

Introduction: Faith is ‘of things hoped for a confidence, of matters not seen a conviction’ (Hebrews 11:1, YLT – with two ‘Divine passives’). This faith gives people the assurance that even in the darkest valleys, where death becomes a strong possibility, they will not be anxious because they know with certainty God is with them and they will experience His peace, even though circumstances remain dark (Psalm 23:4; Philippians 4:6-7). *** All who live by faith will live joyous lives as they do God’s will to bring others to faith in Jesus, even if they do not see the fruit of their service (2 Corinthians 5:17-21). *** Peter was present when Jesus told Thomas that those having not seen Him, yet believing (He died and rose to life again for them) are blessed. *** Peter later wrote to persecuted brothers and sisters in The Lord Jesus Christ that even though they have not seen Him they love Him, believe in Him and are filled with great joy as by faith they are receiving salvation in their lives (1 Peter 1:8-9). *** David, who received word from Nathan that Messiah would come from his descendants, wrote in one of his songs that those continually fearing The Covenant God and loving Him would be given right desires when He saves them. *** Let’s now look at the context of these great truths.

I. Jesus stands among His disciples late in the day, they are made glad; then, He sends them, commanding they receive The Holy Spirit for discernment concerning forgiveness. (John 20:19-23)

A. Jesus stood before His disciples late on the first day of the week, showed them His wounds and they were made glad. (Verses 19-20)

1. Then being late the same day, the first day of the week, when the doors had been shut where were being the disciples because of fear of the Jews. (Verse 19a)

Time: It is almost sunset, the end of the first day of the week when Jesus was resurrected.

Mood: The disciples fear the Jews because they have not yet processed Jesus’ resurrection.

2. Jesus came and stood in the midst and He is saying to them, ‘Peace unto y’all’. (Verse 19b)

Jesus stands: Jesus gets through the shut doors to stand in the middle (not front) of the disciples.

Shalom: He declares the wholeness of God’s blessing upon them: prosperity, health and peace.

3. Having said this, He showed the hands and the side to them. (Verse 20a)

Show: They are made to see His wounds from being stretched on The Cross and being pierced at death.

4. Then the disciples were made glad, having seen The Lord. (Verse 20b)

Make glad: After Jesus blessed the disciples, showing them His scars, God made them glad. This is what grammarians, interpreters and theologians call the ‘Divine passive’. Whenever people are acted on by an ‘unknown force’ God is always behind the action. God, The Savior is the only source of joy.

See: Here, seeing truly is believing: He IS risen from the dead!

B. Speaking ‘Peace’ to them a second time, He sends them as He had been sent; breathing on them, He commands they receive The Holy Spirit in connection with forgiveness. (Verses 21-23)

1. Then, Jesus said to them again, ‘Peace unto y’all’. (Verse 21a)

Repeat: Now the disciples’ mood has changed from fear to joy, Jesus repeats His blessing of total wholeness to the more receptive followers.

2. ‘Just as The Father had sent Me, I also, I am sending y’all’. (Verse 21b)

Mission: Jesus says the disciples will now carry out His Mission to earth (Matthew 28:18-20). They will be His ambassadors to all people (2 Corinthians 5:17-21); His Body on earth (Ephesians 1:22-23; 4:11-13; Colossians 1:18-20, 24-27).

3. Having said this, He breathed on (them) and is saying to them, ‘Y’all must receive The Holy Spirit’. (Verse 22)

Holy Spirit: Jesus had told them about The Holy Spirit the night of the day He was crucified (John 14:15-27; 15:26-27; 16:5-16). This may be when the disciples were ‘born from above’ (John 3:1-15).

4. ‘If any people y’all may forgive the sins, they had been forgiven to them; if any people y’all may hold unforgiven, they had been held unforgiven’. (Verse 23)

Forgiveness: Because they are now filled with The Holy Spirit, the disciples are able to discern when the sins of people had been forgiven by God due to their faith in Jesus (Ephesians 4:30-32).

Plural: Jesus is not talking about individual disciples and individual sinners. Rather, Spirit filled disciples together have the gift of discerning by faith when corporate sins (of a church) are forgivable.

Jesus gives The Holy Spirit for faith to forgive

II. Thomas set a high bar for believing Jesus’ resurrection and Jesus met it; and, He declared a blessing to those not seeing yet having believed; John issues a call for faith; David proclaimed a blessing for fearing God. (John 20:24-31; Psalm 145:13-20)

A. Thomas was not with the disciples when Jesus came; he says he must see Jesus and touch His wounds to believe; after eight days Jesus stood with Thomas, speaking peace. (John 20:27-29)

1. But Thomas, one of the twelve, being called Didymus, not he was being with them when Jesus came. (Verse 24)

Names: Thomas is Arabic and Didymus is Greek for twin. We don’t know if his brother survived.

Missing: We’re told Thomas was not behind locked doors late in the afternoon of Resurrection Day.

2. Therefore the other disciples were saying to him, ‘We have seen The Lord!’ (Verse 25a)

Excitement: Sometime after Jesus departed from them, the ten disciples are still excited they saw Him!

3. He said to them, ‘If not I may see in His hands the scar of the nails, and I may put my finger in the scar of the nails, and I may put my hand in the side of Him, no way, not I may believe at all!’ (Verse 25b)

Three requests: First, Thomas wants to see the nail scars in Jesus’ hands; second, he wants to put his finger where the nail scars are; third, he wants to put his hand in Jesus’ side.

NO way: Short of that, there is no way, not at all, he will ever believe Jesus has risen from the dead.

