

John 20:19f

The Holy Spirit and forgiving.

John 20:19-23 (NIV2011)

¹⁹ On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you!”

This peace be with you is that shalom peace that I mentioned last week. Jesus is saying be totally well, I am here for your total wellness.

Notice a couple of things.

1. Evening of the first day of the week. (The day after the Sabbath – so that is our Sunday) Here we get a time context. Is this important, well if it is in the bible it must be so how does that work? What is important – Maybe – they met together on Sunday!
2. The doors were locked. Jesus is not constrained by locked doors. He is not constrained by our constraints.
3. The disciples were in fear. Jesus comes to comfort as a primary task.
4. Says peace be with you. This deals with their fear, their purpose for meeting, their togetherness. It is a total peace concept.

²⁰ After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord.

He offers them proof they are not dreaming. This is significant. While they saw the proof, it is recorded and under Jewish law and Roman law of the day the recorded witness of two or three is a valid legal testimony.

I am not sure that overjoyed really portrays the greek intent. It is more like ecstatic or over the moon. (Part of the problem we have with reading the bible we don't get the writers excitement – Thankfully we are blessed with readers who can inject that excitement into the text)

²¹ Again Jesus said, “Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.”

This is interesting again Jesus says – peace be with you. Why the reiteration? He wants them to really get it.

But notice what comes next.

As the father has sent me I am sending you.

Wo, this is huge. A hand over of responsibility here. Jesus is saying – what I am called to do – now you are called to do. That is huge. Yet, it is also very much like a Jewish generational blessing handed down from Father to son as the Father age and can no longer be involved in the heavy aspects of the families business.

It is this blessing thing that we need to be aware of. Remember the firstt stage of the book many of us have been reading Surprise the world by Michael Frost. His first point is bless.

We are called to bless people. And Jesus passes His blessing to the disciples to pass onto others. It has been generationally handed down to us.

This handing over comes with a package.

²² And with that he breathed on them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit.

Wow this again is pretty huge. Receive the Holy Spirit. Jesus is offering them what has in the past only been offered to kings and specially ordained prophets. His presence.

This is a bit confusing. Yep. This is one of the remaining questions that I didn’t get to deal with in the 1 Peter series. That question is: When do you get the Holy Spirit?

The thing is there are heaps of theories.

1. When you become a Christian you receive the Holy Spirit.
2. Some other denominations say it happens at Baptism.
3. Others at the baptism of the Holy Spirit.
4. Others say a continuing filling process

Now I am going to offer my thoughts. Don’t stress if you disagree. It’s ok.

What we see in Scripture is that the Holy Spirit and its impartation is done in various ways. Some times it is a process as it appeared to be for the disciples. They had this experience and the experience of Pentecost in Acts 2 – A progression.

This progression also happened in Acts 8. The group pf believers became believers but didn’t know about the Holy Spirit.

¹⁵ When they arrived, they prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit, ¹⁶ because the Holy Spirit had not yet come upon any of them; they had simply been baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. ¹⁷ Then Peter and John placed their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

When Peter Preached it came on all who heard. Just from the message, instant filling.

AC 10:44 While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message

At other times it was repent and be baptized and receive the Holy Spirit.

Acts 2:38 (NIV2011)

³⁸ Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

What gives?

I think **The giving of the Holy Spirit is personal.** Sometimes different, sometimes similar, sometimes at once sometimes a progression. God can give of Himself however He chooses.

Now I am sure that this will cause some discussion. Be gentle with each other.

The second question is about forgiveness. **What is our part in the forgiveness process?**

This verse puts some real perspective on it. While it is God's responsibility to deal with the consequences of the forgiveness we appear to have some say in it.

²³ **If you forgive anyone's sins, their sins are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven."**

Wo wo wo, So if I don't forgive someone, then God holds off on the forgiveness? That's what it says.

But be careful here before you get all too powerful about what forgiveness you have control of. This is not about revenge or teaching someone a lesson. That is God's job.

Notice the context.

You get the Holy Spirit, then you can forgive.

You see with the Holy Spirit in our lives the perspective is different. We won't not forgive as payback or revenge. The Holy Spirit gives us God's perspective. This statement, **This forgiveness isn't about power it is about ministry.** Our ministry and aim in life is to draw people closer to God. Forgiving them is one avenue and maybe sometimes holding them accountable for their wrong is another but it is under the Holy Spirit's guidance we do it.

Mostly This passage is a handing over of roles. The disciples are given the roles on earth that Jesus held, they pass it to us. We are commissioned by God through the Holy Spirit to be His agents.

We become as Christians and as Christian leaders God's agents in work and deed. And it appears from this passage that is inclusive of the forgiveness process.

Now a couple of things here. **If you have read this passage and have withheld your forgiveness for someone, you need to look carefully at why?** IS it your revenge? Is it your spiritual arrogance? Or is it for their spiritual good?

Secondly, if you have with held your forgiveness for the wrong reasons you own them an apology.

So be convicted by the Holy Spirit.

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