

Read: John 20:19-31

Resurrection Peace

John 20:19

Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!"

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

What are you afraid of? Do you run from creepy critters like spiders and snakes? Are you afraid of heights? Do you despise the dark because you fear what *might* be hiding in the closet or under the bed? Or the really big one—are you afraid of death?

Right now there are millions of people all over the world who are afraid of something called COVID-19, the Coronavirus. They are afraid of germs, afraid of getting sick, and afraid of what this pandemic will do to our schools, jobs, and so much more. And yes, there are even many who are afraid that if they get sick enough, they might die from this virus. With everything going on, is there something that causes you fear?

The times that we are experiencing right now are not much different from the time after Good Friday for Jesus' disciples. They were worried about many things! Their friend and teacher had just been crucified. It seemed like everyone was out to get them. What if they were arrested next? What was going to happen to them? Were they going to die? With so many concerns, the disciples locked themselves together in a room because they were afraid.

But then suddenly, Jesus appeared! Out of nowhere! Alive and standing right in front of them! Could this be? So what would the newly risen and victorious Savior have to say to his fearful disciples? Jesus said, "Peace be with you."

That's right, the very first word that Jesus spoke to his disciples was "peace." It's not that the disciples were never going to have troubles again. There would be plenty. It's not that their enemies were gone. There were sadly many who would oppose them and their preaching. No, Jesus was telling his disciples that they now had peace *with God*.

All their sins were paid for and their guilt wiped away. Their greatest enemy, Satan, had been defeated. And best of all, they had the sure and certain hope that because Jesus lives, they would live with him in the pain and problem free life to come in heaven. That incredible peace with God is what would give them the strength and the hope to get through all the scary times of life.

There are certainly some scary things going on in our world today. The Coronavirus is just one of them. But rejoice! Jesus is alive and he proclaims to you today, "Peace be with you!" Your

sins are also forgiven! Satan is still defeated! And you will live in heaven forever, too. What good news! Jesus offers you peace now *and* forever!

Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.

Questions for Younger Children

- What is something that causes you to be afraid?
- How did Jesus prove at Easter that he is more powerful than anything we are afraid of?

Questions for Elementary Age Children

- What emotions would you have been feeling if you were a disciple locked in that room after Jesus died? Why?
- What emotions would you have been feeling after Jesus appeared and said, "Peace be with you." Why?

Questions for Middle School and Above

- Explain the following in your own words and what it means: No Jesus, No Peace. Know Jesus, Know Peace.
- Explain why the apostle Paul says that the peace of God "transcends" or "surpasses" all understanding in Philippians 4:7.

Closing Prayer:

Dear Jesus, in all the moments of life that I am afraid, remind me that you died and rose to give me peace. Calm my heart with this good news of peace now and eternally. Amen.

Hymn: CW #165 – O Sons and Daughters of the King

1. O sons and daughters of the King,
Whom heav'nly hosts in glory sing,
Today the grave has lost its sting!
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!
4. That night th' apostles met in fear;
Among them came their Lord most dear
And said, "Peace be unto you here."
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!