

Notes for the Ones Called-Out to Meet

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Resurrection: Peace, Proof, Prophecy, Purpose and Power

by Dan Trygg

“When therefore it was evening, on that day, the first day of the week, and when the doors were shut where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, ... Jesus came and stood in their midst, and said to them, ‘Peace to you.’²⁰ And when He had said this, He showed them both His hands and His side. So the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord.²¹ Then Jesus said to them again, ‘Peace to you; as the Father has sent Me, I also send you.’²² And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit.’”

John 20:19-22

“He said to them, ‘Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and rise again from the dead the third day;⁴⁷ and that repentance for forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem.⁴⁸ You are witnesses of these things.⁴⁹ And behold, I am sending forth the promise of My Father upon you; but you are to stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.’”

Luke 24:46-49

If we stop and reflect on Jesus’ appearance to the apostles on that Resurrection Sunday, there are five important themes that emerge, ... five things that Jesus expressed that evening:

The first thing the Lord said, when He suddenly appeared in their midst, was “Peace to you!” The concept of *peace* was much more than “calm yourself”, or “be at ease”. Because of their Jewish background, **their minds would have thought in terms of the Hebrew word, “shalom”, which meant “all is well”.** His living presence among His friends, who *had been* grieving His death, was good news enough, but this was *much more* than they could imagine. **In the midst of the horror, turmoil and fear they had been living in, Jesus’ presence and word to them was “all is well”.** In the Hebrew Scriptures, God was known as Yahweh-Shalom (Jdg. 6:24), and the priestly blessing was a prayer for God to give peace to His people (Num. 6:24-26). The Messiah was said to be the Prince of Peace, who would usher in a kingdom and peace that would be unending (Isa. 9:6,7). In fact, the Messiah Himself would be our Peace (Mic. 5:2-5a), so **these were meaningful and fitting first words for Jesus to speak, even in spite of His sudden and startling appearance among them.**

The second thing Jesus did was to show them proof of His bodily resurrection. In Luke 24:38-43, “He said to them, ‘Why are you troubled, and *why do doubts arise in your hearts?* See My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself; *touch Me* and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have. And when He had said this, He *showed them* His hands and His feet. While they still could not believe it because of their joy and amazement, He said to them, ‘Have you anything here to eat?’ They gave Him a piece of a broiled fish; and He took it and *ate it* before them.” **The bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ is one of the most well-documented events of history.** If we follow accepted methods of establishing historical fact, the case for Jesus’ resurrection is incredible! **What evidence do we have? (1.) The empty tomb** – Without an empty tomb, the claim of resurrection is meaningless. To refute the resurrection, all that would have been necessary was to produce the body. The body was *missing!* **(2.) The condition of the graveclothes** – It is clear that the grave clothes were left behind. The record indicates they remained “twirled up”, and their appearance immediately inspired faith in those who saw them (Jn. 20:1-8). Apparently, they were in the shape of a body, but the body was missing *from inside of them!* **(3.) Jesus’ post-resurrection appearances** - to over 500 eyewitnesses, in different locations, at different times, over a 40 day period, often without any expectation, where He asked them to touch and feel Him, put their fingers into His wounds, where He ate food before them to establish His physicality, and had extended conversations with them! **(4.) The dramatic change in the disciples** - from hiding as cowards to boldly preaching in public, they were willing to endure poverty, hardship, face persecution and even death for their testimony! **(5.) The coming of the Holy Spirit, the birth of the Church and the testimonies of Christians throughout the centuries** who have been radically transformed by faith in Him.

The third thing Jesus spoke of was fulfilled prophecy. In Luke 24, Jesus had two separate “Bible studies” on this subject. The first was with the two disciples on the road to Emmaus. When they explained their confusion and despair at the death of their Master, Jesus declared, “O foolish men and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into His glory?” Then beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures” (vss. 25-27). Then, later that evening, when He appeared to His apostles in the upper room, He reminded them that He had told them that “‘...all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.’ Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures” (vss. 44-45). Those would have been some awesome studies to listen in on! **If you do a Google search for “How many Messianic prophecies did Jesus fulfill?” you will find charts and listings of well over 300 fulfilled prophecies about Jesus. One site even states that there are at minimum 414 examples of fulfilled prophecies and clear foreshadowings of Christ in**

