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His first words were “**Peace to you,**” reminding them of the ‘peace’ He had promised earlier (**14:27**). These words were intended to calm and reassure the terrified disciples, who thought they were seeing a ghost (**Lk. 24:37, Mt. 14:26**). So it wasn’t just a greeting but with a deeper and fuller meaning: “Peace/wholeness/contentment to you!” **Read 14:27, 16:33.** We could also look at **Rom. 5:1** and **Phil. 4:7,9**. There is no place we are that our Lord and His peace are not present also. **Read Lk. 24:36-39.**

**:20 And when He had said this, He showed them both His hands and His side. The disciples then rejoiced [were filled with joy] when they saw the Lord.** **Lk. 24:40-43** continues (read). Jesus had flesh and bones and was able to eat a piece of broiled fish. He had a real body. He had hands. He showed them His side. This was really a bodily resurrection. The writer John was present when this happened. Yes, Jesus is the victorious Lord, but also the same Jesus who was crucified. They recognized Him. They were filled with joy when they saw Him. They proclaimed His resurrection because they couldn’t do anything else; the evidence was too clear. For the disciples, seeing was believing. The resurrection of Jesus from the dead is the source of a living hope. **Read 1 Pet. 1:3.** And this same living Lord Jesus is right here in this room today, in us. Our lives should be living proof that He’s real and alive.

**:21 So Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you; as the Father has sent Me, I also send you.”** 40 times in John’s Gospel, Jesus is described as the One sent by the Father; now He sends them to continue His mission to reach the world. **In 17:18 He prayed, “As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world.”** There were others in the room besides the 10 (**Read Lk. 24:33,44-49**). We need to acknowledge He is with us, as real as He was

in the days of His flesh. Someone commented, “At times we don’t know He is all we need until He is all we have.” What a calling, to do precisely what our Lord did in this world, sharing Him, His words, and using our spiritual gifts in whatever way God has motivated us to love.

**:22 And when He had said this, He breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit.”** Jesus later said in **Lk. 24:49** that they were to stay in the city of Jerusalem until they were clothed with power from on high. He reaffirmed His earlier promise of the Holy Spirit (**14:26, 15:26, 16:13, Jer. 31:31-34, Ezek. 36:26-27, Joel 2:28-29**). Signifying the coming reality of the Holy Spirit being with and in them, He breathed and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit.” Receiving the Holy Spirit is part of the New Covenant (see **Ezek. 36:26-27**) which now takes place the moment a person believes and receives Jesus as Lord. Every believer is permanently indwelt (**1 Cor. 6:19**), empowered (**Acts 1:8**), and gifted (**1 Cor. 12:4-11**) by the Holy Spirit. This ‘receiving’ the Spirit took place on the day of Pentecost 50 days later. He breathed (not “on them”) and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit.” If you remember (**1:29-34**), the Lamb of God would be the One who baptizes with the Holy Spirit. Remember John the Baptist’s statement in **Mk. 1:8**, “I baptized you with water; but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.” Jesus’ statement was a pledge that the Holy Spirit would be coming; this was a foretaste of what would occur on Pentecost.

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Two of the verbs are in the passive which suggest that it is God who is acting. Not only can we claim it, but we can offer it to people. Jesus died in our place (He became sin) and for our sins on the cross; then we share that good news with others. God in Christ has dealt with the sins of the world. **Lk. 24:47:** proclaim ‘repentance for forgiveness of sins’ in Jesus’ name to all the nations. Believers have the authority to do this because God has given us His Word as the supreme standard by which to judge. See parallels on this passage in **Mt. 16:19, 18:18**. This authority has been granted to all believers to proclaim His message of forgiveness. If ‘any’ respond with belief to the proclamation of the gospel, the disciples have the authority to pronounce them forgiven. And so do we.

**Read :24-25. :24 But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus [nicknamed the Twin], was not with them when Jesus came.** Judas was already dead by his own treacherous hand (**Mt. 27:5**). Remember Thomas? In **11:16** he had

said “Let us also go, so that we may die with Him. Thomas next appeared in the upper room (14:2-6) “Lord, we don’t know where You’re going; how do we know the way.” Thomas wasn’t with the 10 a week earlier when Jesus had appeared. He was committed and courageous, but wanted proof that Jesus had truly been raised from the dead. :25 **So the other disciples were saying to him, “We have seen the Lord!” But he said to them [But he replied], “Unless I see in His hands the imprint of the nails and put my finger into the place of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe.”** He refused to believe their testimony—including that of Peter and John. Realize Thomas wasn’t the only one who scoffed and failed to believe the Scriptures that predicted Jesus’ resurrection (Mk. 16:10-13; Lk. 24:9-11,25-26; Jn. 20:9). “Unless I see...” Thomas was willing to believe but he wanted proof! By deliberate choice he had rejected the evidence. He felt hopeless. He was of all people most miserable (1 Cor. 15:12-19). He voiced the doubts we all may feel at times.

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In many ways, this statement by Thomas is the pinnacle of the Gospel (1:1,14,18, Acts 2:36). Thomas made perhaps the greatest confession of any of the apostles. Thomas was acknowledging Jesus of Nazareth as his Lord and his God instead of Caesar and in spite of the Jewish religious leaders’ opinion. Thomas declared His firm belief in the resurrection and the deity of Jesus (Titus 2:13). For a Jew this was a remarkable confession. **Lord**—personal name of Israel’s covenant God, Yahweh. **God**—The Word was God...and the Word became flesh.

