

John 20 v19-31

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[0 : 00] John chapter 20 is where we've got to and we look at the section from verses 19 to verse 23.

We'll read it once more. On the evening of that first day of the week when the disciples were together with the doors locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, Peace be with you.

After he said this, he showed them his hands and sighed. 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 whose sins, they are forgiven. If you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven.

Sometimes when you're in a room, you can be conscious that the atmosphere in the room changes dramatically when just one person walks in.

[1 : 06] I am seeing friends from Sky here today. And I was thinking about when I was in school in Sky when I was a younger man. And we had a head teacher in the school in Portree.

And he was fondly called the Beak. He would swish around the building with a long cloak. He had a Dracula kind of quality about him. And even if your back was turned to the door, you knew instantly when the Beak walked into the room.

Or you knew instantly when he was just around the corner. Because the whole atmosphere of the place changed. Everything went quiet.

There was a tension in the room. There's other people when they walk into a room, it's as if the lights go on. They just bring a warmth and they bring a brightness to the atmosphere.

The second they walk in, they bring that kind of energy to the room. What we find here in John chapter 20 is we find the disciples and they're together.

[2 : 19] It's on the first day of the week. First Sunday, you could say. And the doors were locked. The room was a sealed unit. And the atmosphere, we imagine, was quite heavy.

And then all of a sudden, Jesus came. And stood in the middle of that room. I was trying to imagine, you can try and imagine with me, what the atmosphere in the room must have been like.

And how it must have changed as Christ appeared. The outlook of the disciples in that instant was transformed.

As they saw the risen Christ. And that's the scene I want us to think about today. I have probably four points. The first point that we note is that Jesus stood amongst them.

Verse 19. Jesus stood amongst them. On the evening of that first day of the week. When the disciples were together with the doors locked for fear of the Jews.

[3 : 35] Jesus came and stood among them. The first thing I want to note just in these verses as we step through them. Is that this encounter was at the initiative of Jesus.

Jesus. They didn't call for him. They didn't expect him. They weren't looking for him. Their faith was all but gone at this stage.

But notwithstanding the shortfalls in their faith. Jesus came. He was the one who approached. He was the one who made the move towards them.

And Jesus still does this. This is not something that is set back in history. And has no connection with us today. Jesus is the same yesterday, today and forever.

And what he did on that day. He continues to do today. Jesus is the loving, gracious, outreaching God man.

[4 : 48] And he stands among us. Even today. Even this morning. Even in this room. And he is calling us to look to him.

And he is calling us to trust him. Some of us are sitting here this morning. And it probably did not cross our minds.

That. God would be with us. In this room this morning. We just got our stuff on. And we got ready for church.

Some of us. Have come in here. And we are not looking for God. In that expectant way. We don't expect to meet with him. And yet. He has promised.

And he is good in his promises. That he is here. We can't see him. But in the power of the Holy Spirit.

[5 : 47] He is here. And if we are making sense of scripture. If we are still tuned in. And have our attention.

And if our hearts are stirred. And if as we listen to sermons. Here, there and everywhere. We find a connection with us. Then be assured.

Jesus is coming to you. He is entering. What may have once been. The locked door of your life.

And he is saying.

Trust me. Believe in me. There might be some. This morning.

Who are saying. Well. I know my own heart. I know how far. I stray. I know my history. And I struggle to believe.

[6 : 48] That Jesus would come to me. I can accept that he comes to others. But they are so much better than me. But I cannot accept or believe.

That he would come to me. Because of my undeserving state. But think about this room again. And think about the disciples. Don't you think that.

This is what was going through their minds. In that instant. That Jesus materialized. If you flip back. Just for a few chapters.

John chapter 15. John chapter 15. John chapter 15. John chapter 15.

It's a while since we've been in it. And yet. In terms of. Chronology. In terms of time. This was only a few days ago. In the experience. Of the disciples. And they're in close communion.

[7 : 54] With Jesus at this point. And Jesus. In verse 16. In that. Blessed. Upper room. And all that. Was happening. Just after the upper room.

Jesus is ministering to them. And he says in verse 16. To the disciples. You did not choose me. But I chose you. And at that point.

The disciples probably. Could take that in. With some. Readiness. They were in close communion. With God. They didn't struggle. To accept.

