

Make Disciples! (Part 6) The Challenge of Discipleship (Jn. 20:19-22)

Introduction: Today we celebrate the highest day of the Christian calendar – the resurrection day of our Lord and Savior, Jesus! For us in hindsight, it is a wonderful day of celebration and praise. A day that commemorates Christ's finished work of redemption. But on that first resurrection day, it didn't start out that way. In fact, for the people who loved Jesus, who had abandon everything to follow Him, the darkness of the that first Easter morning three days after Jesus had been arrested, brutally beaten, mocked, and crucified, it was a bleak day. His followers' nerves were shot. Their Lord was dead, an earthquake had shaken their world, and the disciples were frightened (thinking as followers of Christ they too might be next to be crucified). As quickly as they could they all took flight (Just as Jesus said they would), into an upper room in somebody's house – huddled together in fear with the doors and windows shut tight. Being a disciple of Jesus is no guarantee of an easy life!

But every professing believer claiming Christ as their Lord is called to a life of being a disciple and making disciples, and we are empowered by the Holy Spirit to do it. On this resurrection Sunday, I want us to see how our resurrected Lord and Savior Jesus, transform His disciples' fear into courage so they could answer the challenge of both being and making disciples and how He can do the same for us today.

We have defined discipleship as (Let's say it together...) "**Discipleship is a lifelong relationship with Jesus that makes us like Jesus as we do what He tells us to do as we share our lives with others.**" As we said, this is no guarantee of an easy life, but it is the way to the full life Jesus promised us we should have.

In our text, (try to get the scene in your mind), we have some very frightened men tucked away in an upper room.

I. **Jesus came to them: (v. 19)**

A. **At first, they don't believe** – (Lk. 24:37) They went from disbelief to...

B. **Then they don't know what to believe** – (Lk. 24:38) So, Jesus has to prove that it is true...

C. **Finally, they do believe** – Jesus shows them His scars and asks for something to eat to prove to them it's Him.

1. **Jesus' presence was real** - (Luke 24:41-43).

2. **Jesus' presence with them was personal** – This is not the first post resurrection appearance of Jesus. (John 20:11-18; Matt 28:9-10; 1 Cor 15:5 and Luke 24:34; Luke 24:13-32) *It is actually a little remarkable that these men were afraid.*

Jesus knew what they needed and He comes to them to personally meet them at their deepest need. *He will meet us at our deepest need too...* and in acknowledging His presence, we can find peace and His peace, and power to overcome what has us shaken... (*Greater is He who is in us than he who is in this world!*)

II. **Jesus calmed them: (v. 19b)** He stood in their midst and offered them peace... (not once, but twice)

A. **Their problem** – Came from fear of what the Jews (or the world might do to them).

1. Jesus had forewarned warned them about the problem of fear – (Mt. 10:26-31) (*Prov 29:25*)

2. It is the fear of man that strangles our witness in the world. (1 Jn. 2:15, 19)

3. Jesus focus for them now is to overcome their fear through His peace –

B. **Their peace** – Would come from His peace. His scars did more than identify Jesus, they were evidence of His great victory! (Rom. 8:31-39)

III. **Jesus commissioned them:** (v. 21)

A. **He gave them peace** – through the assurance of His presence and victory.

B. **He gave them purpose** – "*As the Father has sent Me, I also send you.*"

1. **Their purpose and ours are bound together** in Christ's purposes. (Mt. 28:16-20; Lk. 24:47-49)

2. **Our purpose** – (Eph. 2:7; Rom 9:23; Rom 8:29; Eph 1:4; Eph 1:12; 1 Peter 2:9; Eph 2:10) and there are many more.

The general trend of the truly saved, in Christ believer, is to desire and live out the new life in Christ that has been put in them – they want to fulfill their purpose "in Christ!"

For us to do what we have been called to do, and be what we have been called to be, requires us to have what these men needed and received for Jesus...

C. **He gave them power** – (v.22) "*He breathed on them, and said receive the Holy Spirit.*"

1. **As God breathed life into Adam** (Gen. 2:7) and gave him as a new creation, life.

2. **Jesus is breathing new life into these men** who were becoming new creations (2 Cor. 5:17; Eph. 2:8-10)

a. **The Spirit they received then** should be understood as a limited gifting of knowledge, understanding and empowerment until the fullness of the Holy Spirit would not come upon them – but would be dwell in them.

b. **The Spirit we received** – is the fullness of the Holy Spirit – who dwells in us who are in Christ (Rom.8:9; Eph. 5:18)

IV. **Jesus changed them:**

No one will argue that the resurrection didn't cause some dramatic changes in the lives of Jesus' followers. That's undeniable.

A. **It changed their character** – from fearful to bold (Ac. 4:20).

B. **It changed their lives** – They had peace in turmoil and nothing could steal their passion.

C. **It changed their belief** - Many gave up their lives to preach the resurrection. They saw the risen Lord – and gave their lives in service to Him. (Rom. 6:5)

Conclusion: All those who have by faith believed and called upon Christ as Savior and Lord, have been raised to walk in new life with Him, have been called to a life of being and making disciples of Christ. And Jesus, by the power of the Holy Spirit in us has given us all the ability to accept and meet that challenge.