

**Sermon Notes of  
Pastor Craig Kuhlman's Sermon on September 6, 2020:**

**"Transformed by the Son of God:  
The Power of Jesus' Resurrection  
(John 20:19–31) (Part 23)"**

**[In today's sermon, Pastor Craig Kuhlman on Zoom shows us through the Gospel of John that Jesus's first words to His followers were, "Peace be with you" and what that means to all of us.]**

Introduction:

- Welcome to Grace and peace be with each of you!
- Why did Pastor Craig say today, "Peace be with you"?
- Audience answers:
  - We need peace in the craziness of this world today.
  - Godly peace is so different than worldly peace. It's more than the absence of war. It's something special.
  - Jesus is peace in our spirit today.
  - Each person has to find peace in him or herself.
  - That's the greeting from Jesus after His resurrection.
  
- Sunday evening after Jesus was resurrected, He appeared to the disciples, which historical was the first church service.
- Jesus showed us what our resurrected bodies will look like.
- Resurrected bodies don't abide by natural laws because Jesus walked through the door that was locked.
- The disciples were in a fearful state and so Jesus choose to say, "Peace be with you" three times to them.
  
- The disciples were going through their own self-isolation process at that time.
- They were together in a room with the door locked because they were fearful of the Jewish leaders.
- The disciples need peace back then and so do we today because there is not a whole of peace going on around us with the pandemic and all the protests going on.

Peace Be With You! (This is from the Lexicon to the New Testament, by Spiros Zodhiates, TH.D.)

- The Greek word *eirene* means peace, or rest. It's in contrast with strife; denoting the absence or end of strife.
- Through Jesus' resurrection we are into that ontological state where there is an absence of strife because of what Jesus did for us.
- We may not always feel that way because the Holy Spirit is transforming us from the way of our being into the truth of our being, which is a process.
- Because the Father looks at us through the eyes of Jesus, that's the basis of why we should not have fear, shame, guilt or doubt.

- Eirene denotes a state of untroubled, undisturbed well-being.
- This is something we should feel right now, despite whatever troubles we might be going through right now, or whatever health issues we might be facing.
- This is given to us by God.
  
- Synonymously, the Greek word *asphaleia* means security.
- This is the meaning when used as a form of salutation.
- Such a state of peace is the object of divine and saving promise and is brought about by God's mercy, granting deliverance and freedom from all the distresses that are experienced as a result of sin or our fallen state.
- Jesus' peace has been given to us – it's not something that we have accomplished by ourselves.
  
- Greek philosophy, especially the Stoic philosophy during the time of Christ, was considered very wise.
- And today, over 2000 years later, it's still felt that way by many.
- They felt that happiness, as they defined it, was the result of living a good life or as Aristotle called it, "the examined life."
- And that meant living by four virtues: courage, justice, wisdom and temperance.
- These are Godly virtues, by the way, as Paul tells us in his list of ethics and what Jesus speaks about in the Sermon on the Mount.
- But they didn't have this Godly peace that Jesus has given us that we have right now.
  
- Used together with *e/leos*, mercy for the consequences of sin, and also with *charis*, meaning grace, which affects the character of the person.
- Peace as a Messianic blessing is that state brought about by the grace and loving mind of God wherein the derangement and distress of life caused by sin are removed.
- Hence, the message of salvation is called the Gospel of peace.
- We are no longer living in that state of sin, so we have that peace, even in some difficult times, where we fall short and sin.
- But we know that when we reconcile ourselves to God by asking forgiveness, we come back to God.
  
- God is changing us from the way of our being into the truth of our being
- It is called the peace of God, not that God needs it, but God gives it, the peace of Christ.
- It can be the result only of accomplished reconciliation, referring to the new relationship between man and God brought about by the atonement.
  
- So dear brothers and sisters, when Pastor Craig says, "Peace be with you today," this is the peace we should meditate on and be absorbed by it, because it's the reality that we live in.
- It's given to us through the reconciliation and the incarnation of Jesus.

Overview of today's message about the power of Jesus:

1. Jesus moves us from Fear to Courage (Verses 19-23)
  - a. Jesus came to them
  - b. He reassured them

- c. He commissioned them
  - d. He enabled them
2. The disciples then moved from Unbelief to Confidence (Verses 24-28)
  3. And then from Death to Life (Verses 29-31)

In Preview of today's message (John 20:19-31) – Pastor Craig's rhyming verses:

*Behind locked doors, disciples are Afraid,  
Jesus appears among them, now they're Dismayed.  
Overcome with Joy now that He's Here,  
He declares "Peace be with you," no need to Fear.*

*Receiving the Holy Spirit, and to be sent Out,  
Sins forgiven their message was About.  
Thomas not with them, he hears the Good News,  
From his doubt, he's singin' the Blues.*

*One week later, and the doors still Locked,  
But Thomas now there, he's about to be Shocked.  
"Peace be with you!," now once More.  
Thomas' faith Jesus will Restore.*

*Thomas now believes, "My Lord and My God!"  
But belief without sight Jesus gives the Nod.  
Many more signs not written in this gospel of John,  
These provide belief in God so eternal life goes On.*

1. Jesus moves us from Fear to Courage (Verses 19-23):
  - a. Jesus came to them
  - b. He reassured them
  - c. He commissioned them
  - d. He enabled them

**John 20:19 (NIV), On the evening of that first day of the week,**

- The calendar has changed and the first day of the week is now called Sunday,
- We see here and in the book of Acts that the Sabbath observance has moved to Sunday when Jesus, after His resurrection, repeatedly met with the body of believers, now called the church, on Sunday.