That assurance. From Jesus. But now. Think about. How things had changed. In just a few days.

The disciples. The disciples. Were in an absolute mess. They had let Jesus down.

Terribly. And they probably thought. In their minds. In their hearts. If Jesus is alive. As Mary seems to be saying.

[8 : 53] He is. If he's alive. Then he won't want. Anything to do with us. We're done. And yet.

Jesus comes. To them. And he stands. Amongst them. And in a sense. He's saying to them. Again. With greater.

Emphasis. What he said. In John 15. You did not choose me. Even in the last few days. You did not choose me. But I chose you.

And I'm still choosing you. You may have messed up. And you may have denied me. And you may have deserted me.

And you may have all but given up on me. But I haven't given up on you. You may have let go of me. But I still have a hold on you. I still have you in the palm.

[9 : 57] Of my hand. And there is nothing. And there is no one. That will rip you out of my grass. And maybe that's a word.

For some of us here. I don't know. Maybe you've had a bad week. Maybe it's been a bad month. Maybe we've been in a downward slope.

For years now. Spiritually speaking. Maybe we've been drifting. From Jesus for a long time. And we've let him down badly.

The devil is saying to us. I don't even know what you're doing. Sitting in one of these chairs. You have no right. Jesus has given up on you. And yet through.

The word of God. And the power of the Holy Spirit. He comes to us this morning. He stands.

Amongst us. This morning. He searches our hearts.

[11:05] He knows more. About these hearts. And these minds. And these hands. And these feet. Than any of us do. And yet he says to us.

You do not choose me. And you have not been choosing me. For a while. But I'm still choosing you. And I'm still calling. And you may have let go of me. But I have not. And will not. Let go of you. And you will have no peace.

Until you take my hand again. So trust me. Take hold of me. Enough of your back sliding. Turn back to me. Maybe that's a word. For someone. Here this morning. Maybe it's a word. For many of us. This morning. Just in passing.

[12:11] Before we move on. To the. The second point. A wee detail. About the locked door. How did Jesus get in? The door was locked.

Absolutely secured. So. How did Jesus get in? And. You can go to commentators. And you can read.

Page after page. After page. Of speculation. About how Jesus got in. You can get a PhD. I'm sure. On how Jesus. May have got into the room. But the text. Doesn't tell us.

Because. That's not the point. We don't know. How Jesus got into the room. Even though the door was locked. We just know that. He got into the room. And.

The point. I think. For us to note. For our encouragement. Is. Locked doors. Don't stop us. Locked doors.

[13:10] Stop us. But they don't. Stop Jesus. And. I can think of. Some people. Who are. Locked into addictions.

And a total mess. And we can think of others. Who. Are locked into. Dead. Patterns.

Of tradition. And religion. We just can't seem to get through to them. With the gospel message. There are others who are.

Locked into a dark. Sinful. Pattern. Of life. And we may look at. Such people. And think. Well. There's just no way through to them. For Jesus.

It's as if. Everything about them. Is. Is in lockdown. It's locked. And we get despondent. And we. Struggle to keep. Reaching out. And praying.

[14:05] For such people. But just for. Our encouragement. And instruction. Let's note here. Locked doors. Locked lines. Are no problem.

For Jesus. So give up on no one. Give up on no one. Keep praying. For these locked doors.

That Jesus will. Appear on the inside of these. Enclosed lives. So the first point is. Jesus stood. Amongst them. The second point to note.

Is that Jesus spoke to them. Still in 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 Jews. Jesus came. And stood amongst them. And said. Well what did he say? What does.

[15:02] Jesus speak to them? What does he. What words. Does he choose? You know. Our conversations. Are ongoing. We. We know each other.

And. Even though. We might be. Away from each other. For years and years. We. We have conversations. That continue. There's dialogue. That continues. Even Delangy and Barbara.

There. Who I haven't seen. For donkey's years. I think back to the family. And we continue. A conversation. That we left off. Decades ago. We see someone. On Tuesday. And they say.

I'm going to the doctor. For tests. We bump into them. Again on Friday. And we say. How did things go? Our conversations. They're ongoing. There's a continuity.

In our dialogue. And. Take that. And apply that. To the disciples. At this point. When did the disciples.

[16:00] Last. See. And hear Jesus. Well. They heard him. On the cross. And they were.

