John 20 ENGAGE FELLOWSHIP

"Jesus repeated his greeting, "Peace to you!" And he told them, "Just as the Father has sent me, I'm now sending you." (John 20:21)

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To be "sent" with the heart and mission of Jesus is to live as a servant, sharing His life, love and the gospel.

Recall a time when you were prompted to serve a friend, family member, or even a stranger during a time of need. *"Freely you have received, freely give" (Matthew 10:8).* When did God involve you in ministry to another person at their point of need and aloneness?

I recall when (who/what) _____ and God led me to _____. (For example: I recall when several homeless people gathered near my house to stay warm. God prompted us to take them warm soup and blankets each day until the weather changed.)

Serving others with sensitivity and initiative is a critical part of our being "sent" to live and love as Jesus. Christ exemplified this when He noticed the many needs of hurting people around Him and took initiative to meet those needs.

Take notice of opportunities to be "sent" as a servant to others in your life:

- Look for the *unnoticed* people around you. Start a conversation. Ask them about the details of their lives.
- Offer to help someone with their groceries, offer your seat on the bus, or even buy a cup of coffee for the person next in line.
- Take care packages to the homeless in your town or volunteer to deliver meals to the elderly.

Follow Jesus' example: pray with others to live out this request: *Heavenly Father, I want to be a better servant to my family, co-workers, neighbors, friends, and others around me. Help me this week to lift my focus beyond myself to notice the needs of others. Holy Spirit, prompt my mind and empower my initiative to meet these needs.*

John 20 ENCOUNTER JESUS

"But all that is recorded here is so that you will fully believe that Jesus is the Anointed One, the Son of God, and that through your faith in him you will experience eternal life by the power of his name." (John 20:31)

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Notice the patience and pursuing grace we find in Jesus' love of Mary, the disciples and a hesitant Thomas; we also have received this same loving pursuit as it provides hopeful confidence of His Lordship.

Romans 5:11 *"…We also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through who m we have now received reconciliation."*

Let's be reminded that before we were drawn into a personal relationship with God, we were separated from Him. Because of our sin we had no friendship, no relationship and no peace with God. But because of His grace we were saved from our eternal separation from God. We were reconciled, brought back and restored in our relationship with Him.

P*ause quietly before the Lord as He reminds you what life would have been without Him? Ask Him to remind you of His grace and how the Lord brought you back, made things right and restored you.*

- "I'm especially glad that God brought me to Him because…."
- "I rejoice in God's grace because without Him, I would…."

Now, with a partner or small group, "rejoice" together in your having received reconciliation. The Lord smiles when He sees His people living out His Book, experiencing the Scriptures…and in this we find peace and confident hope.

John 20 EXPERIENCE SCRIPTURE

"For until then they hadn't understood the Scriptures that prophesied that he was destined to rise from the dead." (John 20:9)

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"For until then they hadn't understood the Scriptures that prophesied that he was destined to rise from the dead" (John 20:9).

"…they did not yet know the Scripture"—is an insightful message on where we find peace and hope. It seems that these disciples could have found benefit from personally embracing Christ's frequent words concerning His promised resurrection.

It's this same hope of embracing Scripture that provides encouragement and security in our walk with Jesus. *"Through the encouragement of Scripture we might have hope" (Romans 15:4).*

The Lord is "with us" as His Spirit brings direction and deepened relationship through His Word.

"Be it done unto me according to Thy word" (Luke 1:38).

Join with one or two others asking that His word becomes the explanation of your life. *"Holy Spirit I say 'Yes' to Your God-breathed book. Without even knowing all that Your word will ask of me, I yield for it to be true of me."*

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