

## Still Focused on the Father

*John 20:11-23*

*Jesus said to her, "Stop clinging to Me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to My brethren and say to them, 'I ascend to My Father and your Father, and My God and your God.'"*

*When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and when the doors were shut where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace be with you." And when He had said this, He showed them both His hands and His side. The disciples then rejoiced when they saw the Lord. So Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you; as the Father has sent Me, I also send you."*

*And when He had said this, He breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, their sins have been forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they have been retained." (John 20:17, 19-23, NASB)*

Read Jesus' first words to His disciples after His resurrection. What was pressing on His mind? What did He most long for them to understand?

He continued to emphasize the same truths He was teaching them immediately before His arrest and crucifixion (see John 13 – 17):

- The Son is looking forward to His return to the Father. Notice His words to Mary Magdalene:  
*"Stop clinging to Me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father"* (John 20:17a, NASB; compare to John 13:1).
- Jesus is eager to cement their direct relationship with the Father, the relationship He was joyfully sharing with them:  
*"Go to My brethren and say to them, 'I ascend to My Father and Your Father, and My God and your God'"* (John 20:17b, NASB; compare to John 16:23-28).
- He repeatedly blesses them with His peace:  
*"Peace be with you"* (John 20:19, 21, 26, NASB; compare to John 14:27)
- As the Father had sent Jesus into the world, Jesus is now sending His disciples:  
*"As the Father has sent Me, I also send you"* (John 20:21, NASB; compare to John 17:18)
- Through an enacted parable, Jesus teaches them that the Father will pour out on them His Holy Spirit, and it will be the personal Spirit of Jesus Christ:

[Jesus] *breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit"*  
(John 20:22, NASB; compare to John 14:16-17, 26; 15:26-27; 16:5-15)

After the resurrection, as before, Jesus' deepest desire was for His Father and that His disciples would fully share their relationship.

Listen & Sing: "Holy Father, Only You"  
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