

## As the Father Has Sent Me, So I Send You

John 20:19–23

**MAIN IDEA:** The risen Jesus sends His disciples into the world with His authority, His peace, and the power of the Holy Spirit to proclaim the forgiveness of sins in His name.

**BACKGROUND / CONTEXT:** At this point in the “Sent by the Savior” series, we have traced the mission of Christ step by step. In Matthew 28, we saw Christ’s authority to send His church. In Matthew 9, we saw Christ’s compassion for the lost, who were like sheep without a shepherd. In 1 Corinthians 15, we saw the message of the gospel we proclaim. In Acts 1:8, we saw the power of the Holy Spirit for witness. In Acts 2, we saw the response to the gospel and the formation of the church. In 2 Timothy 2, we saw how the gospel must be entrusted to faithful people and multiplied. Now we step back to the evening of the resurrection itself. This moment in John 20 takes place before the church begins its mission. Jesus has risen from the dead. The disciples are gathered together behind locked doors, afraid and uncertain. And what does the risen Christ do? He comes to them, strengthens them, and sends them. John gives us a unique version of the Great Commission—one that emphasizes: the peace Christ gives, the sending Christ commands, the Spirit Christ provides, and the message of forgiveness Christ entrusts. In other words, John shows us how the mission begins in the hearts of the disciples themselves. The resurrected Christ personally commissions His followers to continue His mission, just as the Father sent Him to bring salvation to the world. Because Jesus sends us as He was sent, we faithfully proclaim the message of forgiveness through Christ, relying on the Spirit’s power and resting in His peace.

### 1. The Risen Christ Brings Peace to Fearful Disciples (vv. 19–20)

#### A. The disciples are locked in fear.

- “The doors were locked... because of fear of the Jews.”
- These are the same men who will soon preach boldly.

#### B. Jesus appears in their midst.

- “Jesus came, stood among them...”
- The resurrection body of Christ demonstrates His victory over death.

#### C. Jesus speaks peace.

- “Peace be with you.”
- This peace is not merely emotional comfort. It is the peace purchased by the cross. Romans 5:1 teaches that we now have peace with God through Christ.

#### D. Jesus shows His wounds.

- Proof of the resurrection
- The mission they will carry is grounded in a crucified and risen Savior.

E. **Application:** Before Jesus sends His disciples out, He first settles their hearts in Him. We cannot effectively proclaim Christ if we are still living in fear or uncertainty about Him. Therefore, we should rest in the finished work of Christ. Remember that our mission is grounded in a risen Savior, not human strength. It is difficult to tell people about something we ourselves are unsure of. But when someone has truly experienced peace with God, they speak about Christ naturally.

### 2. The Risen Christ Sends His Disciples Into the World (v.21)

#### A. The mission mirrors Christ’s mission

- Jesus says: “As the Father sent Me...”; this tells us how the church is sent. Christ came in humility, obedience, compassion, proclaiming the Kingdom, bringing salvation. Now the church continues that mission.

#### B. The Church is sent, not stationary.

- Christianity is not meant to remain inside the walls of a church building. The church is a sent people.

#### C. The mission is personal.

- Jesus did not simply say: “The church will go.” He says, “I send you.” Every believer has a place in the mission.

D. **Application:** Ask yourself: “Where has God placed me?” “Who around me needs to hear about Jesus Christ?” Your mission field begins with those around you. God places believers strategically in communities so the gospel spreads relationally.

### 3. The Risen Christ Provides the Power of the Spirit (v. 22)

#### A. The mission requires divine power.

- The disciples could not accomplish the mission on their own.
- This echoes what we saw in Acts 1:8: “You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you.”

#### B. The symbolism of breathing.

- This echoes Genesis 2:7, where God breathes life into Adam. Now Christ breathes new life into a new mission.

#### C. The Spirit empowers witness.

- The Spirit convicts sinners, strengthens believers, and guides the church.

D. **Application:** Evangelism does not depend on personality or skill. It depends on the Spirit of God. What we should do is pray before conversations and depend on the Spirit when speaking about Christ.

### 4. The Church Proclaims the Forgiveness of Sins (v. 23)

#### “If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them...”

NOTE: This verse is often misunderstood. Jesus is not giving the church authority to forgive sins personally. Only God forgives sins. Instead, Jesus is speaking about proclaiming the terms of forgiveness.

#### A. The church declares the gospel

- When we proclaim the gospel, we declare: those who repent and believe are forgiven, and those who reject Christ remain in their sins.

#### B. The authority comes from the gospel itself

- The church simply announces what God has already determined.

#### C. The message of the mission

- The mission of the church is not moral advice. It is the announcement of forgiveness of sins through Christ. Luke 24:47 summarizes the task at hand: “Repentance for forgiveness of sins will be proclaimed in His name.”

#### D. Application:

- When we share the gospel, we are telling people: forgiveness is available, reconciliation with God is possible, and Christ has already paid the price for us. A herald does not invent the king’s message; he simply delivers it. The church is the herald of God’s message of forgiveness.

**Closing Exhortation:** *The disciples began this passage fearful, hiding, and uncertain. But after encountering the risen Christ they became bold witnesses to the world. The same Christ now sends His church. And the same mission continues today. The question is not: “Has Christ sent His church?” The question is: “Will we faithfully go where He sends us and speak the message He has entrusted to us?”*