. Therefore Jesus offered him more direct proof of his resurrection and more direct instructions to believe in him.
7. Thomas placed a burden of proof on God, that sane people do not place on other things in life. Can you think of modern examples of people placing an unusually difficult burden of proof on God?

People think they should be able to understand exactly why something God forbids is harmful, when they trust companies who post warnings without investigating.

People think they must be able to explain every biblical passage according to their human reason, while their own worldview contains logical contradictions.

People refuse to accept the eyewitness testimony of the Bible writers while they accept far less convincing testimony about things such as the existence of Alexander the Great, the Mongol Empire, the Ancient Greek naval fleet, and many other historical ideas.

Some people even dare God to strike them dead if he is real, and refuse use their continued existence as proof that God is not real—as if they have the power to command God to do whatever they want him to do.

8. John points out that our faith and our peace come from the Word of God. (v. 31) As a group list 4 ways you can hear more of God’s Word this week than you did last week.
Answers will vary.
You could join Pastor Raasch’s Sunday morning Bible class on zoom.
You could find a reading plan on the Bible app.
You could listen to the Family Growing in Christ podcast from Mount Olive.
You could read a psalm before bed each night this week.
9. Jesus says we can share his peace by offering heaven’s forgiveness to others on earth. Each person list someone who needs to hear that God forgives them.
Answers will vary.
Start by thinking of those in your immediate family, then your extended family, then your co-workers and friends, then your acquaintances. Start by praying for them, and for courage to offer them God’s forgiveness and peace.
10. Based on your study tonight, what is one helpful thing that might impact your upcoming week?
Answers will vary.

Consider which question prompted the most discussion.

If nothing else, review questions 8 and 9, and make an action plan for how to get more of God's word or a plan for how to share God's peace. Include in your plan a date, a time, and a method; then pray for God to help you do it.