

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

John: Believing On The Christ, The Son Of God, For Eternal Life Part XLVII: Trusting In Christ For His Resurrection Evidence To His Disciples (John 20:19-23)

I. Introduction

- A. John's Gospel presents Jesus as the Son of God Who was full of grace and "truth," and the events surrounding His death, burial and resurrection reveal His truth and grace in claiming to be the Son of God and Messiah.
- B. For our edification, we view the evidence of His bodily resurrection in His meeting with His disciples:

II. Trusting In Christ For His Resurrection Evidence To His Disciples, John 20:19-23.

- A. Jesus first revealed Himself to be the **true** Son of God and Messiah Who had risen, John 20:19-20:
 - 1. The evening of the day He rose from the dead, Jesus appeared to His disciples in private, telling them, "Peace be unto you," and He showed them His pierced hands and side to prove He arose, John 20:19-20a.
 - 2. The disciples were so sure they were seeing the risen Lord, they were "overjoyed," John 20:20b NIV.
- B. Jesus then revealed Himself to be the **gracious** Son of God and Messiah Who had risen, John 20:21-23:
 - 1. The Lord graciously repeated His call for peace to be to His disciples further to settle them, John 20:21a.
 - 2. Then, He graciously claimed that as His Father in heaven had sent Him into the world, He was now sending them as His representatives to make disciples of the nations, John 20:21b with Matthew 28:19-20.
 - 3. However, these men hiding behind closed doors need empowering and gifting to disciple the world as God's representatives, so Jesus graciously breathed on them and said, "Receive ye the Holy Spirit," John 20:22. The word for "spirit" here is *pneuma*, meaning "wind, breath, the breathing out of air, spirit" (U. B. S. Grk. N. T., 1966, p. 409; Arndt & Gingrich, A Grk.-Eng. Lex. of the N. T., 1967, p. 680-685), so this "breathing out" action by Jesus was symbolic of the disciples' receiving the Holy Spirit.
 - 4. As the Spirit was later formally given to them at Pentecost (Acts 2), this event was "a partial limited gift of knowledge, understanding, and empowerment until Pentecost," Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 343.
 - 5. However, going even further in His gracious ministry unto them, Christ said, "Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained," John 20:23, which statement needs an explanation in depth due to great misunderstandings in Church History (as follows):
 - a. The Baltimore Catechism of the Roman Catholic Church relies in part on this verse to assert that "Confession is the telling of our sins to an authorized priest for the purpose of obtaining forgiveness," Loraine Boettner, Roman Catholicism, 1978, p. 196.
 - b. However, the Greek text at this verse reveals the disciples were **not** given power to *forgive* or to *retain sins*: (1) the Greek word for the KJV "remit," *aphiemi*, meaning here "pardon" (U. B. S. Grk. N. T., 1966, p. 409; Arndt & Gingrich, A Grk.-Eng. Lex. of the N. T., 1967, p. 125-126), is initially written in the second person subjunctive active (*aphete*, Ibid., U. B. S. Grk. N. T.; The Analyt. Grk. Lex. (Zon.), 1972, p. 61, and then in the third person plural perfect indicative passive (*apheontai*, Ibid., U. B. S. Grk. N. T.; Ibid., The Analyt. Grk. Lex.). John 20:23a should then read, "Whose soever sins you might pardon they already have been pardoned in the past with the result that they are permanently pardoned!" (2) Then, the Greek text's word for the KJV "retain," *krateo*, meaning here "retain" (Ibid., Arndt & Gingrich, p. 449-450), is initially written in the second person subjunctive active (*kratete*, Ibid., The Analyt. Grk. Lex., p. 239) and then in the third person plural perfect indicative passive (*kekratentai*, Ibid., U. B. S. Grk. N. T.; Ibid., The Analyt. Grk. Lex., p. 228). John 20:23b should then read, ". . . whose soever sins you might retain they already have been retained in the past with the result that they are permanently retained!"
 - c. Thus, Christ was informing the disciples that they would **announce God's verdicts** as **His messengers**, **not** themselves *forgive* or *retain* men's sins, Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 343. It was thus a great act of **grace** by which God would equip men to herald as His messengers God's great truths to the world!

Lesson: *The day He rose, Jesus showed Himself to be the TRUE Son of God and Messiah in proving to the disciples He had truly bodily risen, and He showed Himself to be the GRACIOUS Son of God and Messiah by encouraging, empowering and assigning His disciples the work of heralding God's great truths to the world.*

Application: *(1) May we trust in Jesus, the truly risen Lord, to be saved, John 3:16. (2) May we rely on the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit and the spiritual gift He provides to serve the Lord in power for God's glory! (3) May we not go to any mortal man to be forgiven of our sins, but go to God alone instead, Colossians 1:14; 1 John 1:9.*