

SERMON NOTES

Reason to Believe: Empowering Truth!
John 20:19-31

Last week we learned that the resurrection of Jesus is an unavoidable truth. Jesus literally, physically rose from the dead! After the resurrection, we find the disciples locked in a room, fearful of arrest, persecution, and death. Yet, in just a short period of time, we see them fearless, bold, and tenacious! What changed?

“And now, Lord, take note of their threats, and grant that Your bond-servants may speak Your word with all confidence... And when they had prayed, the place where they had gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak the word of God with boldness.” *Acts 4:29, 31*

The resurrected Christ appeared and empowered them to live as faithful witnesses. Yes, the resurrection is an unavoidable truth, but it is also the truth that empowers every believer to boldly and tenaciously bear witness to Jesus Christ.

Key thought: The resurrected Christ empowers you to live as a faithful witness.

How does Jesus empower His disciples?

1. He gives you assurance and confidence! (19-21; 26)

Jesus did not shame them for their doubt, He spoke the words “peace be with you.” What was the difference maker? It was the fact of the resurrection! Our assurance and confidence in the face of doubt, fear, and timidity is the reality of a resurrected Christ!

The book of Acts is full of instances where boldness was given in situations where disciples were tempted with fear:

- In Antioch Pisidia, Paul and Barnabas “spoke out boldly” when the Jews publicly reviled them (Acts 13:46).
- In Iconium, they were also vigorously opposed, “so they remained for a long time, speaking boldly for the Lord” (Acts 14:3).
- In Ephesus, Apollos spoke “boldly in the synagogue” (Acts 18:26).
- In Ephesus, Paul taught in the synagogue “and for three months spoke boldly, reasoning and persuading them about the kingdom of God” (Acts 19:8).
- In Caesarea, when Paul was imprisoned, he spoke “boldly” to King Agrippa (Acts 26:26).
- And the last thing we know about Paul is that, while under house arrest in Rome, he went on “proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness and without hindrance” (Acts 28:31).

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2. He gives you a clear purpose (21)

“And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, ‘All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.’” *Matthew 28:18–20*

“And He said to them, ‘Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation.’” *Mark 16:15*

“And that repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. ‘You are witnesses of these things.’” *Luke 24:47–48*

“So Jesus said to them again, ‘Peace be with you; as the Father has sent Me, I also send you.’” *John 20:21*

3. He gives you the person of the Holy Spirit (22-23)

“And behold, I am sending forth the promise of My Father upon you; but you are to stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.” *Luke 24:49*

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.” *Acts 1:8*

4. He gives you the reason and opportunity to believe (24-31)

Take away:

- Do you believe?
- Identify one person you know who needs Christ?
- Pray for their salvation?
- Share the gospel with them?
- Invite them to church?
- Will you go and make disciples?