

Jn20:19 Then, the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them, "Peace be with you."

20:20 When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord.

20:21 So Jesus said to them again, "Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you."

20:22 And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit.

20:23 "If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

20:24 Now Thomas, called the Twin, one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came.

20:25 The other disciples therefore said to him, "We have seen the Lord." So he said to them, "Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe."

20:26 And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, "Peace to you!"

20:27 Then He said to Thomas, "Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing."

20:28 And Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!"

20:29 Jesus said to him, "Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

20:30 And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book;

20:31 but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.

### **【From today's sermon】**

Let us read about what happened on the day of the Lord's resurrection.

The other disciples repeatedly tell Thomas, "We have seen the Lord." It is as if they are saying, "You should have been there too. You could have met Jesus."

However, Thomas was Thomas. While he regretted missing the opportunity, he also must have felt frustrated that the other disciples were so afraid and trembling, even though they had seen Jesus.

This teaches us that everyone is necessary in a gathering. We are taught that a community is formed when we help and support one another. It is not enough for someone to be there; everyone is needed. The church needed Thomas's insight and his unwavering determination

once he had seen something. And the church needs brothers and sisters who, no matter how dangerous the situation or how faint the hope may seem, continue to attend worship services, trusting in the Lord.

Jesus spoke to them three times, saying, “Peace be with you,” and that there would be peace and harmony. He also said, “Do not be unbelievers, but believers,” and “Keep the faith.” Believe without seeing. Believe in the One who is invisible but certainly present and who saves us, regardless of the circumstances. I desire to continue to have faith in God.

Good morning, everyone. Let us continue reading about the events of the day of the Lord's resurrection.

Today, we will look at the story of Thomas in the Gospel of John.

This passage is well known as the story of “doubting Thomas,” but it reminds us of the incident when Jesus asked Thomas about Lazarus' tomb.

John 10:22 At that time, the Feast of the Cleansing of the Temple was taking place in Jerusalem. It was winter.

10:23 Jesus was walking in the Temple area, in Solomon's Colonnade.

10:24 The Jews gathered around him and asked, “How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly.”

10:25 Jesus answered them, “I have told you, but you do not believe. All the works I do in my Father's name testify about me.

10:26 You do not believe because you are not my sheep.

10:27 My sheep listen to my voice. I know them, and they follow me.

10:28 I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand.

10:29 My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can take them out of my Father's hand.

10:30 No one can take them out of my Father's hand.

10:31 Then the Jews picked up stones to stone him.

10:32 But Jesus answered them, “I have shown you many good works from the Father. For which of these do you stone me?”

10:33 The Jews answered, “We are not stoning you for any good work you have done, but for blasphemy, because you, though only a human being, claim to be God.”

10:34 Jesus answered them, “Is it not written in your law, ‘You are gods’?”

10:35 If those to whom the word of God came were called gods, and they are God,

10:36 will you not call the one whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world, 'You blaspheme,' because he said, 'I am the Son of God'?

10:37 If I am not doing the works of my Father, then do not believe me.

10:38 But if I am doing them, even if you do not believe me, believe the works, so that you may know and understand that the Father is in me, and I am in the Father."

10:39 Then they tried to arrest him, but he escaped from their grasp and left them.

10:40 Jesus went again to the other side of the Jordan, to the place where John had first baptized, and he stayed there.

10:41 Many people came to Jesus and said to one another, "John performed no sign, but everything John said about this man was true."

10:42 And many believed in Jesus.

11:1 Now there was a man who was sick, named Lazarus, and he was from Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha.

11:2 This Mary was the one who anointed the Lord with perfume and wiped his feet with her hair. Her brother Lazarus was the one who was sick.

11:3 So the sisters sent someone to tell Jesus, "Lord, the one you love is sick."

11:4 When Jesus heard this, he said, "This illness is not going to kill him; it is for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it."

11:5 Jesus loved Martha, her sister, and Lazarus.

11:6 After he heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed where he was for two more days.

11:7 Then he said to his disciples, "Let us go back to Judea."

11:8 The disciples said to him, "Rabbi, the Jews were just now trying to stone you, and you want us to go there?"

11:9 Jesus answered, "There are twelve hours in a day. If anyone works during the day, they will not stumble, because they see the light of this world.

11:10 But if one walks at night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him."

11:11 When he had said this, he said to them, 'Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep; but I am going there to wake him up.'

11:12 The disciples said to him, "Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will get well."

