

Small Group Questions

“Commissioned”

John 20:19-23

Previous message summary: Early on Sunday morning, Mary and the other women come to the grave to anoint Jesus' body with additional spices. When she arrives, she sees that the body of Jesus is no longer in the tomb, and concludes that someone has taken the body. In her conversation with the angels, and with who she thinks is the “gardener,” she asks where the body of her Lord has been taken. When Jesus speaks the name “Mary” she recognizes that she is not talking with the gardener, but with Jesus. In that moment her tragedy is turned to triumph as she realizes that Jesus is alive, and in that moment of excitement, she can't stop clinging to him. Jesus tells her to stop clinging to him and go tell his brothers, the disciples, that he is ascending to “My Father and your Father, to my God and your God.” Jesus sent Mary to spread the good news of the resurrection and to tell the disciples that the resurrection changes everything.

What we learned: The excitement of the resurrection of Jesus compels us to go and share that news with those in our world who need to hear about the power of the resurrection in their life. Now is not the time to selfishly cling to the knowledge of Jesus, but to go and tell others about how the resurrection has changed us and can change things for all people.

Introduction

1. Have you ever tried to accomplish a big task all by yourself? What kind of struggles did you experience by working to complete the task alone?
 - a. What are the advantages of working together with others to complete a task?
 - b. Do you see the church as a place where people work together to accomplish a specific mission? If so, how do you see people working together? If you don't see people working together, what needs to change so that people are unified?

- c. What is the mission of the church?
- d. How can people working together make progress towards accomplishing the mission of the church?

Discussion Questions

Read John 20:19-23

2. What day of the week does Jesus appear to the disciples? What is significant about this day in the history of the church?
 - a. What has already happened earlier this day? Read John 20:1, 3, 11, & 18.
 - b. Is Sunday a special day for you? What does a normal Sunday look like for you and your family?
3. Where are the disciples on this day? Why are they behind locked doors?
 - a. Why would the disciples be afraid of the Jews?
 - b. How has fear kept the disciples from doing what they know Jesus would want them to do? Have you ever experienced fear that keeps you from accomplishing God's will in your life?
4. Who came into the room and what was his message to the disciples?
 - a. What had Jesus promised to the disciples during their last evening together? Read John 14:27 & 16:33.
 - b. Why is the message of “peace” so fitting for the disciples as they sit in fear after the crucifixion of Jesus? Why does Jesus repeat this greeting of peace in verse 21? Who else does Jesus greet with the words “Peace be with you”? Read John 20:26.
 - c. How has the message of Jesus' resurrection brought peace into your life? Have you had opportunity to help others realize peace in their life because of who Jesus is and what he has done for them?

5. What task does Jesus give to the disciples? Read John 20:21; Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16; Luke 24:46-49; and Acts 1:8.
 - a. Who had Jesus appeared to earlier that day, and what was his message to that person? Read John 20:17.
 - b. What is the primary mission of those who follow Jesus?
 - c. How have you seen the church and other Christians effectively accomplish the mission that Jesus gave to the church?
 - d. Has the church ever struggled to stay on mission? What are some things that have distracted the church from accomplishing the mission of Jesus?
6. What does Jesus do to the disciples in verse 22? What do they receive?
 - a. How is this similar to what we read in Genesis 2:7 about God and what he does to Adam?
 - b. What did Jesus promise to the disciples as a result of his glorification? Read John 7:37-39.
 - c. Read Acts 2:1-4. How is what the disciples receive in John 20 different than what happens in Acts 2?
 - d. Can all Christians expect to experience the Holy Spirit like the disciples did in Acts 2? What does Peter say about the gift of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2:38? Can all Christians expect to receive this gift?
 - e. How does the Holy Spirit show up in your life to lead and guide you? Read Galatians 5:22-23.
7. What does Jesus tell the disciples about the message that they will proclaim to the world? Read John 20:23.
 - a. Who is the only one who can forgive sins? Read Luke 5:21-24.

- b. What is the message that the disciples are commissioned to tell all people? Read Acts 2:38; Colossians 1:13-14; and Hebrews 9:22.
- c. How important is it for you to share the message of forgiveness with others? What are some ways that you can effectively proclaim the message that Jesus provides forgiveness to those who repent and believe in him?

Challenge: Jesus' resurrection changes everything for the disciples. They have a new task to share the message of Jesus with a world in need. They have a new life through the power of the Holy Spirit living in them. They have a new authority to boldly and confidently proclaim that forgiveness of sin is possible because of who Jesus is and the work that he has accomplished. As followers of Jesus we need to understand that we too have a new task, a new life, and a new authority to go into our world and announce with certainty that forgiveness of sin is available through Jesus Christ.

Action: This week, I will praise God for the newness of life that I experience because Jesus has overcome the grave!

Next Steps:

- I am so thankful for the new life that is available (for myself and others) in Jesus Christ.
- I need the peace that Christ offers in my life.
- I will look for opportunities to tell others about Jesus.