

Quick Backdrop

Imagine the disciples' situation that first Easter weekend. They'd followed Jesus for three years. They depended on Him for guidance, even for daily things like food. They found His teaching irresistible. They were moved by His mercy and compassion. *And they'd just watched Him die—at the hands of an angry mob they thought might be coming for them.* It must have been tense in that upper room,

1 Digging In (God, Show Me!)

If you were Jesus, what do you think you'd have said to the disciples when you first saw them after your resurrection? Write down an idea or two.

Jesus could have given His disciples the biggest "I told you so" of all time. But He didn't. Read John 20:19-28 below. Highlight the first words Jesus said whenever he saw a disciple or a group of disciples. Then jot down the words you circled.

John 20:19-28 (NIV)

¹⁹ *On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you."* ²⁰ *When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord.* ²¹ *Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you."* ²² *And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³ If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you withhold forgiveness from any, it is withheld."*

²⁴ *Now Thomas, one of the Twelve, called the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came.*

²⁵ *So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see in his hands the mark of the nails, and place my finger into the mark of the nails, and place my hand into his side, I will never believe."*

²⁶ *Eight days later, his disciples were inside again, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you."*

²⁷ *Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side. Do not disbelieve, but believe."²⁸ Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!"²⁹ Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."*

Fold or Cut

2 Taking It Inward (God, Teach Me!)

Of all the things Jesus could have said to His friends, He said, "Peace." You've gotta figure it's an important word! Think about it: The moment we're born into this world, our souls long for relationship with God. But because of sin (see Genesis 3), our souls are separated from God—and we're in chaos and misery. Jesus' death and resurrection made it possible for us to satisfy our yearning for God. Read Colossians 1:19-23 and Romans 5:8-11 from your Bible or Bible app. Make a list of anything you learn about the gap that separates us from God. Then list what you learn about the peace that closes that gap.

The Gap

The Peace

3 Putting Into Practice (God, Change Me!)

Highlight the words below that best describe your inner spiritual world:

Turmoil	Calm	Worry
Chaos	Nervous	Peace
Depressed	Fulfilled	Empty
Frantic	Blessed	Trusting

Only Jesus can bring the peace. In a lot of ways we're like Jesus' disciples: we're unsure of our next steps, while the world outside is ready to knock down our door. Picture Jesus appearing in the room where you are, putting His hands on your shoulders and saying, "Peace be with you."

Kneel before Him and accept the peace.