

What kind of things do you “like” or “share” online for the world to see? I would venture to say it is the things that you agree with, that bring you some feeling of hope or happiness, or it is to support someone, or just show a good time. I am guessing it's probably not the times when you were confronted with being wrong, the sins you've committed, the doubts you have, or the fears that plague you. We struggle with fear, regret, uncertainty, and worry but that's not the stuff we put online. Today Jesus confronts all of it, and he gives us something we can't help but “like,” and something worth “sharing” in as many ways and as many times as possible:

Like and Share: Real Peace in a Real Resurrected Savior.

Jesus rose physically from the dead. He didn't ask Rome's permission or if it would be alright with the Sanhedrin. He rose because he is true Man and he is true God. Scripture foretold he would. Jesus himself often told his disciples he would be killed and after three days rise again. Jesus keeps his promises. That is good to remember, even worth sharing: Jesus keeps his promises whether you see him doing it or not, whether you feel like he is or not.

“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!” After he said this he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord.” I wonder if Jesus ever had the thought, “You know, they really don't listen to a word I say.” They always needed help remembering. He condescends to them and shows them beyond the shadow of a doubt – It's me! I am risen, just as I said. I don't know if they completely grasped it even then. I don't know if I would have – something so impossible, something so glorious. I don't judge them.

Huddled together. Doors locked. Pretty certain the only thing coming for losers like them who bet on the losing horse was to be up on crosses in a few weeks being mocked by the Sanhedrin, even the servant girl who called out Peter. They couldn't count on Pilate to give a fair trial, nor their own leaders. Fear focuses us in at our sinful selves and on all our troubles. We won't find answers within, will we? The physical doors were locked that day – maybe they were French doors, maybe it was the outer door of the building and then the room door. I don't know if Peter still carried his sword, or if he had dropped it at Gethsemane. Either way it wasn't enough. But weren't the mental and spiritual doors locked as well? Confusion, fear, guilt over what happened in the garden, even disbelief?

Are your doors locked? People can download an app and install equipment that allows them to lock their doors wirelessly, but we can lock our hearts faster. We lock the doors of our heart maybe to try to protect ourselves. Can't be honest with ourselves or others about the difficulty we're having or some sin in our lives. We wouldn't share that. We'll figure it out, master it, someday, maybe. Maybe if we just don't think of it, ignore it, God won't think of it either and maybe he won't punish me.

We may find it difficult to trust God's Word and his timing. We can cut corners in some area of our lives to try to ensure we get what we want or get what we need or feel we deserve but God hasn't allotted. Will they still love me if I don't do this thing I know is sinful? Will I ever be happy again if I give this sinful thing up? Will I have enough for myself if I share my time, money, or energy for others? Will my life be awful if I trust God on this and do what he wants rather than what everybody else wants? Fear causes us to lock ourselves within and hunker down hiding it all – our sin, our guilt, our fear – trapped. We wonder, could God ever love failures like us?

Jesus stands in your midst even though your doors are locked. Jesus didn't wait for the disciples to open a door. Jesus *"stood among them...Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone's sins, their sins are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven."* This whole thing – all of it - was about their forgiveness. This was about their freedom from fear, guilt, and shame. This was about true Peace of which the world knows nothing. Your forgiveness was won on the cross. Scripture foretold it. Jesus accomplished and finished it. Now you have God's forgiveness. The Holy Spirit lives in your heart. God loves you. Jesus has proved it.

This forgiveness frees you from your sin and guilt and from sin's control. God gives you peace to know that he is with you, has forgiven all your sin, and will walk with you and strengthen you to not be mastered by sin any longer. Jesus has won. Trust your Savior and his will for your life. Walk with him without fear knowing he will provide. He stands among you. And you have the message that frees others trapped in their guilt and shame. This is worth sharing. **Like and Share. Real peace in a real resurrected Savior.**

Jesus' disciple, Thomas, the twin, wasn't with them when Jesus appeared to the rest of the disciples. Thomas was brave, a straight shooter, and nobody's fool. He heard what they were saying, but where was Jesus? Was he staying at the Best Western in Bethany and Bethpage? Did Jesus have a doppelganger that looked like him? Can't believe all your friends' posts, can you?

Eight days later Jesus gives Thomas and the disciples something worth sharing. The Son of God, the Savior of the world, showed up again – same situation. Except, he uses the same words of doubt that Thomas blustered with 8 days earlier to show him, *"Stop doubting and believe."* Thomas touched the nail marks in Jesus' hands and put his hand to into Jesus' side. Thomas posts on the pages of Scripture about Jesus: *"My Lord and My God."* Jesus Christ is true God in the flesh, risen from the dead. Believe in him with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. He lives!

Jesus told him, *"Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."* John posts, *"Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name."* Jesus didn't always give everyone a sign just because they wanted one, or they demanded one. He left Herod hanging when he demanded a sign. He barely said a word to Pilate who thought he could free Jesus. He took a hit from an official when he told the High Priest that he spoke everything openly and honestly for all to hear and he could ask anyone who heard him, and they could speak it. Sometimes sinful hearts don't want signs even if they ask for them. But we do, and the Bible is full of signs that save. And blessed are you when you trust what Jesus has told you.

His Word – promises and commands. Trust that you are forgiven and freed and that his commands are good and best, even when difficult and we follow feebly. His Sacraments – remember your baptism and what God did for you through water and his Word and the lasting effects – you are a child of God, connected to all Christ has done, and saved. God loves even you and me. Go to the Supper to receive his body and blood for your forgiveness and strengthening of your faith to go and live freed and forgiven. Gather as a family of believers to hear his Word, to grow in Grace, and to encourage one another because the day is coming soon when he will stand among us physically, visibly just like he did with Thomas standing there and we will say too in awe and joy, *"My Lord and My God."* And Go. Live in his forgiveness. Be bold to run in his commands and promises trusting he knows what is best and will be with you whether you feel it or feel it not. Share this message, the Word, the Bible, with others. It saves. It's true. It changes hearts, lives, and eternities. It did so for Thomas. It has done so for you. **Like it. Share it. You have Real Peace in a Real Resurrected Savior.**