

The Forgiveness of Sins

Promise: Jesus' Resurrection Gives Credence to His Claim to Forgive

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Acts 5:29-42; Psalm 148; 1 Peter 1:3-9; [John 20:19-31](#)

(Second Sunday of Easter, 4/16/23)

"If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you withhold forgiveness from any, it is withheld." – v. 23

Lead In – Jesus' death and resurrection is all about the forgiveness of sins. His death was necessary for our sins to be atoned for and forgiven. And as we learn in the Small Catechism, *"For where there is forgiveness of sins, there is also life and salvation."* Stated differently, there is no life and salvation apart from the forgiveness of sins.

I. More Than One Fear in Disciples' Minds that Day...

A. They had made bold predictions of their faithfulness...

B. What if the early reports were true?

C. The significance of the exchange of peace...

II. Disciples Sent to Continue Christ's Mission

A. They are first equipped with new life...

B. They are told the heart of what their ministry is...

C. Has it really been entrusted to the Church to forgive?

III. Is It Repenting Or Believing That Results in Life?

A. The purpose of John's Gospel, that we might believe!

B. Only people brought to faith will repent...

Parting Shot – Luther's succinct explanation to the Third Article of the Creed sums it up well: *I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ my Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Spirit has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in true faith. ... In this Christian church He daily and richly forgives all my sins and the sins of all believers.* It is because He forgives sins that there is the hope of being raised from the dead, of being given eternal life, and being given an inheritance in the Kingdom of God.

Mk 10:37-39 And they said to him, "Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory." ³⁸ Jesus said to them, "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?" ³⁹ And they said to him, "We are able." And Jesus said to them, "The cup that I drink you will drink, and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized."

Jn 11:16 So Thomas, called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, "Let us also go, that we may die with him."

Mt 26:35 Peter said to him, "Even if I must die with you, I will not deny you!" And all the disciples said the same.

Mt 26:56b Then all the disciples left him and fled.

Lk 24:10-11 Now it was Mary Magdalene and Joanna and Mary the mother of James and the other women with them who told these things to the apostles, ¹¹ but these words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them.

Lk 24:45-47 Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, ⁴⁶ and said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ should

John 20:19-31 ESV

Jesus Appears to the Disciples

¹⁹ On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you." ²⁰ When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. ²¹ Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you." ²² And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³ If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you withhold forgiveness from any, it is withheld."

²⁴ Now Thomas, one of the twelve, called the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came. ²⁵ So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see in his hands the mark of the nails, and place my finger into the mark of the nails, and place my hand into his side, I will never believe."

²⁶ Eight days later, his disciples were inside again, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." ²⁷ Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side. Do not disbelieve, but believe." ²⁸ Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" ²⁹ Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

³⁰ Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; ³¹ but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, ⁴⁷ and that repentance for the forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem.

2Co 5:18 All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation.

2Co 5:20 Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us.

Ac 2:37-38 Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" ³⁸ And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."