

EASTER EVENING

(How Jesus Turned Sadness into Gladness on Easter Sunday Evening)
John 20: 19-23



Behind Closed Doors

- ◆ The Volume of Fear
- ◆ The Visitation of Jesus
- ◆ The Victory of All

“When the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst of them and said, ‘Peace be unto you.’” (John 20:19)

Bill Kirk

"EASTER EVENING"

"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 unto you.'" (John 20: 19)

Introduction

1. The news of Jesus' resurrection was spreading far and wide.
2. The disciples didn't believe the first reports (Thomas even demanded proof).
3. But the lives of people were transformed when they encountered the risen Christ.

(Five Sunday Appearances)

Jesus made five appearances the day of His resurrection:

1. To Mary Magdalene (John 20:11-18)
2. To other women (Matthew 28:9 & 10)
3. To Peter (I Corinthians 15:5)
4. To the two Emmaus Road disciples (Luke 24:13-32)
5. To Jesus' disciples, minus Thomas (John 20:19-25)

(For ministry behind closed doors)

"Then the same day" (V. 19) which means:

- ◆ This was the day on which John, Peter and Mary Magdalene had visited the sepulcher early in the morning.
- ◆ It was now evening of the first day of the week (the evening of Jesus' resurrection).
- ◆ It was a Sunday evening service **where Jesus would do what Jesus still does.**

(Questions with answers)

1. Why were the disciples huddled together in an upper room in Jerusalem?
2. Why were the disciples full of fear and tension?
3. Why were the doors shut tight around them?
4. What did Jesus do on this Sunday evening?

I. The Volume of Fear

"The disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews." (V. 19)

Question: Why were the disciples fearful?

Answer:

- ◆ They dreaded the Jewish rulers who had put Jesus to death.
- ◆ They found themselves in a season of transition.
- ◆ They were uncertain about their tomorrows.
- ◆ They had just experienced great sorrow and disappointment.
- ◆ Unfulfilled expectations had left them deflated, wounded and low In spirit.

(The doors were shut)

1. It was a tense situation. (Ever had any?)
2. It was a troublesome time. (Ever had any?)
3. It was a transition season. (Ever have any?)
4. It was a turbulent day. (Ever have any?)
5. It was a time when the disciples banded together; a time when they needed the ministry of Jesus.

Remember

1. Fear is the feeling of anxiety caused by the presence of danger, evil or pain.
2. Fear is the feeling of apprehension which can lead to irrational action.

And Worry....

...is accepting responsibility God never intended for you to carry.

Fear and worry produce nothing good:

1. They polarize our faith.
2. They paralyze our spiritual growth.
3. They presume that God is small and unaware of what goes on behind closed doors.
4. They are tools of the enemy to steal your joy, peace and love for living.

(The disciples were alone and isolated.)

Question: Is there anything that consumes your mind this evening?

Question: Are you facing an uncertain tomorrow like the Lord's disciples?

Question: Is there anything on your heart that is affecting you in a negative way?

Question: Has an unexpected disappointment touched your life?

Question: Is there something right now that Jesus needs to speak to you about?

Question: Are you a candidate for Jesus to pour courage into your heart tonight?

II. The Visitation of Jesus

"...then came Jesus and stood in the midst of them" (V.19)

"...then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord." (V.20)

(Jesus showed up.)

Fact: Nothing happens until Jesus shows up.

Fact: And nothing happens in church until Jesus shows up.

1. It may be in the worship time,
2. It may be in the prayer time,
3. It may be in the special music,
4. It may be in the preaching of the Word,
5. It may be in the altar call.

- ◆ But when the presence of God comes in; something happens.

Question: What did Jesus have to get through so His disciples could see Him?

Answer: “**Closed doors**”

Question: Why did Jesus walk through the “**closed doors**”?

Answer: To make something very real to you and me!

1. Our limitations (**doors**) do not limit Jesus!
2. Our impossibilities (**doors**) to not intimidate Jesus!
3. Our obstacles and hurdles (**doors**) do not have to keep Jesus on the outside.
4. Our worries, fears and distractions (**doors**) are not thick enough to keep Jesus out of church. (**In fact**)

Our “closed doors” are Jesus’ opportunity to do what only Jesus can do.

Question: What **didn’t Jesus do** when He came into the meeting?