the OT. Jews for Jesus has a chart of 365 Messianic prophecies fulfilled in Christ. **This was a vital part of the preaching of the apostles and the early church. *There is no other religious figure in history, or religious teaching, that has anything like this!*** In attempting to grasp the astronomical impossibility of any person randomly fulfilling these, Professor Peter Stoner attempted to apply principles of probability and statistics to just eight messianic prophecies. What would be the chance of a ruler born in Bethlehem (Mic. 5:2), who had a forerunner announce his coming (Mal. 3:1), who would ride into Jerusalem on a donkey's colt (Zech. 9:9), would be betrayed by a friend for 30 pieces of silver and suffer wounds in his hands (Zech. 11:12; 13:6), but the silver would be thrown down in the Temple and was given to a potter (Zech. 11:13), and this same man would be innocent, but be betrayed, oppressed, afflicted, and yet never say a word in His defense (Isa. 53:7), and would have his hands and feet pierced by his enemies (Psa. 22:16)? Using conservative estimations, the combined probability of just these eight prophecies happening by chance is about 1 out of 10²⁷. That would be like covering the state of Texas two feet deep in Girl Scout thin mint cookies, licking the chocolate off of *one* cookie, throwing it back in with the rest, somehow mixing up the whole batch and spreading it out evenly across the state, blindfolding yourself, wandering across the state for a week, and then reaching down to grab a cookie, and to *happen* to pick the one cookie without any chocolate on it. *That* example is only dealing with *eight* prophecies! **When you consider that there are literally *hundreds* of Biblical prophecies that would predict not only *who* this Messiah would be, but *why* it was necessary for Him to die, to *describe in detail* the manner of His suffering and death, and that *He would even rise from the dead* on the third day, and that repentance for the forgiveness of sins should be preached to the nations in His name, ...well, the thought that these events could take place *by chance* is virtually impossible. Fulfilled prophecy is such a powerful, *compelling* argument that Jesus *is* God's man, the Messiah, and His death and resurrection for us *is* God's plan.**

The fourth thing Jesus spoke about was the *purpose* of His coming, His death and His resurrection. In the gospel of John, Jesus said, "**As the Father has sent Me, I also *send you.***" Send them? **For *what?*** In Luke's account Jesus declared that "...upon His (Jesus') name repentance unto forgiveness of sins is to be preached unto all nations." In Matthew's account, before His ascension into heaven, Jesus charged His followers to "make disciples of all nations, baptizing them... and teaching them to obey all that I commanded you" (28:19). **God's purpose has been the same throughout the centuries, to call out for Himself a people who are willing to walk with Him and do His will** (Ex. 19:3-6; I Pet. 2:9,10). Now that Jesus, the Seed of the woman, had crushed the head of the serpent (Gen. 3:15), the forgiveness of sin and the freedom from the curse could be proclaimed to *all* people, *everywhere*. Jesus had even defeated death and the grave! Truly, this was *shalom*, indeed! **The work of salvation had been accomplished, now the word of salvation needed to be proclaimed abroad!** The message of repentance was an *exciting* message, a *good news* message! It was proclaiming good news of peace with God, forgiveness of sins to all who will call upon the name of Jesus as Lord. The focus of the gospel message was not primarily *inward*, it was *outward*! It was the proclamation of *shalom* to all people. **Those who *heard*, and *truly understood*, had to respond and tell others. God's mission was not *over*; it was just *entering a new stage*.** The Kingdom of God was about to spread like leaven, and the message of *shalom* between God and men would be carried abroad *by those infected with Kingdom life*.

This brings us to the fifth theme from that Resurrection Sunday evening: We need the *power* of the Holy Spirit to fulfill our calling and accomplish the mission Christ gives to us. In John's account, Jesus breathes on them, and commands them, "Receive Holy Spirit." Some have misunderstood what this means. It is clear that **they did not actually receive the Spirit until the day of Pentecost** (Acts 2). Peter speaks of this in Acts 10:47; 11:15-17, when he compares the experience of when the Spirit came upon the first Gentiles, with his experience at Pentecost. **Thus, what Jesus is doing in John 20:22 was a *prophetic command*.** The word "receive" can also mean "take". Jesus is identifying the Holy Spirit with *His own breath* (the word for "Spirit" can also mean "wind" or "breath"). The fact that they did not actually receive the person of the Holy Spirit that evening, however, is clear, ...because He tells them to "*wait* for the promise of the Father", which is equivalent to being "clothed with power from on high". In Acts 1:8, Jesus tells them, "you will *take/receive* power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you." Obviously, then, they did not have the Holy Spirit in that way, yet. In Acts 2, when the Holy Spirit comes upon the gathering of believers, and Peter explains what had taken place, He tells the crowd who Jesus was, what He had accomplished, and how God had exalted Him. He then tells the crowd, "***Repent, and be baptized ...into the name of Jesus Christ unto the forgiveness of sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, for the promise is for you and your children and for all who are afar off, as many as the Lord shall call to Himself***" (vs. 38). **God's plan is that we all receive and walk in the *power* of the Holy Spirit.** This was a crucial focal point of early church preaching.

These same five ingredients are essential to our ministry today. From the excitement of the *shalom-peace*, to the content of the proofs and prophecies, let us forget our purpose: to proclaim the peace of God in the power of the Spirit to all people. Jesus did the *work of salvation*; we are to *bring the word*, and *make disciples*.