

An Opportunity to Get Right With God

John 20:19-29

Introduction: In this passage, Jesus appeared to His disciples and said, "Peace be unto you." Here, Jesus gives His disciples one of His commands concerning the Great Commission. He said, "...Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." (John 20:21) Luke 19:10 tells us why Jesus came, "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." Now, Jesus says, "So send I you." Jesus was sending His disciples out with the same commission His Heavenly Father had given Him.

However, Thomas was not there that first time, and he well-earned the title we give him even to this day, "doubting Thomas." When the disciples said that they had seen the Lord, Thomas said that he would not believe until he saw the nail prints in His hands and was able to thrust his hand into Jesus' side. For some reason, most of the disciples just didn't get it. They did not trust the promises Jesus gave to them before His crucifixion. Some had no problem believing, while others had a hard time believing, even with Jesus standing there in the room with them. Thomas was basically saying he could not believe what Jesus said by faith, rather he could only believe by sight.

Jesus did not throw in the towel on Thomas; Jesus came and gave Thomas an opportunity to get his heart right with God. That is the purpose of this message. I want to give those, in this room, the opportunity to get right with God. Are you away from the Lord? Is your heart cold? Is your spirit tired? Does it no longer seem worth it to do what you've been doing for years?

1. I think of David and how the Lord gave him nearly a year to get right with God.

-As the story goes, Nathan the prophet came to David and simply told him a story,

"And the LORD sent Nathan unto David. And he came unto him, and said unto him, There were two men in one city; the one rich, and the other poor. The rich man had exceeding many flocks and herds: But the poor man had nothing, save one little ewe lamb, which he had bought and nourished up: and it grew up together with him, and with his children; it did eat of his own meat, and drank of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter. And there came a traveller unto the rich man, and he spared to take of his own flock and of his own herd, to dress for the wayfaring man that was come unto him; but took the poor man's lamb, and dressed it for the man that was come to him. And David's anger was greatly kindled against the man; and he said to Nathan, As the LORD liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die: And he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity. And Nathan said to David, Thou art the man. Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, I anointed thee king over Israel, and I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul...And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the LORD..." (2 Samuel 12:1-7 & 13)

- Little else needs to be said, for when David was afforded the opportunity, to get right with God by Nathan the prophet, he got right with God. David's response was quite in-depth, "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me." (Psalms 51:1-3)

2. I think of Peter and how the Lord gave him a second chance to make things right.

- The story is an old one but appropriate to this point. Peter cursed, swore, and quit the ministry. He made a mockery of his faith to those who were not saved. He ruined his testimony, and others followed him down this path of discouragement, disillusionment, and destruction.
- When the Lord gave messages to His disciples after Peter had quit the ministry, He always

included Peter. He wanted Peter to have the same news the rest of the disciples had.

- About two weeks after the resurrection of the Lord, we find Peter in an upper room waiting for the promise of the Father. The power of the Holy Spirit fell upon those 120 disciples of the Lord, and Peter became the great preacher of Pentecost. On that day, 3,000 souls came to faith in Christ, and all of them became members of that great church there in Jerusalem.

3. I think of Thomas, whom we read about at the beginning of this message.

- I don't know if Thomas was "the disciple with the attitude" or not, but I do know that, despite all that Jesus had promised before His death on Calvary, he disregarded every word.

- The Christian life is a life based on and lived by faith. It is not the faith of sight, rather faith without sight.

- The Apostle Paul said, "...the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." (Galatians 2:20)

- One of the great tenants of the Christian faith is that we learn early on to walk by faith and not by sight, "For we walk by faith, not by sight." (2 Corinthians 5:7)

4. Lastly, I think of us.

- Some of us only need the opportunity to get right with God, and we will. Thus, the opportunity is now afforded in this service.

- You know whether or not you are right with the Lord. I know Dr. John R. Rice said that he could never raise his hand during an invitation in order to say that he was right with God. But none of us are John R. Rice. All of us are individuals.

- I'm not interested in your saying, with Dr. Rice, that there are just too many hidden sins to be able to say you're right with God. I'm not interested in what you can't remember, but I am interested in what you do know.

- Would you be willing to get right with God if the opportunity was afforded you?

Conclusion: Well, the opportunity is now afforded. What will you do with this opportunity to be totally right with the Lord? Will you take advantage of the opportunity and confess that sin that the Holy Spirit has brought to your mind?

When David was given the opportunity, he got right with God. When Peter was given the chance, he got right with God. When Thomas was given the opportunity, he responded positively. Now, it's your turn.

What would keep you from making this decision? Only two things:

- **Pride**
- **Stubbornness**

There are three steps you need to take in order to make this decision. It's as simple as ABC.

1. **Admit**, like David, you're not right with the Lord. He said, "I have sinned!" (2 Samuel 12:13)
2. **Bow**, like Peter, your heart beneath your knees and humble yourself before the Lord. Peter wrote, "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God..." (1 Peter 5:6)
3. **Confess**, like Thomas, your sin and forsake it. Thomas said, "My Lord, and my God." (John 20:28)