

# Jesus, the Living King (John 20:19-31)

Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> April 2020

Rev Simba – All Saints Tatura Anglican Church



All Saints Tatura

Loving Jesus and Our Community

To listen to this sermon go to: <https://allsaintstatura.org.au/sermon/>

G'day everyone, I do hope you had a wonderful Easter and that you were able to use plenty of those extra Diocesan resources that were at your disposal on Good Friday. My family and I are doing well, thank you for your continuous encouragement and prayers. We continue to see God's faithfulness daily. Our kids have started second term – Vusa at Kinder and Thembi at home. We're juggling the online learning and all the various routines that come with.

Our scripture today is **John 20:19-31**

*<sup>19</sup> On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" <sup>20</sup> After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord.*

*<sup>21</sup> Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." <sup>22</sup> And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. <sup>23</sup> If you forgive anyone's sins, their sins are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven."*

*<sup>24</sup> Now Thomas (also known as Didymus), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. <sup>25</sup> So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord!"*

*But he said to them, "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe."*

*<sup>26</sup> A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" <sup>27</sup> Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe."*

*<sup>28</sup> Thomas said to him, "My Lord and my God!"*

*<sup>29</sup> Then Jesus told him, "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."*

<sup>30</sup> *Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book.* <sup>31</sup> *But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.*

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I remember walking along a footpath a few weeks ago early in the morning and when all of sudden, I saw a very big dog...a brown pitbull running towards me. Dogs may be considered by some to be man's best friend but at times their actions can be quite unpredictable! Especially pitbulls, from what I know they can be aggressive and vicious. This particular dog's temperament wasn't friendly at all. I was scared as the dog was running towards me and barking loudly! I continued walking towards him but I wasn't sure if this was the right thing to do. The scary pitbull slowed down and as we came face to face...can you guess? He just sniffed me for a few seconds and then that was it! He turned around and went back to his owner's house. I was terrified throughout the ordeal- it was as if my heart was in my mouth!

In our passage today- John 20:19-31, we're looking at **Jesus, The Living King.**

Jesus had risen victoriously from the grave. He conquered the death and sin for all people. He appeared to different people...for some several times...to people who knew him very well and some who didn't recognise him. It also says in 1 Corinthians 15:6 *"After that, he appeared to more than 500 of the brothers and sisters at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep."*

In Luke 24:13-35, Jesus appears to two men travelling from Jerusalem to Emmaus, their home village. The two men are dejected and defeated because of the death of Jesus but confused at the same time because there's now news of Jesus' resurrection. Mary Magdalene in John 20:1-8, Matthew 28:1-15 meets Jesus after the resurrection. From the account in the gospel of John, Mary thinks that Jesus is the gardener who taken the body of Jesus (v.13-17).

Jesus' original disciples were gathered together after his resurrection- except Thomas and of course, Judas who had betrayed Jesus. The disciples had locked themselves in a room to hide. Can you think of a good reason why they were so afraid?.....They had many good reasons to be afraid. They were afraid of the Jewish leaders who had demanded that Jesus be killed. They were afraid because they were close followers of Jesus and believed this put them in danger of a similar fate to him. They were afraid because the Roman guards had lied and said that the disciples had stolen Jesus body after his resurrection in Matthew 28:11-

15. They were AFRAID. Their fear well exceeded my fear of the pitbull dog that I told you about at the beginning

But so AFRAID that the doors are locked and bolted? Please notice the scripture mentions “doors’ in plural! Meaning that there was an entrance door which they locked & bolted, then maybe an inside door (again locked and bolted) which then led to another door where the disciples met...and this door was locked too. Formal residences, like today had locks and bolts to prevent anyone from entering. But...Jesus’ resurrected body is not bound physically bound by locked doors. Jesus affirms his presence by using a standard greeting, “**Peace be with you.**”

The disciples’ joy at this reunion is a joy that no one will take away. The presence of this joy is brought by Jesus’ peace which he pronounces. Please notice how Jesus speaks peace upon his disciples:

- **Verse 19** ...peace be with you
- **Verse 21**...peace be with you
- **Verse 26** A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.”

In verse 20, we are told

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

We see that Jesus gives more proof of his resurrection by physically showing them his wounds. He probably gestured- “It’s me. Have a look at my hands. Look on my side where they pierced me with the spear. It’s me.” Wounds were sometimes used as evidence in court - here their function is to show that this is the same Jesus who died. The disciples remembered the wounds on his hands from the nails during the crucifixion; the wounds on his side were from the soldiers as they drove the spear just before he died.

Jesus’ self-disclosure to his disciples on that first evening of his resurrection should be understood as the fulfillment of all he had promised in his farewell conversations. For instance, he promises in John 14:8 “...I will come to you” and John 14:23 “My father and I will come to him”. This promise is fulfilled in John 20:19, 26- “...And Jesus came and stood among them.” In another promise of coming back to his disciples (John 16:16), Jesus went on to say, “In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me.” Again, Jesus speaks to his disciples in John 16:22 “So with you: Now is your time of grief, but I will see you again and you will rejoice, and no one will take away your joy”. Now, just look at the glorious fulfillment of the words Jesus had spoken in

John 20:20, *“After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord.”* All of sudden, their sorrow and fear, turned into joy just as Jesus had told them it would! Then Jesus repeats the greeting, **“Peace be with you,”** in verse 21, and now adds *“as the Father sent me I am sending you.”*

Jesus had returned, not for a brief visit and to then go away again. He came back to be with his followers - forever, living in their hearts. His return is not a momentary incident but the beginning of a new relationship.

