

Sunday, April 28, 2019

John 20:19-31

Theme: "SPIRITUAL AUTHORITY"

In Genesis, God created everything by speaking it into existence...
When God came to humanity, Adam was made with God's hands...
God breathed the breath of the Spirit INTO Adam and he became a living being...
God gave Adam the authority to care for creation...
In this passage, Jesus breathes ON the disciples empowering and giving them the authority to forgive each others sins and of reconciliation...

Between the OT book of Genesis and the gospel of John, we read the stories of CARING FOR CREATION, FORGIVENESS OF SINS AND RECONCILIATION...

*When Jesus breathed His Spirit on the disciples, He transferred authority to them to spread the Good news of forgiveness of sins...

*So, as believers, we should not lack any spiritual power or authority...

*We should not think that spiritual authority only belongs to the pastor...

*We should not think that spiritual authority only belongs to a select group of people...

*Spiritual authority belongs to all those who are called to represent the Lord...

*We sometimes believe that spiritual authority only belongs to pastors...

*That is why when we are faced with spiritual challenges, we run to pastors...

*We ask them to pray for us as if to say our prayers will not be heard...

*It is good for brothers and sisters to partner together and cover each other with prayers...

*It is good for brothers and sisters to fast for one another...

*But I also want you to know that God's Spirit gives each of us the spiritual authority we need to fight our own battles and do God's will...

*As spirit-filled believers, we have the power to directly plead with Jesus because He has offered us peace...

*This is the peace that the world cannot give; it only comes from above...

*We are blessed; better than blessed.

*On Easter Day, the people of Sri Lankan experienced suicide bombing at St. Sebastian and St. Anthony's Churches as they gathered to worship...

*Right here in this country, last week, a 19-year-old man opened fire at a synagogue in California...

*The attack killed one woman and wounding three other people...

These were innocent people in the synagogue hosting a Passover celebration when this happened...

We are blessed; better than blessed...

And now the scene changes to where we find the disciples behind CLOSED DOORS...

One of the disciples was absent when Jesus appeared...

Upon his return, he was told by the other disciples that Jesus was alive and that He had visited them...

The disciple said: "Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe..."

After a few days, Jesus reappeared and the disciples were still behind CLOSED DOORS...

Jesus appeared to them and offered peace...

Then He said to the disciple: "Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing..."

The disciple answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!"

Jesus said to him, "Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

Friends, today we do not have the physical Jesus who will help us believe, but we have a record of His life and teachings...

*Many of us find faith difficult because we cannot see or touch Jesus...

*Yet we condemn people who doubt our message of salvation...

*If Thomas knew Jesus personally and still doubted Him, we should not be surprised when people today do the same...

*Instead, we should pray for the Holy Spirit to reveal the truth...

*We must help people to also see the truth...

*People must be directed to God's Word...

*As Jesus came to Thomas, so He will come to those who seek Him...

*You may not be able to see and touch Jesus...

*But I can assure you that He will make Himself known through the work of the Holy Spirit...

*I know that because Jesus has already breathed the Holy Spirit on you...

*I know that because Jesus has already breathed the Holy Spirit on me...

* Take thou authority of the Holy Spirit and live as though the Spirit lives within you...

*The doors may be closed...

*The storms may be ragging...

*The lightening may be flashing...

*The thunder may be rolling...

*You may feel sin's breakers dashing, Trying to conquer your soul...

*But I pray that you will hear the voice of Jesus, Telling you to still to fight on...

*He promised never to leave you, Never to leave you alone... She

*No, never alone, No, never alone, He promised never to leave you, Never to leave you alone; No ...

Amen!