

John Chapter 20 Continued

John 20:17 "Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God."

In the last lesson, Mary has just recognized Jesus and called Him Rabboni or Master. Of course, it is a great desire on her part to touch Him to make sure this is not just her imagination. We spoke of the two kinds of bodies that are explained in (1 Corinthians 15), in the last lesson, natural body and the spiritual body.

Mary was expressing a desire to hold on to His physical presence for fear that she would once again lose him. Jesus' reference to His ascension signifies that he would only be temporarily with them and so she desperately wanted him to stay, He could not. Jesus was with them only for 40 more days and then He ascended (Acts 1:3-11).

After He went to the Father, He sent the Holy Spirit ("The Helper"), so that they would not feel abandoned.

"My brethren": Disciples have been called "slaves" or "friends" (15:15), but not "brothers," until here. Because of Jesus' work on the cross in place of the sinner, this new relationship to Christ was made possible (Romans 8:14-17; Galatians 3:26-27; Ephesians 1:5; Hebrews 2:10-13).

My own personal belief is that this is the Spirit body which the Spirit of Jesus has reunited with. Jesus tells Mary to go tell the disciples. This makes Mary a missionary. She is to carry the good news to her brethren. Mary will be the first to spread the great resurrection story.

We will see in the next verse that Mary is obedient and does just exactly what Jesus has told her to do. All believers in Christ have been adopted into the family of God. He is our Father God, as well as the Father and God of Jesus.

John 20:18 "Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that he had spoken these things unto her."

We see here, that John leaves no doubt which Mary this is that brings the gospel message. Notice that Jesus uses those of the earth whom the world believes is unworthy to bring His message.

John 20:19 "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, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you."

This was Sunday evening of the resurrection. The doors are shut, and Jesus appears in His Resurrection body. Evidently He could appear, disappear, pass through material, and defy the law of gravity (as He did at the Ascension), in His Resurrection body.

The Greek word indicates the doors were locked for fear of the Jews. Since The authorities had executed their leader, they reasonably expected that Jesus' fate could be their own. "Peace be unto you": Jesus' greeting complements His "it is finished," for his work on the cross accomplished peace between God and His people (Romans 5:1; Ephesians 2:14-17).

Jesus is now in His glorified body. It is not necessary for Him to open the door. This appearance of Jesus is the same evening that He had shown Himself to Mary at the sepulcher that morning. This is still Sunday.

These disciples had probably assembled to sort out what Mary had told them. They were afraid to meet publicly for fear that they would be killed. Jesus is the King of Peace, so this greeting is no big surprise.

John 20:20 "And when he had so said, he shewed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord."

Jesus proved that He who appeared to them was the same One who was crucified (Luke 24:39).

Jesus' appearance was different, and yet the scars were still in His hands and side.

The Spirit body has a great deal to do with the physical body, but is changed, also. These disciples had been confused and perhaps, some did not believe when Mary told them that she had seen Jesus. Now they know for themselves that He is risen, and they are glad.

John 20:21 "Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you."

This commission builds on (17:18; see Matthew 28:19-20).

There is a peace that comes when we receive the Truth of Jesus Christ into our lives. We have no fear of death, because we know there is a resurrection.

Now Jesus gives them a job to do. They are to carry the good news of the gospel to the entire world. Just as the Father sent Jesus on a mission to save the world, now Jesus sends His followers to save the world.

John 20:22 "And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost:"

Here the disciples are anointed by the Holy Spirit preliminary to the book of Acts. This corresponds to the Holy Spirits special ministries in the Old Testament. Such ministries were for special tasks. Soon the Holy Spirit would come and permanently abide with them (Acts 2).

Since the disciples did not actually receive the Holy Spirit until the day of Pentecost, some 40 days in the future (Acts 1:8, 2:1-3), the statement must be understood as a pledge on Christ's part that the Holy Spirit would be coming.

This Holy Spirit would breathe into these disciples, eternal life. This would empower them to carry out the work that Jesus had begun. The very next verse tells you something of the Power He has breathed into them.

Jesus gives the Spirit of everlasting life along with the powerful anointing. This divine life which Jesus gives these disciples will empower them to do things impossible to do in the flesh.

John 20:23 “Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.”

This is a divine prerogative (Mark 2:7). The anointing of the Holy Spirit makes this possible.

This is a very hard Scripture, except for the fact that these disciples are extensions of Jesus' ministry. Just as Jesus had said, on another occasion, that when two agree as touching anything on this earth it shall be done of my Father in heaven.

This verse does not give authority to Christians to forgive sins. Jesus was saying that the believer can boldly declare the certainty of a sinner's forgiveness by the Father because of the work of His son if that sinner has repented and believed the gospel.

