

# Word One Bible Study

## The Crucified and Risen Lord

by John T. Pless

Text: John 20:19-31 for the Second Sunday of Easter, Lectionary Series B

### THEME

The crucified and risen Lord gives out the saving gifts of His cross and empty tomb, creating faith and overcoming doubt.

### OBJECTIVES

The Bible study aims to assist participants to see the connection between our Savior's coming to the disciples on Easter evening and His coming to us in the Divine Service that we might grow in faithful and joyful use of God's Word and Sacrament.

### GROUP GUIDELINES

1. Have copies of the Bible, the hymnal and the Small Catechism available for each participant.
2. If more than 12 people are present, divide into groups of 6-8 persons.
3. The person whose birthday is nearest to Easter this year will serve as leader.

### BUILDING COMMUNITY

1. What was the most memorable thing about your last celebration of Easter?
2. What is your favorite Easter hymn? Why?

### LOOKING AT GOD'S WORD

Read John 20:19-23.

1. The setting is the evening of Easter Day. The Resurrection had happened (see John 10:1-18) but the disciples were still in a state of confusion. John describes this confusion as "fear" (verse 19). What did their fear cause the disciples to do? What do our fears often cause us to do?
2. The Risen Lord did not leave His disciples alone in their fear nor does He leave us locked up in our fears. Jesus says to His disciples, "Peace be with you" (verse 19 and again in verse 21). In the Scriptures, peace is that word which carries everything that the Lord has won for us by His dying on the cross. How do the following passages help us understand "peace"?

Colossians 1:19-20

Ephesians 2:14-18

Our Lord's last words to His disciples before going to His suffering and death were a promise of peace (see John 16:33). Now the Lord actually gives this peace to His disciples! Skim through Divine Service II or "The Order of Holy Communion" in the hymnal, noting each reference to the Lord's peace.

3. The peace that Jesus gave His disciples on Easter Evening He still gives to us in His Word and Sacrament. What is the connection between Jesus' words and His death? How is this scene a "repeat" of creation (see Psalm 33:6)? Read the "Office of the Keys" in the Small Catechism. Where do we go to get these gifts?

Read John 20:24-31.

1. Thomas was not "in church" on Easter Evening; therefore, he did not receive the blessings which the Lord gave out when He appeared to His disciples. The text does not tell us why Thomas was absent from the gathering of disciples, but we are told that he was "locked in" his doubt. What did Thomas need?
2. Thomas is called Didymus or the Twin. How are we "twins" (literally "doubles") of Thomas?
3. How does the Lord overcome Thomas' doubt (verses 26-27)?
4. What does Thomas confess in response to Jesus' gift (verse 28)?

5. The Lord speaks a benediction in verse 9. Read 1 Peter 1:3-9. How do the words of our Lord and of the Apostle Peter comfort and strengthen you?
6. According to verses 30 and 31, what is the purpose of Jesus' signs and words? How does this passage help us understand how to listen to the Scriptures and the preaching of God's Word?

## **CLOSING**

Pray together the collect for Easter II:

Grant, almighty God, that we, who have celebrated the mystery of the Lord's resurrection, may by the help of your grace bring forth the fruits thereof in our life and conduct through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen." (Lutheran Worship, p. 50)

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