

# “The Great Disruption ”

April 19, 2020  
CoVid-19 wk 5

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John 20: 19-31

originally recorded in the home of Josh & Ellie Bennett

## **John 20:19-31** *New International Version (NIV)*

*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!” After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord. Again Jesus said, “Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.” And with that he breathed on them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone’s sins, their sins are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven.”*

*Now Thomas (also known as Didymus), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, “We have seen the Lord!”*

*But he said to them, “Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe.”*

*A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you!” Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe.” Thomas said to him, “My Lord and my God!” Then Jesus told him, “Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”*

*Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.*

We are experiencing a great disruption in our society, and around the world. They don’t happen very often. The last really large global disruption was World War 2.

Disruptions on this scale are painful to go through, and can often lead to grief – grief for loved ones who have died, or who are in danger; even grief from our loss of freedom, or our loss of being able to meet friends at the pub.

A great disruption can lead us to anger, denial, and even depression. As Christians we’re taught to seek Christ. With Christ in our hearts, we are given peace, and he helps us find order in these disruptions.

But you know, what I find really interesting when I read the Gospel is that Jesus himself was a massive disruption. When he was preaching, going from town to town, the crowds of people got bigger and bigger and he was a major disruption to the religious leaders and authorities at the time. They were angry at Jesus for what he kept preaching, because Jesus would often point his finger at the Pharisees and Priests, telling them that they were doing things all wrong.

When Jesus was arrested and killed, it was also a major disruption for his followers. Let's think about what the disciples were going through right after Jesus was crucified. The disciples were the entourage of Jesus, and Jesus was like a rock star! Every town they went into, the crowds got bigger and bigger, and the biggest of all was when they entered Jerusalem and the masses came to cheer him on!

And then everything changed very quickly. Jesus was arrested and there was a 'sham' trial. The masses who only days earlier were cheering him on had turned against him, and then he was put to death.

What must the disciples have been feeling?

Anger – certainly they must have felt anger. Anger towards Judas who betrayed them – one of the twelve! One of their brothers! Anger towards the authorities who cowardly beat, tortured and humiliated Jesus. Angry at the masses who turned so quickly against Jesus.

Grief – they would have been in deep grief. Sorrow and grief at seeing their master tortured, humiliated, and crucified. Their sadness and grief would have been overwhelming for them.

Fear – Fearful of their own lives. In the scriptures it describes the disciples being behind locked doors; fearful of the authorities and possibly fearful of the crowds.

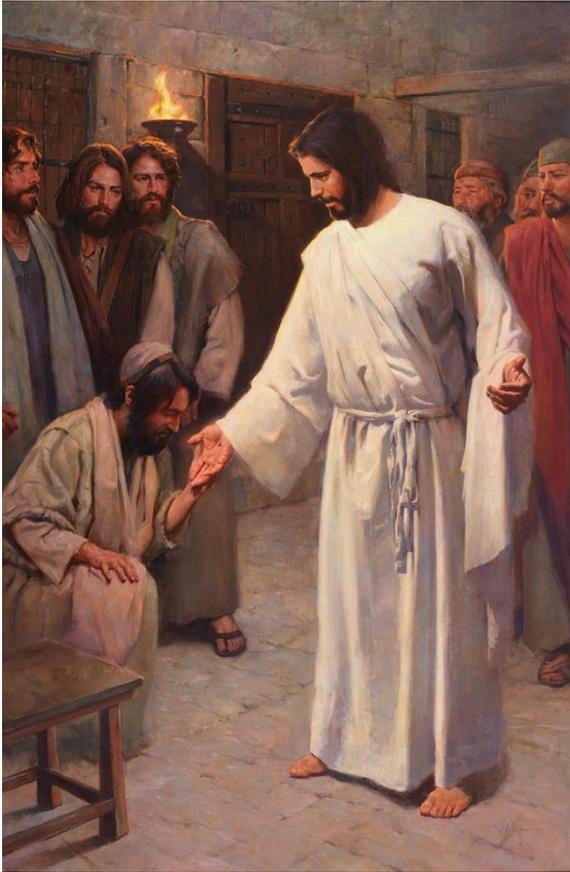
Denial: And of course, denial – on the Sunday morning when Mary Magdalene came to the disciples and told them the incredible news that Jesus was alive, they didn't believe her.

In the scriptures today we read about Doubting Thomas. Let me talk about Thomas for a second. He gets a bad rap doesn't he? Thomas is dubbed "Doubting Thomas". He refused to believe until he could put his fingers in the holes of Jesus' hands.

No doubt he was still reeling in grief, anger, and denial. But the truth is, all of the Disciples had their doubts, and struggled to believe that Jesus was alive, until he was standing right in front of them.

And here's another thing – it's okay to have doubt. If you have doubts about who Jesus really is, or if he truly rose from the grave, that's okay,

you're in good company! The disciples themselves had doubts! All I ask is that you keep an open mind and explore the facts.



And if you do, you'll find, just as the disciples did, that Jesus is alive, and is Lord of all! When Jesus appeared before Thomas, Thomas sank to his knees, and proclaimed "Jesus, my Lord and my God!"

In the middle of all of that disruption, Christ changed the disciples. He gave them peace. He removed their fear, their anxiety, and he opened their eyes to a new way, a new order filled with truth and love. And they emerged from behind their locked doors, and started preaching to the masses, and spreading the word that Christ is risen and is Lord of all!

And Jesus does the same for us today. I know that many of you, myself included, have anxieties over our current situation during this COVID-19 pandemic. If you invite Christ into your

heart, he will give you peace, and remove your anxiety. And he'll open your eyes to a new way. Christ was the greatest disruption the world has ever seen, and he continues to bring us order and peace.

And you know, when I look around during this pandemic, I see some amazing things:

- As a society, we now have a greater appreciation for our health care workers
- We have greater appreciation for grocery store workers and pharmacy workers
- We have a much greater appreciation for truck drivers who are keeping our supply lines going for the essentials that we need to live
- I've never seen so many families going for walks together on a regular basis

Have you noticed that the pace of life seems to have slowed down? I think it needed to. Don't get me wrong, this pandemic is not a good thing! CoVid19 is killing thousands upon thousands of people. But during this lock

down, let's consider how our change of pace has been a gift of time. And use that time to get to know Christ.

During this massive disruption, remember this: Christ himself was a disruption. The resurrection of Christ was the greatest disruption in the history of the world. But it's a disruption that brings us to peace and order. Christ takes away our fear and anxiety, and he opens our eyes to a new way that is filled with love and truth.

Amen.