Jesus had said in John 14:19-20,

*“Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you.”*

Jesus is the Living King. Alive forever more, not to die again. Remember the conversation Jesus had with Pilate the Roman governor prior to his death (John 18:37):

*“You are a king, then!” said Pilate.*

*Jesus answered, “You say that I am a king. In fact, the reason I was born and came into the world is to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me.”*

If Judas had known. If Annas the priest had known. If Caiaphas the high priest had known. If Pilate had known. If the soldiers had known. If the Jews had known...

If they had known that Jesus is the real king, the living King, the one spoken of in Daniel 7:14,

*“He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all nations and peoples of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.”*

The one spoken of in Isaiah 9:7,

*“Of the greatness of his government and peace  
there will be no end.  
He will reign on David’s throne  
and over his kingdom,  
establishing and upholding it  
with justice and righteousness  
from that time on and forever.*

*The zeal of the LORD Almighty  
will accomplish this."*

Jesus is the living king. Alive forever more among his followers and living in their hearts by faith. This new relationship is made possible by the Holy Spirit, whom Jesus had said, "...lives with you and will be in you," (John 14:17). Jesus is very different to earthly kings. The kings of the earth will all die and have all died before. Jesus will never die again. He is with us every day and all the time.

Jesus wants us to have peace in a world full of chaos, trouble, disease, even COVID-19 and all the uncertainty that we face.

There's a song written and sung by Bill and Gloria Gaither, "Because He lives." A song which they say was written in a time of extreme mental anguish, uncertainty, anxiety, pain and a pregnancy in the midst of severe hardships. Some of the lyrics of the song are:

God sent His Son  
They called Him Jesus  
He came to love, heal and forgive  
He lived and died to buy my pardon  
An empty grave is there to prove my Savior lives

Because He lives I can face tomorrow  
Because He lives all fear is gone  
Because I know He holds the future  
And life is worth the living just because He lives

And then one day  
I'll cross that river  
I'll fight life's final war with pain  
And then as death gives way to vict'ry

Jesus is the living King, who gives strength to those who believe.

This living King calls the non-believer to look up to him because he is the giver of life.

He is our hope in a hopeless world.

He now lives and reigns with the father so that, by believing in him, we may have life in his name just as it says there in John 20:31.

God wants us to put our trust in Jesus this morning, even as we face a complex world pandemic. Governments will help to an extent. Our hospital and doctors will reach the end of themselves. Researchers, scientists and epidemiologists are

not sure when the vaccine to COVID-19 will be found. No one knows. Even the smartest scientists in the top laboratories and research institutions across the globe do not know.

Now my question to you is, does God know? Does Jesus know? The answer is yes he knows all of creation. He is all-knowing. He knows every part of our planet earth. He knows every bacteria and virus. He knows this deadly and dreaded Coronavirus. He is above it because he is the God of all creation. God speaks loudly through Paul in Colossians 1:15-17

*“The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.”*

From our passage today,

God sends us out to continue the words and works of Jesus.

He sends us out to go and bear fruit that’s long-lasting and acceptable before God.

He sends us out with the good news of his forgiveness in Jesus Christ.

Let’s pray

*Our Father in heaven, we thank you for the ministry of your word this morning. Be glorified through our lives as we worship you in our homes.*

*We pray as your people that we may have a faithful and affectionate relationship with Jesus, your only Son, the brightness of your glory, your exact image.*

*Although we have not seen him, may we love him by faith because of his sacrifice for our sins. Help us to believe all that he did, taught, promised and commanded in the scriptures. As we put our faith in your Son Jesus, help us to discover what it is to have joy and peace in him.*

*Through your Holy Spirit, may we live daily by faith in your Son, Jesus our Saviour. Father, please fill us with your Holy Spirit, and not just being filled with the Spirit- we pray that we will be led by your Spirit. We want it to be evident to others that we are children of God.*

*Lord Jesus, on that first evening of your resurrection, the disciples were filled with fear behind locked doors. You appeared proving to them that you had defeated*

*death. They were immediately filled with joy and even more joy as you spoke to them again. How we desire that peace and joy right now- only you give it.*

*We therefore pray in your Mighty name that you will remove the spirit of fear in us caused by this COVID19 crisis. You have adopted us as your dear children. You live in us. You delight in us. We cry to you saying ABBA Father. We acknowledge the chaos and suffering in the world right now, the pain, the overwhelming and discouraging news that we wake up to everyday. Lord the world is hurting. There are many people grieving the loss of their loved ones and others the loss of social interaction with loved ones. There is worry, fear and anxiety. Nearly all institutions and governments across the world, are struggling to cope with the impact of this pandemic- COVID-19. Lord, in your name we take authority over fear in God's people right now. Lord your Spirit does not make us slaves to fear. Come now Lord. You are our only hope. We declare that you are the living King.*

*You are in control and in you there is victory. You are all-knowing and absolutely powerful. Nothing is impossible with you. You are sovereign and unchanging in your mercy and love. You are near to the broken-hearted, and you save those crushed in spirit.*

*Lord please make us strong and courageous for the days, weeks and months ahead.*

*We surrender ourselves under your mighty hand. Help us to be faithful in prayer, reading your word and obeying it as we wait for your deliverance. Remove doubt and unbelief as we pray to you. Purify our hearts and cast out whatever doesn't belong to you. Help us to be content in every situation, patient in all trials, knowing that you are on our side.*

*Lord, we pray that ultimately, it will be your name that will be glorified.*

*Jesus, our precious King, the one who went on the cross for us, the now Risen King.*

*The Living King, the one who reigns and lives forever.*

*Amen.*