

# That You Might Have Life – Gospel of John

[John 20:1-31](#)

“Life in His Name” – December 5, 2021



## **Introduction**

How would you finish this sentence...I would be happy if...? As we reflect on that question, our minds may fill with many things. We want joy. We don't want to merely exist; we want to live. [John 10:10](#).

You may have no problem with Jesus' claim for life. But Christian faith is undivided. Trusting in Christ as the One who gives life means forsaking all others. The world does not rely on Jesus for life. They trust wealth, power, entertainment, and success. If they have control, they have joy. We can be confused when the world seems happy – when the wicked prosper. But when we struggle, we envy the wicked. ([Psalm 73](#))

The disciples are trapped by fear and confusion now that Jesus is dead and buried. BUT - Jesus rose from the dead! Jesus is alive!

## **Pray**

Before you begin, take some time to ask God to help you understand His word, to reveal what needs to change in you, and for the grace to follow Him in response. To help, use [Psalm 119:33-40](#) as a prayer for God to open His word up to you.

## **Sermon Outline**

- I. Despair turns into hope. Vs. 1-18
- II. Fear turns into joy. Vs. 19-23
- III. Skepticism turns into trust. Vs. 24-28
- IV. Trust leads to life. Vs. 29-31

## **Read & Discuss**

- 1) Read 20:1-18

It's Sunday, and Mary is the first person to arrive at the tomb. It's dark. John emphasized this because the disciples are in the dark about what's happened. The disciples didn't understand. They had the Old Testament and Jesus' word. Had they believed this, they could have avoided the despair.

The lynchpin of Christianity is the resurrection! If you are making up a story in 1st century AD you don't want women as a witness (their testimony was inadmissible in court) or cast the disciples in such a bad light (slow to believe). But John is telling it like it is. He's telling the truth about what happened.

Jesus is patient with Mary who is in despair. In moments of despair, we forget the promises of God. Jesus says one word and speaks her name. She immediately understands and sees. This is how God's word works. He can speak one word to pull you out of despair. The resurrection is a guarantee that God can handle any problem we have today. There is no problem bigger than death. We are never without hope.

Did you wrestle with truths of scripture before you believed? Can you relate to Mary's despair? What are the problems in your life now that you need to trust God with?

**Additional Reading:** *Matthew 28:1-16; Mark 16:1-13, Luke 24:1-12; 1 Corinthians 15; Psalm 42*

- 2) Read 20:19-23

The disciples were hiding because of fear of the Jews. Jesus appears. The last time they saw Him was when He was arrested. They fled at that time. What do you think they expected Jesus to say after they had failed Him? Jesus comes to them. He looked at them and says, "Peace!" He loves them. He reassures

them that His death accomplished what He set out to do – peace with God for them! What affect does this have in them? They were glad!! Jesus took the sting of death for them, and His resurrection proves that death is not the end.

Peace with God leads to peace with others. He sends them to bear witness of the truth. ([John 18:37](#); [John 20:21](#). [Mathew 28:18-20](#), [Mark 16:15](#)) How can we do that? How do we put selfishness to death and be united as a church, to share the Gospel? It is only with God's help.

What do you expect after you fail Jesus? Are their times when you are afraid - Of what might happen tomorrow? What people will think? That you might fail? Of letting someone down?

**Additional Reading:** *Matthew 28:16-20; Mark 16:12-15; John 16:20-22; Isaiah 41:10*

3) Read 20:25-28

Thomas wasn't at Jesus' initial appearance to the disciples. When the disciples tell Him the good news, he is skeptical. He had followed Jesus for 3 years. He was all in - burned the bridge to plan B. Now he was heartbroken because of Jesus' death. Now Jesus appears again and says "Peace!" He invites Thomas to feel the wounds and commands him to believe.

Even as a Christian, we can struggle with unbelief and skepticism. Skepticism gives us the illusion of control and leads to turning inward, keeping people at arm's length. But the way to guard your heart is by making yourself vulnerable to God. Trust the risen Lord, and He will never fail you.

What are some of the reasons you have experienced for skepticism and unbelief?

**Additional Reading:** *Psalm 34:18; Psalm 147:3*

4) Read 20:29-31

Hundreds of people saw and heard Jesus during His earthly ministry and didn't believe. But we see Him with the eyes of our heart and believe. God used John to give us a true and faithful account of Jesus' life so that we can read it today. John shows us who Jesus really is so that we might believe.

God does the complete work of redemption. Sin separates us from God. We are unresponsive to God. But, we can have life – eternal life. "Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

When did God open the eyes of your heart to the truth of Jesus? With whom can you share that Good News this week?

**Additional Reading:** *Ephesians 1:18; 2:1*

### **Prayer of Response**

1) After hearing God's Word, what sin do I need to *confess*? From what do I need to *repent*?

2) How should my life be lived this week based on what I have heard? What should I *understand, believe, desire, or do*?

Spend time praying together in response to God's word asking for His help and greater faith to follow Him in the week to com.

If you missed the sermon on Sunday or would like to listen again, visit our website at <https://fbcum.org/sermons-new/>

**\*Next week's sermon text:** we turn to [John 21:1-25](#) "From Denial to Embrace"