11:13 Jesus had been speaking of Lazarus, who was dead, but they thought he was speaking of Lazarus who was asleep.

11:14 Then Jesus told them plainly, "Lazarus is dead.

11:15 And for your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. Let us go to him."

11:16 Then Thomas, called the Twin, said to the other disciples, 'Let us also go, that we may die with him.'

Indeed, when we look at today's passage, he said, "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger into the nail marks and put my hand into his side, I will never believe." He seems quite stubborn and doubtful, but on the other hand, even though he was worried that the other disciples would be in danger if they returned to Jerusalem, he was a man of courage who said, "If the Lord has commanded it, what can we hesitate to do? Let us go and die with him if we must."

20:19 On that day, the first day of the week, in the evening, the disciples were gathered together in a room with the doors locked because they were afraid of the Jews. Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you."

20:20 After saying this, he showed them his hands and his side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord.

The other disciples were gathered together that evening, but they had closed the doors because they were afraid of the Jews. Thomas, who was supposed to be brave and bold, was not there. What happened to him? Perhaps he would have encouraged the others not to be afraid if he had been there, but he was not there in the first place. Why was he not there? Was he perhaps more cowardly than those who were present? However, the reason is not recorded. In the midst of this, Jesus stood among the disciples and said, "Peace be with you." Saying this, he showed them his hands and his side, and the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord.

20:21 Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you."

20:22 Then he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit.

20:23 If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

Jesus again said to his disciples, "Peace be with you," and breathed on them.

"Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

Jesus spoke of something truly important. It was about forgiving people's sins.

One month later, on June 8, is Pentecost, but receiving the Holy Spirit and forgiving people's sins are spoken of together. By receiving the Holy Spirit, we come to understand the will of

God the Father and are able to pray in the name of Christ. Praying in the name of Christ means praying through Christ. Praying through Christ means believing in Christ, desiring what Christ desires, and uniting our hearts in prayer.

John 14:12 “Very truly I tell you, Whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do. And greater works than these will they do, because I am going to the Father.

14:13 Whatever you ask in my name, I will do it, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

14:14 If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

14:15 If you love me, you will keep my commandments.

14:16 I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, that he may be with you forever—

14:17 the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know it, because it is with you and is in you.

14:18 I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.

14:19 In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live.

14:20 On that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you.

14:21 Whoever has my commandments and keeps them is the one who loves me. And the one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and reveal myself to him.

1 John 5:1 Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God. Everyone who loves the one who gave birth to him also loves the one who was born of him.

5:2 If we love God and keep his commandments, we know that we love God's children.

5:3 This is love for God: to obey his commands. And his commands are not burdensome.

5:4 For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world: our faith.

5:5 Who is the one who overcomes the world? Only the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.

5:6 This Jesus is the one who came by water and blood—not by water only, but by water and blood. The Spirit is the one who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth.

5:7 There are three that testify:

5:8 the Spirit, the water, and the blood. And these three agree as one.

5:9 We accept the testimony of men, but God's testimony is greater. For this is the testimony of God that He has testified concerning His Son.

5:10 Whoever believes in the Son of God has this in him. Whoever does not believe God has made Him a liar, because he has not believed the testimony that God has testified concerning His Son.

5:11 And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.

5:12 Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.

5:13 I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life.

5:14 This is the confidence we have in God: that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.

5:15 And if we know that He hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have the requests we asked of Him.

5:16 If anyone sees his brother committing a sin that does not lead to death, he should ask, and God will give him life. There is a sin that leads to death. I do not say that he should ask about that.

In 1 John 5, at the climax of the passage about prayer, it says, “If anyone sees his brother committing a sin that does not lead to death, he should ask, and God will give him life. There is a sin that leads to death. I am not saying that you should ask about that.”

James 1:15 Desire is what causes sin, and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.

6:23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Therefore, we are told to pray earnestly for our brothers so that they may not die. The term “brothers” here refers to the members of the church.

20:22 Then he breathed on them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit.

20:23 Whatever sins you forgive, they are forgiven; whatever sins you retain, they are retained.”

