

The Power of Christ's Presence

"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. As he spoke, he showed them the wounds in his hands and in his side. They were filled with joy when they saw the Lord!

John 20:19-21 (NLT)

Imagine the fear the disciples felt after the crucifixion and pronouncement of Jesus' death. Consider the internal conflict that arose when confronted with the absence of Jesus' presence—the sense of loss and abandonment of a confidante, comrade, and teacher amid a hostile environment. We, too, have experienced a broken heart, deep despair, and a longing to have restored that which was lost. The power of Jesus' presence provides hope for believers in a time of sorrow and grief.

We can glean three things from this passage of scripture. First, the preeminence of Christ's presence brings peace. Once the Lord enters your heart, you cannot shut him out! He brings peace because he is the Prince of Peace. Jesus alone perfects that which is imperfect, and only Jesus can restore shattered hopes and dreams. Hope cannot submit to hopelessness in the presence of the Lord because He has the power to destroy yokes and relieve burdens. God's presence brings peace.

Secondly, the power of Christ's presence is a result of God's infinite grace. Christ 'breathed on them,' and the power of his love and faithfulness invokes an everlasting joy. Once the Word is 'breathed upon you,' and later deposited in you, it prompts you to go forth with the gospel message. It compels you to speak peace and hope that brings salvation to the loss, healing to the sick, comfort to the brokenhearted and, liberty to those imprisoned by sin. Christ sends the original disciples to prepare the way for a church without end. God's presence is everlasting.

Lastly, the power of Christ's presence prepares us to walk circumspectly, individually, and as a community with the propensity of God's love to reflect and sustain the gospel message. The ability to joyously work with those who hate Christ, listen to the belligerent, and serve the unloving is a direct result of the power of Christ's presence within us. What an incredible sense of eternal strength and joy.

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