

Sermon John 20- The Power of the Holes Produces Peace (Part 1 & 2)

Preached at Cloverdale April 2024

John 20

Background: You know the story, Jesus had been crucified three days earlier. The disciples had witnessed this and were in fear and hiding. When you have been walking with and trusting in Jesus, it can be scary when he seems to no longer be around. The disciples have heard from Mary earlier that Jesus was alive. We pick up with the story from there.

¹⁹ Then, the same day at evening, being the first *day* of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them, “Peace *be* with you.” ²⁰ When He had said this, He showed them *His* hands and His side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord.

The same day after Mary Magdalene tells the disciples she has seen the risen Lord, the disciples are in hiding for fear of the Jews who had not long ago just took Jesus out.

Watch me, they had a reason to be afraid because people are crazy. If Jesus is not with you, that’s a pretty scary situation.

Jesus shows up in the middle of their situation and the first thing he tells them is “Peace be with you.” Jesus shows up in the middle of their chaotic and scary situation and tells them have peace. Watch me.

- They are in a bad and uncomfortable situation and Jesus shows up.
 - Jesus will still show up in your most difficult season....he works like that.
 - If it seems like you are alone, just wait, he’s coming back for you!
 - The doors were shut but that didn’t stop Jesus from getting to them. Jesus is crazy about his disciples and he’s crazy about you.
- What a great way to start your week off.
- What they lack and need and want is peace. Didn’t say they lacked food or clothes or relationships....but what they must have needed more than anything else was peace.
 - Ain’t no peace like the peace that God gives. Jesus knows what you need most so the first thing he says to them is about peace.
 - Do you need peace today? Peace be with you.
 - Peace didn’t enter the picture until Jesus showed up with this word. This can be your word today....have peace that can only come through knowing Jesus.

Now, after saying this, Jesus shows them his hands and his side. His hands where the nails were driven and his side where he was pierced. Why does he show them these things?

His wounds must have something to do with our having peace.

- The holes show the depth of his love and what he went through for us.
- His love produces peace.
- His recovery from his wounds gives me peace. If Jesus can get up and recover from this, I can too.
- We have peace regarding the plan of God for our lives after looking at how Jesus fulfills His plans for the earth.
- Why are they afraid of the Jews? Because the Jews just took out Jesus. The holes gives me peace that whatever the enemy tries to do, it cannot keep us down. His holes provides evidence and gives me peace.

Observations:

- Wait, when they first saw him, they should have been glad.
- When they heard him speak and proclaim peace on them, they should have jumped up and been happy.
- But they didn't get glad until after they saw the holes, they didn't really see Jesus until he showed him his holes.
- Jesus must have understood the situation, just showing up might not be enough, just speaking a good word might not be enough, sometimes you have to show them your wounds before they really see Jesus.
 - You may have to show them your holes before they see the Savior.

The impact of Jesus showing them his holes is profound.

- They really know it is Jesus because they remember what he went through.
- They are glad because even though they heard he had gotten up, now they can see for themselves that his wounds couldn't keep him down.
- Notice, they are glad!! Situation has not changed, crazy Jews still around, doors still closed, but in the middle of this they have their sadness turned to gladness and the only difference is they see Jesus is there in their situation.
- They are glad perhaps because even though they deserted him in his hour, he had forgiven all that and came back to give them peace about all of that.
 - I need peace, Jesus still tells me peace for the times when I walked away from him, punked out on him, and denied him.
 - I don't need to have that guilt on my mind any longer, because I have his peace and we are cool.
- The wounds are a testimony, and sometimes people won't really see Jesus until they see what we have suffered and gone through and how he brought us out.
- We overcome through the blood of the Lamb and the word of our testimony.

Important, if you don't have any holes, if you ain't been through anything yet, they may not see the Jesus in you. If I'm a follower and disciple of Jesus, I probably have some holes I can show you.

- Count it all joy when you go through various trials.
- It's important that we go through something because it will help others see Jesus, get glad about their situation and believe.
- You need some holes, and if you have some holes, take the gloves off and show somebody so they can believe and get glad in their condition.
- Somebody may need to know how you made it through. You might not look like you been through it. You might not smell like the smoke from the fiery trials you've been through.

²¹ So Jesus said to them again, "Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you." ²² And when He had said this, He breathed on *them*, and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³ If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the *sins* of any, they are retained."

Jesus understands that they need to know again that his peace is available to them. Saying it again confirms it. He didn't make a mistake the first time he said it.

He then commissions them and sends them into ministry. Before he sends them out, he prepares them to receive the Holy Spirit. Why?

- Jesus knows the proper order of ministry. You have to go through the cross, the grave, and experience the resurrection before you can really receive the power of the Holy Spirit which helps you when you are sent to minister to others.
- You have to have the leading of the Holy Spirit before you minister and deal with others.
- Jesus wants you to have peace about what the next assignment is....that is to minister to others.

Two phases of peace. The first peace is to believe that we are right with God through our belief in Christ. The second peace is to give us confidence about our assignment.

Seeing and Believing

²⁴ Now Thomas, called the Twin, one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. ²⁵ The other disciples therefore said to him, "We have seen the Lord."

So he said to them, "Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe."

Ah, doubting Thomas. He didn't see Jesus during the last visit. He wasn't there. Because he wasn't there, because he missed it, the disciples told him what they saw.