At a distance. Because they had. Abandoned him. Peter. Had denied him. And couldn't get. Far enough away.

And the rest of them. Had crumbled. And since then. They were. In hiding. Their faith. Had all but. Dissolved. They weren't. Looking for Jesus. As we said. But Jesus. Came looking for them.

He stood amongst them. And then he speaks. Again. Think back to the room. Nowhere to hide. In this wee room. Jesus is now there. All eyes are on him. As he scans them. And he opens his mouth.

[16:58] Can you imagine. The tension. Can you imagine. The sense of dread. And fear. What would he say. What has he got to say to us. What would you say.

What would you say. If those closest to you. Had denied you. And abandoned you. And left you high and dry. Utterly alone.

In your greatest. Out of need. What would you say. Likely would. Would look at them. And would say. Shame on you.

I thought you were my friend. I thought you were with me. You should be ashamed of yourself. But Jesus.

Says no. Such thing. Jesus. Does not say. Shame on you. Jesus. The first word. They hear. From the lips. Of the resurrected Christ. Was not shame.

[18:02] But it was. Shalom. Peace. Peace. Verse 18. Peace. Be with you. And again.

In verse 21. Jesus. Said. Peace. Be with you. And just think about. The wonder. Of God's grace. That's audible. At this point. One of the. Commentators. Stuart Briscoe. He says. Justice. Is getting. What you deserve. What do they deserve?

They deserved. A good scolding. That would be justice. Jesus. Roaring up. Mercy. Says Briscoe. Is not getting. What you deserve. That might be silence. Grace. But grace. Grace. Is getting. What you do not.

[18:58] Deserve. And Jesus. Speaks. To these. Disciples. With such. Grace. They must have been.

Terrified. Of the. Repositive Christ. They must have been. Absolutely. Overcome. With fear. Understandably. So that's the. Rational response. They must have. Expected punishment. It's what they deserved. But Jesus. Puts them. At ease.

Don't be afraid. Of me. Is what he says. I haven't come to. Terrorize you. I've come to.

To give you my peace. Came across this quote. This morning. It's J.C. Ryle. And he says. Jesus spoke.

[19:56] We may be sure. With special. Reference. To the state. Of mind. Of the eleven apostles. With special. Reference. To the events. Of the last few days.

And with special. Reference. To their future ministry. Peace. And not blame. Is what he says. Peace. And not fault. Finding. Peace.

And not rebuke. Was the first. Word. Which this. Little company. Heard. From their master's. Lips. After. He left. The tomb. Peace.

Peace. Peace. Peace. Peace. Jesus spoke. And he spoke. Peace. And that's the offer of the gospel.

For us. This morning. It's peace. Jesus. Still comes to us.

[20:50] In the gospel. To offer. To us. Terms. Peace. Peace. Peace. Peace. With God. Our sin. Has put us. At enmity. With God. You're against him. And no one. Who stands. Against God. Will overcome.

But they will be overcome. And that's something of hell. That eternal punishment. That eternal. Eternal. Torment. Because. Of our sin.

That is where we see. Sin. Crushed. Continued. And yet. Jesus comes. And he offers us.

Not war. Not destruction. But peace. The truth is.

[21:48] That when Jesus. Returns. He will come back. As judge. And all those. Who have rejected him. All those.

Who have persevered. In sin. All those. Who have determined. That they will not. Receive Christ. He comes back. As judge. He comes back.

To punish. But he came. Into this world. In the incarnation. To be the savior. To be the prince of peace.

And he comes to us. In the pages of scripture. Today. In the power of the Holy Spirit. If you're hearing. To offer peace. Peace. Peace with God.

Through the blood. Of Christ. Peace. With each other. Through the grace. Of Jesus. Which unites us. Peace. For our souls.

[22:50] A peace. That passes. Human understanding. A peace. That doesn't find. As origin. In earth. But in heaven. A peace. That enables us.

To be kept. And kept. Steady. And even have joy. When we go through. The hardest. Darkest. Most difficult. Stormy of days. Jesus comes.

And he says. I offer you peace. And he's the only one. Who can deliver on it. The world comes. With a thousand. Hairbrained schemes. To promise you peace. And joy. And you're left.

Shortchanged. Peace. Jesus comes.