1. He **didn’t rebuke** the disciples for hiding behind closed doors.
2. He **didn’t resist** them because of their fears.
3. He **didn’t upbraid** them because of any unbelief.
4. He **didn’t scorn** them for their insecurities and low spirits.

(Why not?)

- ◆ Because Jesus knows that we can believe in the resurrection – and still have to battle things in our earthly environment.
- ◆ We all face things that will test us and can distract us from Jesus in our midst.

Question: How did Jesus enter the meeting place?

1. He came “**on time**” when the disciples were in need.
2. He came “**on through**” the doors that were closed to keep everyone out.

(But)

- ◆ Jesus knew where they were, and He knows where you are tonight.
- ◆ Jesus knew what they needed; and He knows what you need tonight.
- ◆ Jesus knew how to get through the door; and He can get through every door and objection you offer tonight.

(But Pastor)

- ◆ “I was abused as a child and have low self-esteem”
- ◆ “I’m at a distance from God and feel far away.”
- ◆ “I’ve carried a chip on my shoulder and have been angry at God.”
- ◆ “I don’t have faith to move mountains this evening.”
- ◆ “I haven’t been praying like I should be praying.”
- ◆ “I still remember the sins of my past.”
- ◆ “I feel that God isn’t listening when I’m praying.”

(Remember tonight)

1. Doors are made to **swing open!**

2. Doors are made to **go through!**
3. Doors are made to watch Jesus **enter in** and come into this meeting tonight!

(In Other Words)

1. There is not a door in your life that can keep Jesus out if you want Him to come in.
2. There is not a door in your life that Jesus can't get through to touch you in this meeting.

III. The Victory of All

Question: What did Jesus do when He came into the meeting?

Answer: He did four things *then* that He's still doing *tonight*.

1. Jesus ministered "peace"

(V.19) "Peace be unto you."

(V.20) "He showed them His hands and His side."

Fact: The wounds of Jesus were the evidence:

1. That the price for your salvation has been paid.
2. That you indeed can have peace with God.

- ◆ At Calvary Jesus made it possible for us to have peace with God.
- ◆ At the meeting with His disciples Jesus ministers the peace of God.

1. The Greek word for peace (EIRENE) means; rest, order, harmony, security, quietness and tranquility.
2. Peace is tranquility and assurance in your inner man.
3. Peace is security in the midst of life's un-explainables.
4. Peace is that fruit which guards and protects your heart (feelings) and your mind (thinking).

2. Jesus ministered "pleasure"

(V.20) "Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord."

Fact: Their hearts turned from sadness to gladness.

Fact: Their hearts turned from fear to faith.

Fact: Their hearts turned from pain to praise.

Fact: Their hearts turned from hiding to hallelujah.

3. Jesus ministered "purpose"

(V.21) "As My Father has sent Me, so I send you."

Fact: These disciples were the same ones that forsook Jesus and fled.

Fact: These were the same ones that had so miserably failed the Lord.

(What a Revelation

- ◆ That Jesus doesn't cast them away!

- ◆ That Jesus doesn't remind them of their past!
- ◆ That Jesus gives them another chance! **(In fact)**
- ◆ He entrusts them all with the task of evangelism (and gives them privilege with responsibility).

Question: Why did Jesus do this here?

Answer: To show His disciples (then and now)

- ◆ That Jesus has a job for you to do!
- ◆ That Jesus is not finished with you yet!
- ◆ That Jesus can redeem your failures into fruitfulness.
- ◆ That tonight, Jesus can re-commission those who have lost their sense of purpose for living.

4. Jesus ministered "power"

(V.22) "He breathed on them and said to them, receive the Holy Spirit."

- ◆ This was not the baptism in the Holy Spirit,
- ◆ But a special anointing even before the day of Pentecost!
- ◆ This impartation was the pledge or earnest guarantee of the Pentecostal experience about to come.

Fact: And Jesus will breathe upon you to enable you to do His will (in this meeting).

(Conclusion)

1. Have you lost your peace with God or the peace of God?
 2. Have you lost your joy and gladness?
 3. Have you lost your sense of purpose?
 4. Have you been driving on an empty tank?
- ◆ Then tonight is the night for **"Ministry behind closed doors!"**

AMEN!
Bill Kirk