



## Peace be with you: Comfort and Commission

If you have a pattern of having someone share their *Story of Faith* (life before Jesus, encountering Jesus, life since/lately with Jesus) and/or sharing *Evidences of God's grace*, begin with that, followed by a time of thankful prayer for Christ's work in the individual's life/the grace in your lives.

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### OPENING COMMENT

Having experienced the death of their leader and fearing the probable wrath of the Jewish leaders the disciples find themselves scared and locked in a room. The miraculous appearance of Jesus brought them a great deal of Peace, as it validated the teachings of Jesus and their faith in Him, yet it set their lives on a path of continued trust and reliance on Him, His teaching, and His ultimate purposes. Bolstered by the empowerment of the Spirit they were able to accomplish all that Jesus has set out for them to accomplish.

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### READ THE TEXT: John 20:19-23

On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews,<sup>[a]</sup> Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you." When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you." And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you withhold forgiveness from any, it is withheld."



## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. In what ways over the last year have you been able to relate to the fear the disciples were feeling after the execution of Jesus?
2. How has the bodily resurrection of Christ help comfort you as you walk through those valleys? Do you have tangible experiences of the peace of God being present in your life through difficulty?
3. How does being sent by the Father as the son was sent reframe our understanding of our mission? Suffering? Purposes?
4. How does understanding Jesus earthly mission as a saving one, instead of a condemning one, frame our interactions with the world?
5. 1 Corinthians 12-14 indicates that the Spirit empowers each differently for the purpose of building up the body of Christ. How have you been gifted by the Spirit and how are you employing those gifts to build the body of Christ?
6. Given that the authority of the Gospel, the forgiveness of sin for those who would believe, has been given to us to declare how should we interact with our community?
7. Even in church discipline (Matt 18:15-18) the relational trajectory is toward reconciliation. How then should we approach those who have wronged us or been found in sin?

## CONCLUSION

The peace of God is both a soothing salve in times of trouble and a battle cry reverberating to all who would call Jesus Lord. It is in the peace of God that we are commissioned to follow in Jesus footsteps and bring the forgiveness and grace of God to those who are lost, just as Jesus did. We can have confidence because we have been empowered by the Holy Spirit to accomplish this monumental task and given the authority found in Christ to boldly declare the gospel, the saving work of Jesus, to everyone in our path.

## SHARE & PRAY

- Share how you can pray for each other in light of this study.
- Conclude by spending some time praying for one another, for the areas of growth and grace you are seeking, and the needs among you.