Jesus comes. And promises. And delivers. And delivers. To all. Who trust him. Peace. And hands was playing. At the beginning.

[23 : 48] The words of the hymn. When peace. Like a river. Attendeth my way. When sorrows. Like sea billows roll. Whatever. My lot.

That has taught me to say. It is well. It is well. With. My soul. Can we actually. Truly sing that. Has that peace.

Like a river. Been given to us. And. Is it continually. Given to us. As we trust. And as we remain. In Christ. If not.

Today. That offer is open. Jesus comes. To those who are. As guilty. As these disciples. He says. I offer you peace. I freely. Offer. You. Peace. You won't have to work for it. You won't have to earn it.

[24 : 49] You just have to admit. That you need it. And ask me for it. Jesus spoke. Finally.

I think. Jesus showed them. His wounds. Many of you. Over the last few weeks. Have been praying for.

Mary's brother. Neil. Lachie. After the. The injury. That he. That he got. And he's improving now. So thank you for your prayers. Keep on praying. He had a. Terrible.

Crushing. Leg injury. And. A couple of surgeries. And. He had the most. Futured. Awful. Ugly. Wound. On his leg.

And he'd offer. Often. He would offer. To show it to you. And every time he did. Whether it was in.

[25 : 46] The flesh. Or through WhatsApp. He just turned away from the thing. He didn't want to see it. And that's just our natural. Response. To. To wounds.

We. We don't want to look at wounds. Unless we're. Strange medical people. We turn away from him. But Jesus here.

Wanted. The disciples. Wanted. The disciples. To turn to him. Not away from him. Jesus wanted the disciples. To. To see.

Up close. With their own eyes. His wounds. Verse 20. Says after. He said this.

He's. He showed them his hands. And. His side. Now. Why did he do that? Well. Why did Jesus insist on. On showing them.

[26 : 42] These graphic. Bloody. Awful. Wounds. Well. I think. There are various reasons. The first is.

That they would know. That it was actually. Really Jesus. And not a ghost. That their. Minds weren't. Playing tricks on them. Jesus wanted them to know.

That this was no. Hallucination. This was no. Post-traumatic. Stress. That was. Visualizing. Before them. But this. Was. Actually. Jesus. They had seen.

The nails. Go in. They had seen. From a distance. His side. Pierced. So. They knew. When Jesus. Showed them. His hands. And his side.

This really was. Jesus. Who had been dead. And who actually. Was now alive. And I wonder. As they.

[27 : 36] As they saw Jesus. And as they saw his wounds. Did they. Did they think of Isaiah 53. They knew the scriptures. Far better than. Than we do. Did their minds.

Go to Isaiah 53. Verse 5. Where it says. But he was pierced. For our transgressions. He was crushed. For our iniquities. The punishment. That brought. Us peace.

Peace. Was upon him. And by his wounds. We are healed. Jesus.

Jesus. Showed them. His wounds. So that they would. See it was Jesus. He showed them. His wounds. So that they would. Be able to make that. Connection with Isaiah. And understand that. He was the Messiah. He was the Savior. He was. The risen. Christ. And Jesus.

[28 : 33] Showed them. His wounds. His wounds. So that they. Could see. In the marks. That the price.

Was now paid. The. The cost. Was covered. And everything. That was necessary. For their souls. To be healed. Was now done. Now. And here was the price. By his wounds.

