

Finding Peace Through Faith: Lessons from Thomas and the Disciples

In a world filled with uncertainty and fear, the promise of true peace seems elusive. Yet in John chapter 20, we discover that lasting peace isn't found in our circumstances, but in our relationship with Jesus Christ.

What Does True Peace Look Like?

On that first Easter evening, the disciples were huddled together behind locked doors, paralyzed by fear. They worried about their safety, wondering if the religious leaders who crucified Jesus would come for them next. Into this atmosphere of anxiety and terror, Jesus appeared with a simple but profound greeting: "Peace be with you."

These weren't just comforting words to calm their nerves. Jesus was fulfilling a promise he had made earlier in John 16:33: "I have told you these things so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."

Peace Comes Through Victory Over Sin and Death

When Jesus declared "I have overcome the world," he was announcing victory over death, sin, hell, and separation from God. He had conquered the powers of darkness that work in this world. This victory becomes the foundation for the peace he offers.

The peace Jesus brings isn't temporary relief from life's troubles—it's the deep, lasting peace that comes from being reconciled to God. As Paul would later call it, this is "the gospel of peace" (Ephesians 6:15).

How Do We Experience This Peace?

True peace can only enter our lives when we are at peace with God through faith in Jesus. This is beautifully illustrated in Luke 7, where a woman with a sinful past falls at Jesus' feet in tears. After Jesus declares her sins forgiven, he tells her, "Go in peace."

The connection is clear: forgiveness leads to peace. When we understand that our sins are forgiven through Christ's sacrifice, we can leave behind the guilt, shame, and remorse that plague our hearts.

What Is Our Mission as Believers?

After greeting the disciples with peace, Jesus immediately commissioned them: "As the Father has sent me, I am sending you" (John 20:21). This wasn't just for the original disciples—it's for every follower of Christ today.

Living Life on Mission

Being sent by Jesus means:

- Telling others about what Christ has done in your life
- Living with integrity, character, and compassion
- Serving others with gentleness, patience, and love
- Not being afraid to share your faith when opportunities arise

This doesn't require perfection or having all the answers. Jesus doesn't send us out in our own power. He breathed on the disciples and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit." The same Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead empowers us for mission today.

What About Doubt and Skepticism?

Thomas wasn't present when Jesus first appeared to the disciples. When they told him they had seen the Lord, Thomas responded with skepticism: "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" (John 20:25).

Why Did Jesus Rebuke Thomas?

A week later, Jesus appeared again and directly addressed Thomas's doubt. He showed Thomas his hands and side, then said, "Stop doubting and believe." But why the rebuke?

Jesus wasn't condemning honest questions or struggles with faith. Rather, he was pointing out that Thomas should have believed based on the eyewitness testimony of his fellow disciples. They had seen the risen Lord and testified to this truth—that should have been sufficient evidence.

The Foundation of Our Faith

This principle is crucial for believers today. Our faith isn't blind faith—it's built on the solid foundation of eyewitness testimony. As John wrote in 1 John 1:1-3: "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched—this we proclaim concerning the Word of life."

The apostles saw, heard, and touched the risen Christ. They were martyred for their testimony. This eyewitness foundation gives us confidence in our faith today.

What Is the Greatest Declaration of Faith?

When Thomas finally saw Jesus, his response was immediate and profound: "My Lord and my God!" (John 20:28). This declaration acknowledges both Jesus' deity and his lordship—recognizing his resurrection and submitting to his authority.

This confession represents the heart of Christian faith: Jesus is both Lord and God.

Why Did John Write His Gospel?

John concludes this section by explaining his purpose: "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" (John 20:31).

Every miracle, every teaching, every encounter John recorded was chosen to help readers come to faith in Jesus Christ. The goal isn't just intellectual understanding—it's believing faith that leads to eternal life.

Life Application

This week, ask God to give you the courage and strength to live your life on mission. Look for opportunities to share what Jesus has done in your life with others. Remember that you're not doing this in your own power—the Holy Spirit empowers you for this calling.

Consider these questions:

- Do you truly experience the peace that comes from knowing your sins are forgiven through Christ?
- Are you living as someone who has been sent by Jesus to share his love with others?
- When doubts arise, do you turn to the solid foundation of Scripture and the testimony of those who witnessed Christ's resurrection?
- Can you honestly say with Thomas, "My Lord and my God," acknowledging Jesus as both your Savior and the Lord of your life?

The peace Jesus offers isn't dependent on your circumstances—it flows from the victory he won over sin and death. This peace becomes the foundation for a life lived on mission, sharing the good news that others can experience this same peace through faith in Christ.