

- Rev. Grant Mangold, [www.RiversideChurchIowa.com](http://www.RiversideChurchIowa.com)

## POWER & PASSION

That Jesus rose from the dead is a well-attested fact of history. You are not at liberty to ignore His resurrection. Death, burial, resurrection are not normal, but supernatural. You MUST respond.

The apostle Paul says the resurrection is at the heart of the Christian faith, and must be believed. In addition to his appearances recorded in the gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, the risen Lord also appeared to more than 500 followers at one time. Most of whom were still alive when Paul wrote about it in 1 Cor 15 - so anyone could corroborate their testimony. Eyewitness accounts compel you to believe Jesus is alive - and experience His life-changing reality. Receive Him - or pay the price of rejecting Him.

**HIS PEACE** - In John 14:27 Jesus promised "*My peace I give to you, not as the world gives, so do not be afraid.*" This was in context of His leaving them, and giving them the Holy Spirit, which was all now coming to pass. In John 16:33 He said "*I have said these things that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart, I have overcome the world.*" In John 20:19, the resurrected Jesus gives them the fullness of His 'shalom' peace. They will need it as they withstand persecution and share the Good News. Because they will no longer be living for themselves, but for Him.

**HIS PURPOSE** - In John 20:21 Jesus said, "*As the Father has sent Me, even so I am sending you.*" If you are a believer, He sent YOU right here where you are right now - with His peace, for His purpose. John 20 is his capsule version of the "great commission" to go and make disciples. Why, for many who claim to be Christians it's their "great omission" - the one thing they won't or don't want to do? It takes power!

**HIS POWER** - In verse 22, Jesus breathed on them and said, "**Receive the Holy Spirit.**" It's a play on words. Spirit in Greek is *pneuma*, breath, air, spirit. The Bible pictures the Triune God as breathing out the creation of the cosmos, and breathing out the written Scriptures. But the Holy Spirit is the second person of the Triune God, not the actual physical breath of Jesus' mouth.

Jesus breathes as an object lesson of what will soon happen to the disciples on the day of Pentecost, in Acts 2. That's when they receive the promised power of the Holy Spirit, to carry out the mission of Jesus. Don't be confused by John's compressed account, as the actual giving of the Holy Spirit has already happened long before John writes his gospel, which he pens for theological, not chronological reasons.

Likewise in Luke 24 Jesus says the crucifixion and resurrection happened to fulfill Scripture. Therefore, "*Repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in My name. You are witnesses of these things. Behold, I am sending the promise of My Father upon you, to clothe you with power from on high.*"

John 20 is his account of the great commission, echoed in Matthew 28, Luke 24, Mark 16, Acts 1. Jesus passes on His mission, and provides not only His peace and purpose, but the power they require. This process protracted for 40 days after the resurrection until His ascension. The disciples waited in prayer another 10 days for the unleashing of the Spirit. For believers today, receiving the Holy Spirit (*John 1:33, 3:5, 1 Cor 12:13*) comes at the moment of regeneration, as you are born again from above, sealed, indwelt and gifted - all to serve the Savior, who has chosen and commissioned you for His purpose.

**YOUR PASSION** - Jesus gives His disciples three things. His PEACE makes you right with God, as you trust not in rituals but the work of Christ on the cross to pay for sins. His PURPOSE transforms your daily existence from mere earthly pursuits to His eternal purpose, to grow His kingdom. His POWER equips you with the indwelling Holy Spirit - so that you can do His will, to trust and obey Him in all things.

It's the Holy Spirit who convicts and convinces people of sin, and regenerates them to new birth in Christ. This happens as you share your testimony of faith in God's word which declares His judgment against sin, and His offer of forgiveness and new life by trusting in Christ's sacrifice and His resurrection.

These aren't just dry words from a dusty old book, these are words of life to you, if you believe! Jesus has sent YOU to the very place you are right now, so you can show and tell how Jesus has transformed your life, and how He will transform others too - if they will believe in Him! *Share this good news today!*