

Jesus stood in their midstTitle: If I see Him, Then I'll Believe

Text: John 20:19-23

Would you take your Bibles and turn to John chapter 20 beginning at Vs 19. You will find notes in your bulletin and I encourage you to follow along with me as we study the Word of God together. ~~Am~~

In John chapter 20, we continue our insight into the resurrection of our Lord, Jesus. In an early service we examined the details of the resurrection, in terms of the accounts and what happened, in terms of the appearance of Christ to Mary Magdalene. Mary Magdalene was the first person that Christ appeared to.

Read 20:19-23

Let Us pray

Our Father in heaven, we thank you most of all today for Jesus our Lord and our saviour. We thank you that over 1900 years ago he arose from the dead. And one day he is coming back for us. We thank you for the good news that he is alive. We thank you for the good news that his death on the cross was sufficient to ~~Am~~ pay for all our sins. We thank you for forgiveness in Jesus Christ.

And we are excited that one day he is going to come and there is a new world in the future. And we are going to look upon him whom they have pierced. We are going to see him with our own eyes. And we shall rejoice for evermore that our Saviour is alive. And we thank you for it. Bless in this time together that we might understand your Word. For we ask it in Jesus ~~Am~~ name.....Amen...

John chapter 20 and verse 19, we continue with the appearances of Christ to various people. The first of whom was Mary Magdalene.

The second is this group of disciples.

(1D) Now, first of all, I would like you to notice the situation as explained in Vs 19. It seems the disciples were in a room on the same evening, the first day of the week, the day Jesus arose, and the doors were shut. The doors were shut because they were afraid of the Jews. That is why they were assembled together. And Jesus came into their midst.

In John 15:27 the Bible says that Jesus said to his disciples, "peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you." And he came into their midst, into the midst of a group of people who were afraid and wondering what was going to happen to them, he came into them and said, "Peace.".....And what reassurance he brought to their hearts. They were afraid, the doors were locked, and Christ stood in their midst.

Many people have asked the question, "How did he get into that room?" One commentator said: "He probably came through the back door.".... That was his explanation....

Another person said, "Well, what I think happened was that someone in the room opened the door and let him in and they just failed to mention that little fact."

However, I notice in Vs 26, again, it says, "The doors were shut." The Bible is very clear. In other words, the resurrected, glorified body of Jesus Christ, in its structure was not limited as we are limited today. He was able to go right through the walls.....

And I believe, because I believe what science tells me, that if it were possible, and I knew the molecular structure of this pulpit, that I could pass my hand right through it. And never even feel it.

Now, I am not fast enough; and I do not know the molecular structure is..But we know that that is a real possibility.

And knowing this about Jesus Christ excites me because the Bible says that when believers are resurrected our bodies are going to be fashioned likened unto his glorious body. Isn't that great? The walls aren't going to whole us anymore, friends. We are just going to sap anywhere we want to. It is amazing what the Bible describes as our future resurrected body. And you can learn a lot from Jesus Christ and his own experience.

(2D) Now, Vs 20, we notice, secondly, that he showed ~~him~~^{them} his wounds.

Please notice this because it is very important. The disciples were glad to see him. And He shows them his hands and his side. I believe the wound in his side was very large. The reason I believe that is because he invited Thomas not just to put his finger there, but to thrust in his entire hand. And ~~that~~ he wanted them to actually touch his wounds so that they would know that this is the person who was on the cross. He wanted them to know it.

In Luke chapter 24 we learn that in fact they did handle the wounds of Jesus. In ~~1st~~ John chapter 1, we read: and the Apostle John is speaking, "what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we beheld and our hands handled, concerning the Word of life, and the life was manifested unto us."

They actually touched Jesus Christ. Now, I want to tell you something. If I had been one of the disciples, I certainly would have. If He would have said "Touch me and see." Many, I would have had my hands all over him. I would have felt those wounds.... And I would have wanted to touch his side and to feel and to know. Jesus invited them to do so. He said, "handle me and see, because a Spirit does not have flesh and bones as you ~~see/he~~ that I have."

