

Meeting the Risen Christ: Jesus Meets Us in Our Fears

John 20:19-23 || Pastor Scotty Smith || 1 May 2022

*To CARE for one another in truth and in love,
To GROW together as followers of Jesus,
To SERVE those God has placed in our path.
– CG Mission Statement*

Icebreaker: Do you have any recurring dreams? Why do you think you have them?

Worship: [Psalm 91](#) (*Remain a few moments in worship with this passage. What is God's invitation?*)

Sermon Summary for [John 20:19-23](#) (*Read aloud before reading the sermon summary.*)

We have a Savior who not only invites us into relationship with Him; He is constantly moving towards us – not just offering us hope, but extending that hope to us with expectant love. There is so much comfort in this. Especially because of all the things in this world we cannot control, whether personally or communally. And this lack of control creates either fear or anger within us. But as we see in John 20, Jesus comes to those who are consumed by fear. He comes to the disciples and to us when we are in the depths and gives us several, love-filled gifts:

Jesus gives us His peace // And this is not just any peace; He is giving us the shalom of God, which only the Messiah has authority to give. Jesus does not rebuke His disciples for being afraid. Nor does He hold anything against them for deserting Him before His death. Rather, Jesus brings His peace-giving-presence into their fears, the peace and awe of the living God. Because lasting, true peace is a Someone before it is a *something*.

Jesus gives us His scars // This is perhaps the greatest authentication that He truly is the Risen Christ. Of all His gifts, this might therefore be the most precious. Scars on the resurrected body tell a story that confirms all Jesus has taught and all the Scriptures had prophesied ever since God made a commitment to be a great and gracious Redeemer. These scars are proof of God's gift of perfect forgiveness and total acceptance. We see them and we know that Jesus did this for us and for the world. It's also a charge to be open and honest about our own wounds. Because in sharing them, we bear witness to the healing power of Christ's sacrifice.

Jesus gives us His mission // This isn't simply Christ giving us a mission; He's giving us His mission: to redeem a family for eternity "from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages" ([Rev 7:9-10](#)). Along with that mission is the restoration of all things. Every sphere of life has a resurrection future when all things broken will become all things new. This is God's mission. And Jesus has made it our mission. Ours is not a religion of doing things for God; through the Gospel, we are doing things with Him. God promises He is with us through it all.

Jesus gives us His Spirit // As the Father sent Jesus, so God continues in the world – in and through His disciples. The battle is the Lord's, but He delights to use us as active participants in His story. But we don't dare do this on our own. We need God through and through. And so He sends His Spirit. Christ is clear that life on mission is life in and by the Spirit. We can think of this as part of the perpetual pattern for us to always be drinking in the living water of the Spirit – asking and trusting in God for the power and movement of His Spirit in and through us.

Jesus gives us His grace // The context of this is mission. The empowerment is the Holy Spirit who indwells us – Who gives our hearts the first-fruits of the guarantee that everything will be put right. This is a call to live humbly and to be redemptively present in the world. God's call to extend forgiveness presupposes our reception of forgiveness in the Gospel. There is no greater treasure entrusted to Jesus's church than the all-life-transforming gift of forgiveness. *Because of His finished work*, we proclaim the forgiveness of sins in His name. We are ambassadors of reconciliation. What we need the most in this world... **we have**.

Discussion Questions *(You will not be able to discuss all the questions. Pick the ones you like. Some are personal perspective and application questions for life-transforming discussions.)*

Jesus Gives Us His Peace

- What fears distract us from having the promised peace of Christ?
- What's the correlation and difference between peace with God and the peace of God?
 - Can you have one without the other?

Jesus Gives Us His Scars

- What is significant about Jesus showing the disciples His hands and side?
 - What personal significance does it have for you?
- If Christ's perfected body bears scars, what are the implications of this for how we try to hide our own?
 - How do our wounds/scars make the Gospel more believable and beautiful to others?

Jesus Gives Us His Mission

- As the Father sent Jesus, He now sends His disciples (and His church). Discuss what we are sent to do.
 - In what ways do you personally sense you have been sent to continue the mission of Jesus?
- How is life on mission more about boasting in Jesus and His cross, and less about being gifted people?
 - What is your main hindrance in being an effective witness for Christ?

Jesus Gives Us His Spirit

- How does God fill and empower us for the task of carrying out His mission?
 - How does this give you courage?
- Discuss ways we can more fully depend on the Spirit's empowerment.

Jesus Gives Us More Grace

- How is forgiveness related to the mission Christ gave to us?
 - What does forgiveness look like in a church family?
- What most stood out to you in this sermon and how do you want to apply it to your life?

Prayer

For this week's Prayer Guide for personal or group use, click [HERE](#).

Engage & Experience: Prayer & Gratitude

Incorporate "Prayer Walking" into your prayers for God's Kingdom and living a missional life. Go alone or in pairs. Be aware of Christ's presence and try to see the city through His eyes. Confess fears, weaknesses, lack of concern. Ask God to give insight into His ways and to appreciate the beauty and glory around you. Ask for opportunities to love and serve the people of the community. Pray as you walk, stopping at landmarks. Pray for:

- Social, political, economic needs
- Critical crossroads and intersections
- Cultural influencers, schools, businesses, churches etc.
- People, neighbors, residents, workers, people who pass by, major people groups
- Peace and safety, protection against crime, conflict, unrest
- Open doors and hearts to the gospel and workers to share

Talk with God and each other about what you saw and heard. What surprised you? What encouraged you? What made you uncomfortable? How did this remind you that as the Father sent Jesus, Jesus sends you?