

THE MOMENT OF AWE! Gospel: John 20:19-31. Rev. Thomas Parrish

If we had been in that upper room on Sunday night of Jesus resurrection and he appeared to us how would we react and how would it affect our lives forever?



John 20:¹⁹ *When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked 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.* ²¹*Jesus said to them again, 'Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.'* ²²*When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.'*

²⁴*But Thomas (who was called the Twin*), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. ²⁵So 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.'*

Truthful Thomas: John's Gospel, is perhaps the most enlightening of all the Gospels, waits to the final two chapters to express the things he thinks are of vital importance for understanding Jesus.

Key among such things is that we meet the risen Jesus today in both His Word and Worship. Jesus appears to the disciples on the first day of the week, and then a week later. This is the first sign that points to weekly worship, and doors shut and locked.



20:1 the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you.

Then one week later: 20:26 Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you.'

On the second occasion, the fact of the shut doors is slightly less pronounced, but the resurrection Gospel is identical; Jesus comes to the disciples; Jesus stands among them; Jesus says, "Peace be with you."

Repetition is important. It means: *Listen! This is essential.* Seeing alone is not believing. *True Believing and Biblical Faith is taking action for Jesus even when we don't control or see the outcome.*

Two important truths: Thomas was not there, and even though they saw the risen Jesus' His followers stayed behind **LOCKED DOORS!**

So, like Thomas, in the end, we can *only* believe. We can *only* trust. **Therefore we need to take action.** It is not enough to say "*I believe.*" Real belief in Jesus means "*I will take action even when I don't know the outcome!*"

John 20:21b *As the Father has sent me, so I send you.'* ²²*When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.'*

What in the world does that mean? Forgive and retain sin!

- Before Jesus was born the only way sin was granted was by temple sacrifice through the shedding of blood.
- Jesus, in his ministry, forgave and healed. But Only Yahweh could do that!

•Jesus is now risen and will soon ascend to heaven.

Then What does He do? He gives the disciples, individual believers, you and me the power to forgive or not forgive just like him.

So how does that work? **Imagine you are talking with a friend.** This friend confides to you that they have held bitterness toward their spouse for the past ten years. As you listen they say, *“I know that’s wrong, so I have asked Jesus to forgive me and I hope he will.”* You have the power and authority to speak for Jesus and say to them: ***“By the power of the Lord Jesus Christ he does forgive you and his shed blood you are now are empowered to live for him.”***

The same story of bitterness but this person says, *“I hope they rot in hell for what they did to me! I’ll never forgive them”* YOU now have the power and authority to say to them: ***“You claim Jesus as Lord and Savior but your personal anger and unforgiveness will not only affect your marriage but from this moment on it will affect your relationship with Jesus. Friend, you will carry that bitterness to your grave and no longer receive Jesus’ forgiveness so long as you hold that anger and fail to repent.”***

You have this power now to speak for Jesus himself. This power to forgive or to withhold forgiveness is one of the greatest powers in the entire universe.

Thomas declared: 19:25 ‘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.’ One week, Sunday night, later: 19: 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!’

The Real Jesus Is:

God In Human Flesh

The Savior Who Hates Sin

The Master Who Serves Us.

He Who Speaks and Lives The Truth In Everything.

The One Who Defeated Sin, Death and The Devil.

The One Who Claims to Be The Only Way Into Heaven.

The One Who Died for You And Me So That We Might Live.

The One Who Is Coming Again to Judge Those Who Do Not Believe In Him Alone.

The Mighty Warrior with The Sharp Double-Edged Sword.

The Way, The Truth and The Life.

Our Creator.

Our Savior.

Our Lord.

The Beginning and The End.

The Same Yesterday, Today and Forever.

The One and Only One We Bow And Obey In All Things.

If we had been in that upper room on Sunday night of Jesus resurrection and he appeared to us how would we react and how would it affect our lives forever?

The answer is obvious: We would be in AWE! Overwhelmed! Overpowered! It would change us dramatically and make Jesus the only focus of our lives.