We are dealing with eyewitness testimony. What a confession! The weakness of Thomas’ confession was that it depended on sight. With this the Gospel has returned to its starting point, namely, the fact that Jesus is God, the always-existing Word, face to face with the Father, Creator of all, Life, Light (1:1-5).

:29 **Jesus said to him, “Because you have seen Me, have you believed? Blessed are they who did not see, and yet believed.”** Jesus and His words alone should have had the power to convince them. We need to be thankful because Thomas and the other apostles saw and believed. Swindoll says, “Jesus didn’t question the need for evidence in matters of faith, which is why He offered

‘signs’ to validate His identity and to authenticate His message.” But realize, trust in God should come first; then evidence is helpful. Refusal to believe + Evidence = Confusion. Willingness to believe + Evidence = Confidence.”

For us, faith comes not by sight, but from what is heard (or read!), and what is heard should be God’s word [**rhēma**] (Rom. 10:17). The tomb was empty; He was seen by His followers. There is much historical evidence that the resurrection is true. Mary Magdalene, Cleopas and his friend, Peter, the apostles in the upper room all saw Him. There were 100s of people who saw the risen Lord Jesus. We have to depend on the eyewitness reports of those who did see Him and spoke His words and wrote them down for us. But like He says, “Blessed are they who did not see and yet believed (2 Cor. 5:7, 1 Pet. 1:8-9). More blessed are we than Thomas and the other apostles. We are willing to believe based on the witness of the Spirit and the words of the eyewitnesses. We believe and then we see. Because these were historical acts, if we didn’t have the witness of these eyewitnesses, we wouldn’t have access to these truths.

**Read :30-31. :30 Therefore many other signs (attesting miracles) Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book.** With the confession of Thomas—My Lord and my God—the writer John has achieved his purpose. There were other signs: Someone has counted 35 in the Gospels. John selected 7. These signs were given so we may believe Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing we may have life in His name. :31 **but these have been written so that (hina) you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and so that (hina) believing you may have life in His name.** The end result is that people would believe through Jesus’ claims and words and works that He’s the Jewish Messiah and the Son of God. “We must read them not primarily as historians seeking information, but as men and women seeking God.” Yet this book is historical fact. John wrote, “I was there. These words are true.” We began in 1:12-13 with “**Believe and receive**”; this brings us eventually to “**My Lord and my God.**” Worthy is the **Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world (1:29).**

True faith has content; it’s based on historical facts presented throughout the Gospels. We are presented with the Person of Jesus, His words, His works. What a beautiful picture of Jesus, whose portrait is drawn in this Gospel. The aim of John was not necessarily to just give information but to give life. That new life that is found in relationship with Jesus and the Father. **Life in His name**—all that Jesus is and stands for.

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INTRO

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NLT 19 That Sunday evening the disciples were meeting behind locked doors because they were afraid of the Jewish leaders. Suddenly, Jesus was standing there among them! "Peace be with you," he said. 20 As he spoke, he showed them the wounds in his hands and his side. They were filled with joy when they saw the Lord! 21 Again he said, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I am sending you." 22 Then he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. 23 If you forgive anyone's sins, they are forgiven. If you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven." 24 One of the twelve disciples, Thomas (nicknamed the Twin), was not with the others when Jesus came. 25 They told him, "We have seen the Lord!" But he replied, "I won't believe it unless I see the nail wounds in his hands, put my fingers into them, and place my hand into the wound in his side." 26 Eight days later the disciples were together again, and this time Thomas was with them. The doors were locked; but suddenly, as before, Jesus was standing among them. "Peace be with you," he said. 27 Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and look at my hands. Put your hand into the wound in my side. Don't be faithless any longer. Believe!" 28 "My Lord and my God!" Thomas exclaimed. 29 Then Jesus told him, "You believe because you have seen me. Blessed are those who believe without seeing me." 30 The disciples saw Jesus do many other miraculous signs in addition to the ones recorded in this book. 31 But these are written so that you may continue to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing in him you will have life by the power of his name.

JBP 19 In the evening of that first day of the week, the disciples had met together with the doors locked for fear of the Jews. Jesus came and stood right in the middle of them and said, "Peace be with you!" 20 Then he showed them his hands and his side, and when they saw the Lord the disciples were overjoyed. 21 Jesus said to them again, "Yes, peace be with you! Just as the Father sent me, so I am now going to send you." 22 And then he breathed upon them and said, "Receive holy spirit. If you forgive any men's sins, they are forgiven, and if you hold them unforgiven, they are unforgiven." 24 But one of the twelve, Thomas (called the Twin), was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples kept on telling him, "We have seen the Lord", but he replied, "Unless I see in his own hands the mark of the nails, and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will never believe!" 26 Just over a week later, the disciples were indoors again and Thomas was with them. The doors were shut, but Jesus came and stood in the middle of them and said, "Peace be with you!" 27 Then he said to Thomas, "Put your fingers here—look, here are my hands. Take my hand and put it in my side. You must not doubt, but believe." 28 "My Lord and my God!" cried Thomas. 29 "Is it because you have seen me that you believe?" Jesus said to him. "Happy are those who have never seen me and yet have believed!" 30 Jesus gave a great many other signs in the presence of his disciples which are not recorded in this book. But these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is Christ, the Son of God, and that in that faith you may have life as his disciples.