

05.03.22 – A Weekly Word for Covenant Church

Title: “The Living Jesus Appears”

Scripture Reading: [John 20:19-23](#)

Reflection: Rev. George Vink

Being Christ’s disciple is more than an intellectual experience. It must be more than knowing a certain number of theological propositions, definitive doctrines, or timeless teachings. It’s a lifestyle, a way of doing things involving our feelings, our emotions. Looking closely, we can see it reflected in John’s account of Jesus’ first appearance. Re-read vs 19 slowly. *“On the evening....”* Hear it? Feel it?

Less than 48 hours earlier the teacher, your leader, had cried a mournful, “Why, Why Have You Forsaken Me?” Dying on a cross, Jesus was addressing his Father, but it also applied to his disciples and you. Afraid, Peter had denied knowing Jesus and the others had scattered. Fearful they now huddled, worried, and wondering. The door was locked. The emotion of fear filled the room. Imagine the whispering and wondering taking place. Imagine yourself huddling there with Peter, James, John, and....

Then, out of nowhere, there’s Jesus, standing in your midst. And what does he say? Words of chastisement or a fitting rebuke? No way! Not Jesus! Instead, he speaks words of blessing, words of promise, “Peace be with you!” After looking at his wounds, the emotions burst forth. John puts it simply, “The disciples were overjoyed.” It’s the joy Jesus promised in [John 16:20-22](#). Place yourself in that room, feeling joy now, yet being fearful often enough.

Knowing their need, and anticipating our need, Jesus repeats, “Peace be with you!” Hear the Trinity here. The Son, The Father, and The Spirit are present. The Son speaks of peace, power, and a promise. It’s the peace our fearful hearts need to know. It’s the power we need in order to witness to the living Jesus. It’s the promise of forgiveness so desperately basic to our fulfilling our mission, our mandate as empowered followers.

Pastor Kuyvenhoven put it well in [Twilight](#), “Just as sin is the cause of all human problems, so forgiveness is the beginning of all blessings.” For us, often fearful and lacking joy, it means that when the peace of Christ’s presence is ours, and we rely on the power of the Holy Spirit, the promise of forgiveness will mean experiencing blessings. Blessings revealed in lives free of fear and full of hope. It’s the living Jesus who promises all three. Did you claim them?

Prayer:

Gracious God, our Father and Provider of true peace, amazing power, and the promise of forgiveness, equip us to experience the joy of peace in lives empowered to share that peace with a fear-filled world. Grant again and again the joy of seeing a living Jesus promising to be with us to the end, stilling our fears in doing so. We ask in his name, Amen.

Action Item for the Day/Week:

As a follower knowing that peace, and having the power, resolve to make sure that the promise of forgiveness is a priority in your life. Have a “little talk” with Jesus and ask him to show you where which one is most needed in your life.

Songs for today:

[In Christ Alone](#)

[Take My Life and Let it Be](#)