

## Shaped by the Spirit (Part 11) Empowered for Missional Engagement

By Pastor David Fields

### John 20:19-23

<sup>19</sup> 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!” <sup>20</sup> After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord.

<sup>21</sup> Again Jesus said, “Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.” <sup>22</sup> And with that he breathed on them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit. <sup>23</sup> If you forgive anyone’s sins, their sins are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven.” - John 20:19-23

#### 1. **Perspective** – *New Creation*

“On the evening of that ***first day of the week...***” – John 20:19

“At this, she [Mary Magdalene] turned around and saw Jesus standing there...Thinking he was the gardener...” (v.15b).

Just like God the Gardener had brought about the creation at the beginning, so now Jesus – who is God come to us – Jesus, through his death, that was ultimately dead-destroying, he is bringing about the *new creation* on this day of his resurrection. So, historian and Biblical scholar N.T. Wright is right, we could say of this opening line of our text: “On the evening of the *first day of the new creation.*” – N.T. Wright

#### 2. **Peace** – *Filled with Peace, Agents of Peace*

“Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you!” – 20:19b

That word peace – *shalom* in the Hebrew language – it means “wholeness, completeness, total harmony.” It’s not just an internal sense of well-being – though it includes that – it is God’s design for relational wholeness at every level; with God, others, our own selves, and the rest of creation. And the world healed – that healing is breaking in.

The question is not “will I feel fear?” But will I let that drive me? Will I respond out of it? We will feel fear, but you have one very BIG reason to not let that fear drive you anymore. Because look who’s in the room! And look what he brings – his peace – deep into your hearts. And peace for the whole cosmos is coming. This is a call to trust the one who comes in the room, even when I feel afraid.

Listen to what he says to his followers earlier in John's Gospel: "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid." (John 15:27).

### 3. **Purpose** – *Sent Like Jesus*

"As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." – John 20:21

"You see how they not only acquire peace of mind concerning themselves but even receive the power of releasing others from their bonds." - Gregory the Great, 6<sup>th</sup> C

We who are sent by Jesus, are sent to live *like* Jesus in terms of our character. That we would go with love in our hearts and in our hands. We would be ready to give deeply, generously for the sake of others, and do it with joy – because Jesus is still in the room. He *is* present with us. As he was sent – out of the love of God for the world – so too, we are now sent. And now we get to the heart of *how*.

### 4. **Presence** – *Filled with God's Presence*

"And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit." – John 20:22b

- The word for Spirit – *ruach* in Hebrew and *pneuma* in Greek – they can both be translated as 'breath' or 'wind'.
- We see a similar description where God himself is "breathing" life into the man he had formed (Gen 2). This *is* that. Jesus' "breathing" on his disciples marks them as those who are now alive to God – alive with God in them.

### 5. **Power** – *Empowered for Mission*

"God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power...he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil because God was with him." - Acts 10:38

The Holy Spirit had already been at work in the people's lives that Peter was speaking to. And as soon as he shares the news of Jesus, the gospel here, we read that: "While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message..." These are the first thoroughly non-Jewish, or Gentile people to receive God's new life.

Here's where this touches down for us.

- A. The Spirit will offer us *help, comfort, encouragement, even reminders of what to say in those moments we are drawn into moments of ministry.*
- B. We are joining in with what God's Spirit is already up to.

“Evangelism is joining a conversation the Holy Spirit is already having with another person.”  
– Darrell Johnson

- C. Each person who has trusted in Jesus for new life is given these ‘good gifts’ by the Holy Spirit.

As we read in 1 Corinthians 12, the Spirit gives these gifts to different people, who all have different roles to play as the “one Body of Christ.” You have a role to play. We are called together to participate in God’s mission.

- D. The vitality for these missional endeavors means using the *gifts of the Spirit* in the way of the *fruit of the Spirit*.

So, the Spirit makes us both “deep” and “wide”. Deep in the sense of the fact that the Spirit is filling and enabling the complete renovation of our character – we are changed from the inside out. And “wide” in that we are gifted and sent to join God in his mission to the world.