I don't know what you have been told about the resurrection of Christ. But I don't believe that just his Spirit arose. Or that we are living in the attitude of Christ or anything like that. I believe that Jesus literal, bodily, arose from the dead.

He had a real body of flesh that people could handle and they knew it ~~was~~ real. I believe it so strongly that I say that if I did not believe in the bodily resurrection of Christ I wouldn't stay in the ministry one minute more. I would eat, drink, and be marry for tomorrow we die.....

The whole Christian hope is built upon one thing: that Jesus Christ, right now, is alive, and that he arose from the dead. It is not something we make up, it is not whisling in the dark, it's a fact of history. And my friends if you have not taken the time to think about this, then you owe it to yourself to do so. Because everything in your furture and eternity depends upon it. If Jesus arose from the dead, then I have no doubt about his claims. And I have no doubt in my mind that one day he is going to come back. And I hope it is today. I really do..... Wouldn't that be fantastic if Christ came right now?.....

Now, if you think I am wried....I just want to tell you that it is great to be wried when you know Jesus Christ. For you know that one day he is going to come back....

And there are many people, by the way, who ~~have~~^{didn't} accepted Christ because they needed a crutch, Many who have accepted him didn't need any thing, so we thought. ~~Then~~ the claims of Jesus Christ were presented to us. And we knew it was the truth and we had to believe it. Because we could do nothing else. And I believe that some of you seating here right now, are going to come to believe the truth that Jesus is really alive. ~~That he~~
~~is~~. That he has a physical body. A body that one can touch and handle and see.

And one day he is going to come back in that same body inwhich he ascended into heaven. In fact the angle said to the disciples when Christ ascended into heaven, "this same Jesus, who is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner" exactly the same way that you have seen him go.....

And so, they saw his wounds and they handled and touch them...

(3D) Third, I would like you to notice the ~~sending~~ of these disciples as
by Christ in Vs 21. It is important that every believer who hears the
message, "Hay, Christ is alive", now what do we do?....

Jesus said to Mary Magdalene "Go and tell." He said to the woman
"Go and tell".....

The Christian who believes the resuurrection has one obligation.
He has one task. And that is to tell the Good news.....

And so Jesus said to them "Peace be with you; as my Father has sent
me, I also send you."....

And it is with the same message: the son of man came to sseek and to
save that which was lost. He came to tell of forgiveness and to tell how
we can have everlasting life. And I believe that is the same message that
Christians are to take into the world. We are to tell others how they can
have forgiveness and who they can have ever~~lasting~~ life.

I can think of any greater news to tell ~~than~~ ^{you}.

(4D) Fourth, I would like you to notice the Spirit that he gave in Vs 22-23.

Here is a very difficult passage. Vs 20: "When he had said this,"
"I am going to send you", he said, according to the Bible, "He breathed on
them, and then said, receive the Holy Spirit."....

Now, what happened, here? Because a few days later at Pentecost
the Bible says "The Holy Spirit came." It was the day of Penecost and the
Holy Spirit came and they were all filled and Baptized with the Holy Spirit.

But, here, before Pentecost, it says that Jesus breathed on them and
said "Receive the Holy Spirit."

Now, did they receive the Spirit, or, was he just telling about
something that was going to happen a few days later?

No, I don't believe he was treaking them....I believe they received
the Holy Spirit ~~at~~ ^{that} the moment it says.

Now, the word "breathed" is ~~used~~ only used here in the N.T. It is
a very unusally word. It is not used in any other place.

However, it is used in the O.T. That is in the Greek O.T. for the N.T. was in Greek.

And in the Hebrew ^{of} Gen 2:7 where it says "the Lord God formed man out-Of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. And man became a living soul." That word "breathed" in the Greek is the same word here in John 20:22.