You are healed. Jesus. Spoke to them. In terms of grace. And now Jesus.
 Shows them. The marks. Of that grace. The cost. Of that grace. I say this often.
 [29 : 34] I'm just catching. Catching my eye. I say it often. Don't I? What is grace? Thank you.
 For this. God's. Riches. At Christ's. Expense. Expense. And Jesus.
 Here. Showed them. What. Expense. How far. He was willing. To be expended. In order.
 That they could receive. The riches. Of peace. With God. And eternal. Healing. See. See. From his.
 Head. His hands. His feet. Sorrow. And love. Flow mingled down. Jesus. Showed. Them. His
 wounds. So.
 [30 : 35] So that they could see. How much. He loved them. We often go into shops. Don't we?
 We see something that we'd like.
 But the price is too high. It's too expensive. We say. So we. We move on. I'm not willing to pay out
 that much. In order to own this.
 And yet God. In his love. Looked upon us. And he knew the expense. The price tag.
 For our souls. And he said. Let's do it. The father sent the son.
 The son came. Expended himself. Shed his blood. And the Holy Spirit. Is showing us. But it was for
 us.
 [31 : 41] The disciples. Were overjoyed. Verse 20. When they saw. The Lord. But they could not.
 See the Lord.
 And know the Lord. Until they saw the wounds. I want to finish. Just by asking the question.
 Have you. Seen. The wounds. Of Jesus. Has the. Holy Spirit. Enabled you. To see.
 Jesus. Crucified. For you. His hands. His side. Pierced. For you. His body. Broken. For you.
 See. See. See. We need to see that. We need. To look. At the wounds. Of Jesus.
 [32 : 37] Because. This is the only way. That we. That we can. That we can. Receive. Eternal.
 Healing. For our. Sin.
 Sick souls. And if you're. A Christian. I sense.
 That there are. Christians here. Who are. Perhaps. Lacking. The joy. That we should have. We
 need.
 To keep. Looking. At the wounds. Of Jesus. We need. To keep. Remember. That this is.
 Where. Our. Righteousness. Is. It's. In. His. Wounds. That we. Have. That. Absolute. Qualification.
 For. An assurance.
 [33 : 34] Of. Entry. Into. Heaven. Last. Week. Member. Malcolm. He. Took. Us. Into. Heaven. For.
 A moment. In. One. Of. His. Illustrations.
 He. Spoke. About. When. We. Sin. As. We. Do. And. We. Confess. Our. Sin. And. Jesus. Is. In.
 Heaven. With. The. Father. And.
 Jesus. Says. To. The. Father. Yes. They. Did. It. They. Are. Guilty. But. Look. At. My. Hands. Look.
 At. My. Wounds. I. Have. Taken. The. Punishment. For. Before.
 The. Throne. Of. God. Above. I. Have. A. Strong. A. Perfect. Plea. A. Great. High. Priest. Whose.
 Name. Is. Love. Whoever.
 [34 : 31] Lives. And. Pleads. For. Me. My. Name. Is. Graven. On. His. Hands. My. Name. Is.
 Written. On. His. Heart. I.
 Know. That. While. In. Heaven. He. Stands. No. Tongue. Can. Bid. Me. Thence. Depart. When.
 Satan. Tends. Me. To. Despair.
 And. Tells. Me. Of. The. Guilt. Within. Upward. I. Look. And. See. Him. There. He. Made. An. End.
 To. All. My. Sin. Because. The. Sinless. Saviour. Died.
 My. Sinful. Soul. Is. Counted. Free. For. God. The. Just. Is. Satisfied. To. Look. On. Him. His.
 Wounds. And.
 Pardon. Me. Jesus. Jesus. Stood. Amongst. Them. Jesus. Spoke. To. Them. Jesus.
 [35 : 26] Showed. Them. His. Wounds. And. Then. Jesus. Sent. Them. Out. To. Tell. The. World.
 The. Message.
 That. Had. Given. Them. That. Joy. And. That. Is. Our. Commission. We have. No. Time. To. Go.
 To. To. To. To. To.
 To. To. Lord. God. We pray. That.
 We would know. The. Joy. Of. Your. Salvation. Of. As. We would. Again. To. The. Lord. And. To.
 The. Wounds. Of. Jesus. For. Us. And. We pray.

As. We go. Out. From. Here. We. Would. Go. Out. As. The. Disciples. Were. Commanded. To. Go.
Out. To. Tell. A. World. That. So. It. Needs. To. Hear. About.
[36 : 18] Jesus. The. Good. News. Of. The. One. Who. Loved. Them. As. He. Loved. Us. And.
Gave. Himself. In. Order. That. We. Could. Know. That. Salvation. We.
Pray. That. The. Doors. Of. Our. Lives. Would. Not. Be. Locked. We. Say. That. The. Door. Of. This.
Church. Would. Not. Be. Locked. We. Would. Not.
Be. Huddled. In. A. Fearful. Bunch. But. That. We. Would. Go. Out. In. The. Power. Of. The. Holy.
Spirit. To. Share. The. Good. News. Of. The. Gospel. And.
We. Ask. It. In. Jesus. Name. Amen.