Some people might have missed it, as a result, we need to tell them what we saw and what we know about Jesus.

Thomas doesn't believe....I wonder why?

- He must not have thought anyone could come back from what Jesus went through. Impossible.
- He doesn't believe in what the disciples saw or said. They must have gotten it wrong. It sounds too far-fetched.
- Maybe to Thomas, it doesn't make logical sense to him perhaps to come back to the same place where he was abused and rejected.

Thomas' declaration is, unless I can see and feel the holes, I'm not buying what you say. Can people still not believe what you say about Jesus today? Yes. I wonder why?

- Maybe the whole Jesus thing sounds too far-fetched.
- Maybe people think that they can never come back from the mistakes; never be able to rise again.
- Maybe they just don't believe that Jesus would ever really care enough about them to return after you rejected him before.

²⁶ And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, "Peace to you!" ²⁷ Then He said to Thomas, "Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand *here*, and put *it* into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing."

²⁸ And Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!"

Eight days later, Jesus shows up again. The doors are still shut, they are still hiding out and Jesus shows up again with the same greeting..."peace be to you."

Jesus knows us well. Just because you had peace and gladness eight days ago, doesn't mean that you still held onto it today. Pretty clear to me that God wants you to have peace. Do you have it today?

Peace comes with and through Jesus, you just have to believe.

He specifically addresses Thomas and his unbelief:

- Come check out my holes. Look a little closer.
- After seeing what I went through for you....
- After seeing that I came out of this alright....
- After seeing what I can do now after all I went through....just popping up and doors are not closed to me, closed doors can't stop me....
 - I just said something. Doors that are closed can't stop him now after he has gone through this.
 - When you are a believer, some doors that are still closed won't keep you from getting inside.
 - Things that you couldn't do before are not a problem now.
 - Opportunities that I didn't have before, are falling into my lap now.
- After seeing that instead of staying in Heaven, I came back to see about you....
- Stop being an unbeliever and repent and turn into being a believer.



Thomas doesn't say that he is a believer. Nope. He said, "my Lord and my God". He never said he was a believer, but he demonstrated the behavior of a believer.

- Believers know who Jesus is; they call Him Lord and God.
- True believers demonstrate their belief in their actions.
- The holes, the testimony, have the power to turn an unbeliever into a believer....come hear my story and check out my holes.

²⁹ Jesus said to him, "Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed *are* those who have not seen and *yet* have believed."

One of my favorite verses.

The disciples had an advantage, they got to actually put their eyeballs on Jesus. They got to walk with him. They were personally taught by him and could ask him questions. They got to actually see him just pop up in the middle of their situation and bring peace and gladness. They got to see his holes. They had a greater advantage because it is easier to believe when you see. In fact, seeing is believing.

But I love how the Kingdom operates. We don't have to see it to believe it. Jesus seems to indicate that we are more blessed when we haven't seen it yet, but still believe.

I didn't see him in the manger, but I believe I'm born again.

I didn't see him turn the water into wine, but I believe my best days are on the way.

I didn't see him heal the blind man, but I believe he has opened my eyes and my dark days are gone....now that I have him here inside.

I didn't see him raise Lazarus from the dead, but I believe he can lift me out of some dead situations.

I didn't walk with him back then, but I know he walks with me and talks with me along the way.

I don't have to see it to believe it, it's called faith, by faith I call Him my Lord and my God....I'm so blessed!

That You May Believe

³⁰ And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; ³¹ but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.

I didn't see it, but I can read it. Because of the volume of the Book and the testimony about some holes, I believe that Jesus is the Christ and I have my life in Him. In Christ alone my hope is found.

What about you, do you believe?

- He still wants to show up in your scary situations and see about you.
- You may not recognize him at first, he may look like me, or might look like Ms. Barbara or Sister Faye, so you might not recognize him when he first shows up to see about you.
- But you can see him through the holes. When you see my holes...you'll see Jesus.
- He still wants you to have peace.
- He still wants to use you and send you out to do a great work for the Kingdom....regardless of your past mistakes.

Do you believe?

Sermon Summary Notes:

The purpose of Jesus showing up in the room may include:

- To give them peace about their current situation.
- To reveal God's will and His future plans for them.
- To provide evidence that the Word is true.
- To help them to believe in the resurrection.
- To have them fully experience the resurrection.
- To send them out to save others through belief in the resurrection.
- To reveal the Gospel.
- To show the depth of His love and forgiveness.
- To show they are not disqualified for a great future.
- To change their fear into gladness.
- To meet them where they were physically and spiritually.

What is he sending them to do?

- Follow in the same ministry as Christ. Minister to poor, sick, prisoner, make disciples, etc.

How will they do this? Through the power of the Holy Spirit and sharing their testimony (their own holes) to help people believe and see Jesus through their story.

Why doesn't Thomas believe?

- It could be he doesn't believe anyone can ever recover from what he saw Jesus go through.

How did Thomas finally believe?

- Jesus pops up again, doing something he had not done before.
- He saw the holes/evidence of the resurrection.

Observation: You can know Jesus, love Jesus, and hangout with people who believe in Jesus, and still not believe in the resurrection.

What are we to believe?



- In Jesus resurrection and in the plan of God.
- That we can experience hope and the resurrection in our own lives and situations.

Reference scriptures – Romans 10:2, 8-11, 13-18; John 3:16-18; Philippians 3:10-17