4. After eight days, His disciples again were being inside and Thomas with them, Jesus came, the doors had been shut; and, He stood in the midst and said ‘Peace unto y’all’. (Verse 26)

Still fear: The disciples and Thomas, still feel the need for extreme security, despite seeing Jesus alive!

Third time: For the third time, Jesus proclaims wholeness to them, meaning they can be whole in Him, now Thomas hears!

B. Jesus speaks to Thomas what Thomas had said and commands him to believe; he replies, 'My Lord and God'; and Jesus tells him, 'Blessed are those not having seen and believed'. (*John 20:27-29*)

1. Then He is saying to Thomas, 'Thou must be putting the finger of thee here, and thou must see My hands, and thou must be putting the hand of thee and thou must thrust it in My side; and, thou must not be being faithless but faithful'. (*Verse 27*)

Thomas: Imagine how Thomas must have felt when Jesus who was not physically present when he made his three demands gives him four commands to do exactly what Thomas had demanded!

NOT faithless: Then Jesus gives His most important command, negatively and positively: Do not be faithless – be faithful. Believe I came to life forever!

2. Thomas answered and said to Him, 'My Lord and my God'. (*Verse 28*)

My Lord and God: Thomas does a quick and full one-eighty! And, he declares Jesus to be God!

3. Jesus is saying to him (Thomas), 'Because thou had seen Me, thou had believed; blessed the ones not having seen and having believed'. (*Verse 29*)

Because see: Jesus commends Thomas for his faith after He graciously showed Himself alive to him.

Beatitude: Jesus gives a blessing for all who believe without ever seeing Him alive. They will receive The Holy Spirit by faith and be forgiven by The Holy Spirit to forgive (Ephesians 1:13-14; 2:8-10).

Jesus gives The Holy Spirit for faith to forgive

C. John concludes saying Jesus did more signs, but these had been written so all reading might believe Jesus is The Messiah to have life in His Name. (*John 20:30-31*)

1. Then indeed many other signs Jesus did in the presence of His disciples, which not it is being (they) had been written in this book. (*Verse 30*)

Many more signs: John recorded seven miracles in his Gospel. He closes saying Jesus did many more.

2. But these had been written that y'all might believe that Jesus is being the Christ (Anointed – Messiah) The Son of God; and that believing y'all might be having life in His Name. (*Verse 31*)

Result: John was inspired to write for two important results: faith in Messiah Jesus and life in Him. Both faith and life come from The Holy Spirit, along with forgiveness to forgive others (Matthew 6:12).

Jesus gives The Holy Spirit for faith to forgive

D. The Covenant God gives right desires to all continually fearing Him and loving Him, and He will save them. (*Psalms 145:13-20*)

1. Thy Kingdom, kingdom of all eternity / and Thy dominion in all generation and generation. (*Verse 13*)

Eternal Kingdom: The Kingdom of The Covenant God Yahweh is eternal, now in The Lord Jesus.

2. Upholding Yahweh to all falling / raising up to all being bowed down // The eyes of all to Thee will wait (in hope) / and Thou giving to them the food in time of it // Opening thy hand / and satisfying to all life the desire. (*Verses 14-16*)

Five provisions: Yahweh upholds those who fall, raises those being kept down, gives food, opens His hand, and satisfies needs; therefore, all eyes will wait for these provisions in expectant hope.

Human desire: All people have desires and God directs the desires of those who love Him.

3. Righteous Yahweh (is) in all His ways / and kind in all His works. (*Verse 17*)

Kindness: This word comes from the root for God's steadfast LOVE; but, it is also used for a person who is godly by his or her response of love to God for His love.

4. Is near Yahweh to all calling on Him / to all who will call on Him in truth. (*Verse 18*)

Call: God will be present to all who call on Him, especially in truth.

5. The desire of those fearing Him, He will fulfill. (*Verse 19a*)

Desire: A Psalm of David says: All who take great delight in Yahweh, He will give them the desires of their heart. There are eight commands associated with this word of promise. (Psalm 37:3-7)

Reverence: Here David says all who reverentially fear The Covenant God will delight to do His will, and are led by The Holy Spirit who will give them godly desires.

Yahweh fulfills the desire of those fearing Him

6. And their cry He hears and saves them // Preserving Yahweh all loving Him / and all the wicked He will destroy. (*Verses 19b-20*)

Love God: Yahweh saves all who cry to Him in reverential fear and preserves all those who continually love Him.

They have received The Holy Spirit at the moment of salvation by grace through faith and are now forgiven to forgive.

Jesus gives The Holy Spirit for faith to forgive

Wicked: However, the wicked do not respond to God's gracious love. If they continue to harden their hearts to Him, He will destroy them.

7. Praise of Yahweh will speak my mouth / will bless all flesh the Name of His holiness to eternity and forever. (*Verse 21*)

Universal praise: David pledges to praise Yahweh with his mouth; and, prophesies that all flesh will eternally praise Him. This will happen in the new heaven and earth.

Conclusion: Thomas was not with Jesus' disciples late on the first day of the week when He stood among them, showed them His wounds and pronounced 'Peace!' to them. When he heard of this, Thomas demanded he also touch the wounds or he would in no way believe Jesus is alive. Eight days later Jesus stood before Thomas and the others, gave Thomas' words back to him, then commanded he touch the wounds. As Thomas obeyed, he declared Jesus his Lord and God, to which Jesus said blessed are those not having seen and having believed. They have The Holy Spirit to forgive in faith as people in God's Kingdom.

Jesus gives The Holy Spirit for faith to forgive