Here, it says ‘whatever sins,’ so it does not seem to refer only to the members of the church. We have been given the Holy Spirit and have received the passion and mission to save people from sin and death. Forgiveness or not forgiving is not literally that if we forgive, it will be

forgiven in heaven, and if we do not forgive, it will not be forgiven in heaven. Rather, it means that we should not hold onto feelings of hatred toward that person and refrain from conveying God's forgiveness, but instead deeply listen to the Holy Spirit about God's desire to forgive everyone, and to fulfill our mission by proclaiming God's salvation and forgiveness to everyone, so that salvation may come. If we do not fulfill this mission of proclaiming God's forgiveness and salvation, and if we refuse to love, forgive, and accept that person, how can their sins be forgiven? We should understand that our mission of preaching is closely connected to salvation and forgiveness.

1 Timothy 2:4 God desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

20:24 One of the twelve disciples, Thomas, called the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came.

20:25 The other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But Thomas said to them, "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger into the nail marks and put my hand into his side, I will not believe."

The phrase "the other disciples said to him, 'We have seen the Lord'" implies that the other disciples were repeatedly telling Thomas, "We have seen the Lord." Thomas was such a straightforward and courageous man that he must have regretted not being there at that time, and he must have felt irritated by the other disciples who kept repeating, "We have seen the Lord," as if to show off to him. And he said, "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands, put my finger into the nail marks, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe."

Everyone says they saw Jesus, but why are they so afraid of the Jews and trembling? They say they saw him, but did they really see him? Was it not a vision? Did they get close enough to confirm that it was truly Jesus? Perhaps he looked at the other disciples with such eyes, thinking that their claims of having met him were hollow because they had not thoroughly verified the details.

A group certainly needs someone like him—cautious, thorough, never swayed by emotions, who observes carefully, and once he believes, he will believe and follow through even at the cost of his life. At the same time, the church also needs people who, even while saying, "It's scary," and feeling danger, continue to gather quietly but persistently. It's not about having one person who can save everyone else, but about everyone being necessary. And it is by combining the unique qualities of each individual that a strong church and a strong community are formed.

20:26 Eight days later, the disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. The doors were locked, but Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you."

20:27 Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Do not be unbelieving, but believe."

20:28 Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!"

This is the third time Jesus said, "Peace be with you." The word "peace" means "calm" or "tranquility," but it also means "harmony." Peace and harmony are what make up tranquility. In the fellowship of the church, it is not enough for me to have peace; it is important that we have harmony and peace, and that there is tranquility among all of us.

May the grace of God, who gathers manna from heaven and shares it with us without distinction, be with the entire flock. And may God's peace, harmony, and tranquility be with the whole world. May it be a world where the poor are rewarded.

Exodus 16:15 When the Israelites saw it, they said to one another, "What is it?" They did not know what it was. Moses said to them, "This is the bread that the Lord has given you to eat.

16:16 This is what the Lord commands: 'Each of you is to gather as much as you need, and each of you is to take as much as you need for your tent.'"

16:17 The Israelites did so; some gathered much, some little.

16:18 But when they measured it with an ephah, there was no shortage for those who gathered much or for those who gathered little. Each gathered according to what they ate.

16:19 Moses said to them, "Let no one leave any of it until morning."

16:20 But they did not listen to Moses; some kept some of it until morning, and it became foul and full of worms. Moses was angry with them.

16:21 They gathered it every morning, each according to what he ate, and when the sun grew hot, it melted.

20:28 Thomas answered Jesus, "My Lord and my God!"

20:29 Jesus said to him, "Because you have seen me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

May we be able to believe even without seeing. May we be able to continue to have faith even without seeing.

Even though we cannot see the Lord face to face at this moment, may we continue to believe. May we continue to have faith. May we be guided by the Holy Spirit and, through the harmony

and unity of the Church, fulfill God's commission to bring forgiveness, salvation, harmony, peace, and tranquility to the world, no matter how difficult or dangerous the world may seem.

20:30 Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book.

20:31 But these things 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.

Jesus Christ is our Savior, Redeemer, Prince of Peace, and Wonderful Counselor who gives us life. We desire to live with the Savior who gives us life, to be sustained by life, and to pass on life to others.

Isaiah 9:6 A child has been born for us, a son has been given to us. The government will rest on his shoulders, and his name will be called "Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."

9:7 Of the increase of his government and peace there will be without end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time onward and forever. The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this.

◇Prayer: **Heavenly Father, we thank you for today's worship.**

**Thank you for encouraging us three times with the words "Be at peace," breathing on our smoldering faith and urging us to help and support one another as we move forward. Thank you also for encouraging us to never lose our faith, no matter what our circumstances may be. Please lead all those who are suffering into God's salvation and peace. Bless our families and our community. Use us. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.**