**John 20:19 (NIV), On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" 20) After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord.**

**21) Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." 22) And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. 23) If you forgive anyone's sins, their sins are forgiven; if you do not forgive (NTE: retain) them, they are not forgiven (retained)."**

- The better translation of the Greek here is “retain” not “forgiven” as the NIV translated it.
- So this means that the disciples weren’t given the godly authority to forgive sins.
- As the disciples shared the gospel message, some accepted that forgiveness while others didn’t, even though we know that all were forgiven at the cross.

**John 20:22 (Mirror), Having said this he breathed an effusion of spirit upon them and said, “Take Holy Spirit as your companion.”**

Mirror Commentary of this verse:

- Having breathed on them, the Greek word is *enephusēsen*.
- First aorist active indicative of *emphusaō*, late verb, here only in N.T. though eleven times in the Septuagint and in the papyri.
- It was a symbolic act with the same word used in the Septuagint when God breathed the breath of life upon Adam (Gen 2:7).
- It occurs also in Ezek. 37:9. See Christ’s promise in John 16:23. The word lambano, to take what is one’s own, to take to one’s self, to associate with one’s self as companion.
- Jesus gives the disciples a foretaste of Pentecost.

**John 20:23 (Mirror), “If you forgive someone’s sins, they are gone and forgotten. If you don’t let go, then you are stuck with them.”**

Mirror Commentary of this verse:

- *Aphiēmi*: to let go, to divorce, to leave behind, to forgive;
- *Krateō*: to seize.
- In the context of what has happened on the cross and here emphasized in the previous 3 verses, the basis of true forgiveness is the death and closure that Jesus brought to whatever it was that testified against us.
- His glorious resurrection and the companionship of Holy Spirit as the very breath of our *zoe*-life are the essence and authority of our commission which is to announce mankind’s redeemed innocence!
- So when we share the Gospel message, when we share our story and testimony, they may not know that their sins have been forgiven too.
- The work of Adam has been overcome by the work that Jesus had accomplished for us – we are no longer separated from God by our sins.

2. The disciples then moved from Unbelief to Confidence (Verses 24-28):

**24) Now Thomas (also known as Didymus), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. 25) So the other disciples told him, “We have seen the Lord!”**

- What does it mean for us, like Thomas, when were not together hearing that peace from God given to us?
- We have to suffer with our doubts like Thomas did.
- With the disheartening news we watch, it’s so easy to get caught up in despair.

**25b) But he said to them, “Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe.”**

- Doubting is different than unbelief.
- Doubt means “I can’t believe” or “I won’t believe.”
- Unbelief is a state where we need some proof.
- Thomas wanted to see some proof.
- So, Jesus addresses Thomas’ lack of faith. He didn’t berate him.

**26) A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you!” 27) Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe (NTE: Don’t be faithless! Just Believe!; Mirror: Replace your skepticism with persuasion!)” 28) Thomas said to him, “My Lord and my God!”**

- Jesus told them and is also telling us, “Peace be with you” in spite of what’s happening everywhere.
- Peace be with you as you are facing that cancer, peace be with you as you are in the hospital away from your family, peace be with you as you go through that chemo treatment, peace be with you as you are lying in bed becoming a shadow of who you used to be.
- Peace be with you as you are facing pain, peace be with you as you find it hard to walk as you are facing hip replacement; peace be with you as you are facing things at work that are difficult.
- Jesus is saying today, “Peace be with you.” He’s not necessarily saying, “Pick up your mat and walk.”
- Paul tells us that Jesus’ peace is overwhelming, which we can’t put into words.
- God gives us His peace today along with His courage and His wisdom.
- And He also gives us temperance and justice.
- And with Jesus’ peace, we can face death courageously, as the first century Christians did under persecution.

3. The disciples moved from death to life (Verses 29-31):

**29) Then Jesus told him, “Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”**

- You know, that none of us have seen Jesus, yet we believe.

**30) Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. 31) But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.**

- This is zoe-life, life for all eternity.
- We have that life now and that’s what provides our amazing peace.
- This is the peace that Paul describes as “surpassing all understanding.”

- Pastor Craig re-assures us that we are above all the strife and distress that exists in our world today because we have that peace that Jesus gave us.
- That's the Good News of the Gospel today

In Summary of John 20:19 – 31 (Let's say this together):

*Behind locked doors, disciples are Afraid,  
Jesus appears among them, now they're Dismayed.  
Overcome with Joy now that He's Here,  
He declares "Peace be with you," no need to Fear.*

*Receiving the Holy Spirit, and to be sent Out,  
Sins forgiven their message was About.  
Thomas not with them, he hears the Good News,  
From his doubt, he's singin' the Blues.*

*One week later, and the doors still Locked,  
But Thomas now there, he's about to be Shocked.  
"Peace be with you!", now once More.  
Thomas' faith Jesus will Restore.*

*Thomas now believes, "My Lord and My God!"  
But belief without sight Jesus gives the Nod.  
Many more signs not written in this gospel of John,  
These provide belief in God so eternal life goes On.*

Communion:

(Closing prayer)