The believer with certainty can also tell those who do not respond to the message of God's forgiveness through faith in Christ that their sins, as a result, are not forgiven.

(Matthew 18:19). We also, have read here in John chapter 14, that believers can do the same miracles Jesus did when He was on earth, if they are done in the name of Jesus.

This is an empowering to use the name of Jesus. These disciples are an extension of Jesus' ministry. They must do these things in His name is the only difference. It is Jesus' power.

In (verses 24-26), Thomas has already been betrayed as loyal but pessimistic. Jesus did not review Thomas for his failure, but instead a passionate plea offered him proof of His resurrection. Jesus lovingly met him at the point of his weakness (2 Timothy 2:13).

Thomas's actions indicated that Jesus had to convince the disciples rather forcefully of His resurrection, i.e., they were not gullible people predisposed to believing in resurrection. The point is they would not have fabricated or hallucinated it, since they were so reluctant to believe even with the evidence they could see.

John 20:24-25 “But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came.” “The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe.”

This reminds me so much of many people today. They want facts before they will believe on Jesus. Facts and faith are not the same. Without faith, it is impossible to please God. This Scripture above is why a person who does not believe today is called a doubting Thomas.

The Bible must be taken by faith. Abraham's righteousness was because he had faith. We are heirs with Abraham, if we have faith.

John 20:26-27 “And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you.” “Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing.”

Thomas did not enjoy that extra eight days of faith that the others had. Just Jesus suddenly appearing in the room should have been enough, but when Jesus repeated the very things Thomas had said, Thomas believed.

As I said: without faith, it is impossible to please God. It bothers me when people get too caught up in the literal word and doubt everything and everyone. God is a Spirit. We must understand and believe within our spirit to please God.

John 20:28 “And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and My God.”

Suddenly Thomas moves from the unbelieving to the side of undeniable faith. His eyes have been opened, and He calls Jesus more than Savior; he calls Him Lord, which means he is Jesus' servant. The widest understanding comes when he calls Jesus his God.

With these words, Thomas declared his firm belief in the resurrection and therefore, the deity of Jesus the Messiah and Son of God (Titus 2:13). This is the greatest confession a person can make. Thomas's confession functions as the fitting capstone of John's purpose in writing (see verses 30, 31).

These words from Thomas form the climax to John's Gospel and summarize its theme.

John 20:29 “Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.”

Jesus foresaw the time when such tangible evidence as Thomas received would not be available. When Jesus ascended permanently to the Father, all those who believe would do so without the benefits of seeing the resurrected Lord. Jesus pronounced a special blessing on those who believe without having Thomas's privilege (1 Peter 1:8-9).

I really believe for this very reason God has not allowed the masses to see the Ark of Noah on Mount Ararat. When this great ship is found, photographed, and revealed to all, many will believe because of undeniable evidence.

I believe God does not want us to believe with our mind. God wants us to believe with our heart, because we love Him.

Hebrews 11:1 "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

This is the faith God respects. It takes no faith at all to believe in something you can see with your eyes. In (chapter 11 of Hebrews), there are a large number of people listed who believed without seeing. God loves and blesses them the most.

John 20:30-31 "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book:" "But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name."

These verses constitute the goal and purpose for which John wrote the Gospel. John tells us here he wrote that this Gospel for purposes of conversion, "**that ye might believe**", and of sanctification "**that ye might have life**".

Notice what you must believe, that Jesus is Messiah, Christ (the Anointed one of God). When you believe He is the Son of God, you believe He was born of a virgin. We receive everlasting life when we truly believe in our heart these things.

Romans 10:9-10 "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

John Chapter 20 Continued Questions

1. Why did Jesus tell Mary not to touch Him?
2. What was she to tell the disciples?
3. What scripture contains the two kinds of bodies found?
4. Which Mary was this talking about?
5. What did Mary tell the disciples?
6. Who does the Lord send with His message?
7. What day of the week does Jesus appear to the disciples?
8. Why were the disciples hidden?
9. What did Jesus say to them?

10. What did Jesus show the disciples that made them believe?
11. Jesus says, as my Father sent me _____ .
12. When Jesus breathed on them, what did He say to them?
13. In verse 23, what power did Jesus give them?
14. How can Jesus' disciples do miracles?
15. Who was called Didymus?
16. What did he say he would have to see before he would believe?
17. Without _____ it is impossible to please God.
18. How many days later did Jesus appear to Thomas?
19. What did Jesus say to Thomas?
20. What two names did Thomas call Jesus?
21. Why did Jesus say Thomas believed?
22. Who is even more blessed than believe?
23. What is faith in Hebrews chapter 11?
24. Why were these signs written?
25. What must we believe?