

AMANA TRUST BIBLE STUDIES

Lessons from the Gospel of John (22): Life in Resurrection (1)—Coming as the Spirit to Be Breathed into the Believers

Bible reading

You may find it helpful to also read the entire case found in John 20:1-31.

John 20:19-22

19 When therefore it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and while the doors were shut where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst and said to them, Peace be to you.

20 And when He had said this, He showed them His hands and His side. The disciples therefore rejoiced at seeing the Lord.

21 Then Jesus said to them again, Peace be to you; as the Father has sent Me, I also send you.

22 And when He had said this, He breathed into them and said to them, Receive the Holy Spirit.

Introduction

The record of resurrection in the Gospel of John focuses on the impartation of the divine life. This gospel highlights the two crucial steps that the Lord took to accomplish His eternal purpose. First He took the step of incarnation to become flesh, to be among man, and to die in order to redeem us. Next, the Lord Jesus took a second great step to be within man. Therefore, in resurrection Christ became the life-giving Spirit in order to enter into His believers as life for God's building. By breathing Himself into His believers, He fulfilled and made real all that He had promised in John chapters 14—16.

Bible study reading

Please prayerfully read through the following portions of ministry related to this lesson.

The only way that the Lord can be one with us and be within us is by breathing Himself into us. Therefore, we must receive the Spirit, which is the reality of Christ. If we have received the Spirit of Christ, we have received the reality of Christ. In other words, this simply means that we have received Christ Himself. By this we see that the Lord sends us by breathing Himself into us.

[John 20] verse 22 says, "And when He had said this, He breathed into them and said to them, Receive the Holy Spirit." The Lord is the Word who is the eternal God (1:1). In the Gospel of John, the Word passes through a long process and eventually becomes the breath, the pneuma, that He might get into the believers. For the accomplishment of God's eternal purpose, He took two steps. Firstly, He took the step of incarnation to become a man in the flesh (1:14), to be "the Lamb of God" to accomplish redemption for man (1:29), to declare God to man (1:18), and to manifest the Father to His believers (14:9-11). Secondly, He took the step of death and resurrection to be transfigured into the Spirit that He might impart Himself into His believers as their life and their everything, and that He might bring forth many sons of God, His many brothers, for the building of His Body, the church, the habitation of God, to express the Triune God for eternity. Originally

He was the eternal Word. Through His incarnation, He then became flesh to accomplish God's redemption, and through His death and resurrection He became the Spirit to be everything and to do everything for the completion of God's building.

Never forget that the eternal Word took two steps: the step to become flesh (1:14) and the step to become the life-giving Spirit (1 Cor. 15:45). We must remember these two "becomings"—becoming flesh and becoming the life-giving Spirit. The first step was the step of incarnation, and the second step was that of resurrection. The first step was for redemption and the second step was for life-imparting. After becoming flesh to be the Lamb of God to shed His blood for our redemption, He became in resurrection the life-giving Spirit for the purpose of imparting Himself into us as life. (*Life-study of John*, msg. 46, section 3)

The Holy Spirit in [John chapter 20] verse 22 is the Spirit expected in 7:39 and promised in 14:16-17, 26; 15:26; and 16:7-8, 13. Thus, the Lord's breathing of the Holy Spirit into the disciples was the fulfillment of His promise of the Holy Spirit as the Comforter...In chapter fourteen the Lord promised that He would ask the Father to send another Comforter. Here in chapter twenty He brings to His disciples the other Comforter, the Spirit of reality. Now the Spirit of reality has come into His disciples to be within them; now the disciples know that the Lord is in the Father and that the Father is in the Lord; and now they are in the Lord and the Lord is in them. They realize that they are now one with the Triune God. Therefore, all that the Lord had spoken to them in chapters fourteen, fifteen, and sixteen is fulfilled at this very moment. (*Life-study of John*, msg. 46, section 4)

Going deeper

Please read or listen to these materials for an in-depth study of this lesson.

Further reading:

[*Life-study of John*, msg. 46](#)

Radio broadcast link:

Broadcast 49, [*Life in Resurrection \(1\)*](#)

(Click the link above and select Broadcast 49.)

Footnotes from Recovery Version of the New Testament:

John 20:22, footnote 1

John 20:26, footnote 3

Questions for personal or corporate study:

References in brackets indicate readings or broadcasts that may be helpful in answering the questions.

- What two steps did the Lord Jesus take to accomplish God's eternal purpose?
- How was the breathing of the Lord Jesus into His disciples in John 20:22 the fulfillment of the promises found throughout the Gospel of John?

Next week

Life in Resurrection (2)—Stirring up the Disciples' Love toward Him and Charging Them with Lamb-feeding and Sheep-shepherding

John chapter 20 is a chapter of promises becoming reality. After passing through the process of death and resurrection to become the Spirit, the Lord Jesus was able to enter into His believers. Now as the promised Spirit of reality and Comforter, He abides in us and makes real all that Christ is and has accomplished. Although this seems like an apt conclusion to the Gospel of John, next week we will see the wonderful matters of loving the Lord as our great Shepherd and feeding the lambs and shepherding the sheep for the building up of the church.

Works Cited

Lee, Witness. *Life-study of John*. Anaheim: Living Stream Ministry, 1985. www.ministrybooks.org

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