Christ breathed on them and said "receive the Holy Spirit." It means simply this: He was imparting life to them....Just as surely as God produced life in a physical organism that he produced out-off the dust of the ground. So, he breathed into them spiritual life...

And I know that from the "transformed" lives of the Apostle that I see on the day of Pentecost. These men were revolutionized. And

And, I also, believe at this moment they experienced the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. They had received spiritual life from God.

And so the action that is involved here is ~~that~~ God breathing his life into them and they received the Holy Spirit.

I believe the same thing happens to you when you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. The moment you come to believe that Christ died for your sins, that he arose, again, from the dead, and he is really alive, at that moment God breaths into you spiritual life.

The Bible says that if any man be in Christ he is a new creation. Old things are passed away and all things become new. You are born again. Born of God. Born of his Spirit. Born of His Word. A new life comes into you. I believe that....

Now, all of us don't understand that at the ^{of} moment. It is sort of alike a new born baby. I don't see babies walking around giving speeches on what it is to have ^{of} new life, you know..... They have to be feed. They have to be taken care-off. And we are no different as spiritual babies. We don't often understand what happens. But, many times I find that just as a baby is aware that it lives, so also is the new believer. He is aware that he is alive.

And I believe the moment you accept Christ, God is going to breath into you spiritual life. Just as surely as the day when he created man in the first place and gave him physical life. He is going to do it. So, ~~that is the first fact about the spirit.~~

(2E) The second factor about the spirit, I notice from this verse is that they had to accept him. The acceptance of the Spirit was important.

He said ^{To them:} "receive or take the Holy Spirit."

They could have responded: "I don't want him. I don't want anything to do with this."

And I don't believe they would have received the Holy Spirit... I believe God gives man the ability to receive. And God's Holy Spirit works in your heart. But, you must receive eternal life. You must be born again. You must take Christ as your saviour.

The Bible uses simple words. If I were to stand here with this pencil and say to anyone of you, "would you come and take it.?" and you walk up here and took it. It is the same word used here in the Bible "to take Jesus Christ as your saviour."

And what you are really taking in a "confession" of faith. That you believe that ~~he~~ ^{he} is all that he claimsto be. That he died for your sins and that he arose again. And you take "that" as your own. And at that moment you become a new creature in Jeus Christ. God breathes on you and your receive the Holy Spirit...

(3E) Third, I would like you to notice the authority ^{that} he gave them in Vs 23.

I don't believe that ^{that} authority has been given to us today. I believe it was for the Apostles. WHAT WAS THAT AUTHORITY?

He said, "if you forgive the sins of any, their ~~sins~~ have been forgiven them; if you retain the sins... ~~meaning/you/wouldn't~~ of any, they have been retained." In other words, you wouldn't forgive them....

Now, what is this? Did the Apostles have the same authority as Christ? In a sense..YES....God still isthe only one to forgive sins.

But, the Apostles going under the authority of Christ pronounced and ~~decerned~~ declared forgiveness. Or, declared that people were not saved. Because they had decerned it clearly.

There is an example in Acts chapter 8 of a man who tried to buy his way into the kingdom of God. He tried to buy the power of God. And his heart was not right. And yet, outwardly, people thought he believed. In fact, he was Baptized. But, when one of the Apostles came to this situation in Samaria, Peter, himself, said, "Your money perish with you. You are in the bonds of sin and your heart is not right with God."

Peter was an Apostle and he knew. And Christ gave them that authority. While men do not have that today, I want to tell you that when we preach the Gospel of our Lord Jesus, in a sense we are doing the same. If you accept and believe, listen, your sins are forgiven. And I can say just as surely as if Jesus were here, your sins are forgiven the moment you receive Jesus Christ as your saviour.

You don't have to run around the church 10 times or join 64 ~~denominations~~ denominations. One thing is needed....BELIEVE that Jesus Christ is who he claimed to be. That is what is needed. And the moment you do you will be saved....

Shall we close in prayer