

**SERMON TOPIC: MANY INROADS, ONE GOSPEL – SO SEND I YOU**

**SERMON TEXT: JOHN 20:21-23**

Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I am sending you." Then he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone's sins, they are forgiven. If you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven."

### **1. THE BASIS OF MINISTRY – AS THE FATHER SENT ME ... (John 20:21)**

In John 20, Jesus had already reached the near end of his earthly ministry. He had already been crucified and resurrected. He says to his disciples:

*"Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you." And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you withhold forgiveness from any, it is withheld."*

God comes to give us peace through Jesus Christ. **Peace** (Greek *eiréné*, Hebrew *shalom*) is more than absence of conflict. peace is wholeness and healing, and a state of restedness. That is God's desire for His creation and creatures.

Without peace, we wrestle with God. We cannot serve God from a standpoint of guilt, fear or manipulation. Jesus calls us to serve from the standpoint of a healthy relationship with him - like a child is in a state of peace, trust and contentedness with his Father.

The resting point of peace allows us to be a witness of God.

Jesus was sent to do God's will (John 4:34, 6:38) and do God's work (5:36), not his own. Jesus' restedness in His Father propelled Him to humble himself and become obedient- to the point of death. He left the intimate communion of the Trinity and came down to live among the people, experiencing the same things as the people experienced- hunger, pain, and toil.

Hudson Taylor: "I used to ask God to help me. Then I asked if I might help Him. I ended up by asking God to do His work through me."

### **2. THE POWER OF MINISTRY – Holy Spirit (John 20:22)**

'And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit."

The Holy Spirit helps and enables us in ministry, and causes the impossible to be possible. He enables us to be witness for God. To be a witness is simply sharing with others the power of God we experienced in our lives.

### **3. RESULT OF MINISTRY – Proclamation (John 20:23)**

There was a duty of proclaiming the forgiveness of sins by the telling of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Christians in a sense hold the power of death and life- our acts of proclaiming or withholding this truth will affect someone's salvation.

### **4. SO SEND I YOU**

There are many people who are living and dying without having heard the gospel. If we were to take the words of Jesus seriously, that He is the way, the truth and the life, how do we respond to that in our actions?

#### **Questions for Discussions (choose 2 to discuss):**

1. People serve God with different motivations. Reflect on Joh 20:21 – Jesus calls us to serve from a standpoint of “peace”, a shalom/eirene peace. What does this mean for us? Are you constantly in a state of restedness despite circumstances? Why or why not?
2. 1 John 2:6 challenges us “Whoever claims to live in Him must live as Jesus did”. What does incarnational ministry (living like Jesus) look like for me and my family?
3. Many people are living and dying without the gospel. Jesus said, “If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven ...”?  
What does knowledge of Jesus’ command to proclaim the gospel mean to us?
4. What has the Lord laid on my heart? And what am I going to do about?