

## Resurrection Aftershocks

John 20.19-23

Happy Easter (again)! We are looking at some post-resurrection appearances of Jesus this Easter season because there is much to be gleaned. Here are some questions to guide you in your study of this short section in John as you look forward to this week's Life Group. You don't need to answer each question; do what you can, not what you cannot!

Pastor Eric

---

*Group Discussion:* Unless you're relatively new to California, you've experienced an earthquake. Do you have a particular earthquake memory?

Read over John 20.19-23 and make special note of what confuses you here. Why are the disciples afraid of the Jewish leaders? They're hiding behind locked doors, but what else do you imagine they're doing or talking about? Twice Jesus greets them with "Peace be with you." Although this was (and is) the standard greeting (*shalom*), do you think there's something deeper to Jesus' greeting here?

Luke 24.36-49 appears to relate the same story. There, Luke says they don't recognize Jesus. Why not? Does it surprise you that Jesus' resurrected body still had the scars from his crucifixion? Why might God have allowed for that? Does NT Wright's statement below, make sense to you?

"It seems that the gospel writers were trying to explain something for which they didn't have a precise vocabulary."

NT Wright, *Simply Christian*

There's a two-fold act of Jesus here. One comes through his words in verse 21. What is Jesus doing there? The second act, related in verse 22, accompanies it. Is Jesus' Spirit really entering them there, is it a symbol of what would happen on the Day of Pentecost in Acts 2, or is it something else? If he's really giving them his Spirit, what's the difference between this inbreathing and Acts 2? What is the connection between the two actions of verses 21 and 22? Finally, what do you make of verse 23?

Clearly, the resurrection precedes *and* anticipates Jesus pouring out his Spirit (cf John 7.39). What does it mean *to you* that the Spirit Jesus gives is *his* Spirit (as well as the Spirit of God)? Second, the resurrection precedes *and* anticipates Jesus sending out his disciples to continue the mission he began. Thus, verse 23 is the disciples' call to declare *God's* forgiveness to those who repent and believe, or to withhold it from those who do not.

"As the Father has sent me, I am sending *you*."

John 20.21

Since the disciples are the embryo of the church, those who are part of the church have inherited the same Spirit and the same mission. Why did I make the claim in the sermon that our mission totally depends on Jesus' Spirit? To what degree is that true, and what does that mean to you as a mission member? How can it also be true that the mission is totally dependent upon us? What does that mean to you, personally? What should you change or do to make that more central to your purpose in life? How might that change your daily life?