

## **Come Holy Spirit**

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*When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors were locked where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you."<sup>20</sup> After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord.<sup>21</sup> Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you."<sup>22</sup> When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit.<sup>23</sup> If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."<sup>24</sup> But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came.<sup>25</sup> So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe."<sup>26</sup> A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you."<sup>27</sup> Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe."<sup>28</sup> Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!"<sup>29</sup> Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe."<sup>30</sup> Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples that are not written in this book.<sup>31</sup> But these are written so that you may continue to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name (John 20:19-31).*

### **1. The Shortest Sermon**

Last Sunday, someone gave me a sermon idea for today. She said there was a pastor who preached the shortest sermon on Holy Humor Sunday. The pastor got up and preached on sin. He said, "don't do it. Amen." Then the pastor sat down.

I thought of doing the same thing for this Sunday. But I felt the writer of John's Gospel might feel a little disappointed. So I'd like to share about how we can be filled with joy in the resurrection of Jesus Christ always.

### **2. The Story of the Resurrection of Jesus**

Last Sunday, we celebrated the resurrection of Jesus. How many people do you think believe that Jesus rose from the dead? Although

Christianity is the world's largest religion, only 31% of the population are Christians. That means 69% of people don't believe in Jesus.

What about the people in the time of Jesus? Do you think it was easier for them to believe that Jesus rose from the dead? Not at all. Believing that Jesus rose from the dead was difficult even for the disciples of Jesus.

Verse 19 and the following tells us what the disciples did after Jesus rose from the dead. ***"When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors were locked where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." 20 After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord."***

When Jesus was arrested, his disciples were almost arrested with him. That is why the disciples met in secret behind locked doors and in fear. The Sunday night after Jesus rose from the dead, Christ visited his disciples. He passed through the doors and stood among them. Jesus showed his pierced hands and his sides to the disciples. When they saw his hands and side, they were overjoyed. We do not know why, but one of the disciples, Thomas, was not with the other disciples.

The other disciples told Thomas that they had seen the risen Jesus. But Thomas said, ***"Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe."***

### 3. My Lord and My God

Verses 24 and the following tell us how Thomas comes to believe in the resurrection of Jesus. ***"A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." 27 Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe." 28 Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!"***

One week later, Jesus appears to the disciples again. This time, Thomas is with the other disciples. Jesus shows Thomas his pierced hands and side and tells him to believe.

Thomas calls Jesus, ***"My Lord and my God."*** When Thomas meets the risen Christ, he is filled with the power of the Holy Spirit and comes to believe that Jesus is not only the Messiah, but God himself.

### 4. Receive the Holy Spirit

After showing his bruised body to the disciples, Jesus says, “**as the father has sent me, so I send you**” (verse 21). At the first meeting with the disciples after his resurrection Jesus commissions the disciples as the living witnesses to his resurrection.

The writer of John’s gospel says in verse 22, “**When he (Jesus) had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit.”** Just as God has breathed the Spirit into Adam, so Jesus is infusing the disciples with his resurrection power. Why do you think Jesus told the disciples to receive the Holy Spirit? The disciples needed to be empowered by the Lord to be witnesses to the resurrection of Christ.

How do we receive the Holy Spirit? Peter says in Acts 2:38, “**Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.**” Peter says, when we acknowledge that we are sinners in need of forgiveness and baptized, the Lord will forgive us, and the Holy Spirit will be given as a gift.

How do we know if we have received the Holy Spirit? 1 Corinthians 12:3 says, “**Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking by the Spirit of God ever says, “Let Jesus be cursed!” and no one can say “Jesus is Lord” except by the Holy Spirit.**” Paul tells us that without the Holy Spirit, we can’t confess that Jesus is the Lord.

## **5. A Caterpillar Turns into a Butterfly**

The resurrection of Jesus is the heart of the Christian message. Christianity and the church are founded on our faith that Jesus rose again. If Jesus did not rise from the dead, there would be no Christianity or church.

How can we convince non-believers to believe in the resurrection of Jesus? Most of us have tried at least once to tell someone about the resurrection of Jesus. Our family, friends or neighbors often might hear the message of our faith. At face value, the resurrection of Jesus seems impossible to those who don’t believe.

But let’s consider something easy to understand like caterpillars transforming into butterflies. Did you know that a caterpillar transforms into a butterfly in just 2-5 weeks on average? The caterpillar goes from a land-only insect to a flying butterfly in a short period of time.

We may not fully understand the mystery of the resurrection of Jesus. But the resurrection of Jesus is what God did. The resurrection of Jesus is a reminder that there is nothing that God cannot do, whether we believe or understand it or not.

## **6. Conclusion**

Why do you think Jesus rose from the dead? And what does the resurrection of Christ mean to us? Christians believe that God created the world and sent Jesus to be his son and our Messiah. Jesus was crucified like a criminal on the cross. Does this happening make any sense to us? Absolutely not. Jesus didn't do anything wrong, and yet he was killed by the crucifixion. This is not fair, and this is why God raised Jesus from the dead.

Jesus is raised from the dead to vindicate that Jesus did not die as a consequence for his own sin. Instead, Jesus died for the sins of all human beings. His death is the redemption that brings each of us back in relationship with God. And Christ's resurrection gives us the hope that we can live with the Lord, forever. Christ is the first fruit of our resurrection at the end of time. That is why Paul says in 1 Thessalonians 4, "**therefore encourage one another with these words.**"

Today, all of Christians wait for the return of Jesus. When Christ returns to the earth, he will reign over God's kingdom. Paul tells us that Jesus will raise all those who have passed at that time.

## 7. Application

If we take a step back and think about it, the resurrection of Jesus can sound ridiculous. However, the resurrection of Christ was the greatest news the disciples ever heard. When the disciples saw that Jesus rose from the dead, they were overjoyed.

Our physical death can often seem so permanent. But can you imagine what joy it will be at the resurrection when we see those who have passed? I can't imagine what it will be like to see David Klotzbach, Gean Richards, Carl Wilson, Joanie Cahoon, Cliff White, Bob Yaeger, Russ Peck, Tom and Nancy Armstrong, Bette Prouty, Alice Cooper, James Kmetz, Judith Frost, Sandra Knight, HaKyung Cho-Kim, Al Marsh, Paul Kerins, Ben Miller, Burt Bouldry, Wayne Terrill, Mary Lou White, Herb Ellis, and Esther Cox.

The resurrection of Jesus is not an easy thing to believe in. However, let us listen to what Jesus said to Thomas in verse 29, "**Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.**"

Although we have not seen Jesus in person, when the Holy Spirit is with us, we can believe in the resurrection of Christ and be witnesses to Christ's resurrection. This is why we pray "Come Holy Spirit" to fill our hearts with a never-ending joy in knowing that Jesus died and rose again for you and me. Amen.