



Jesus' Final Words

Lesson Overview

1. BrainBuilder—Doubt

Have you been touched by doubts?

2. Watch a Video

Watch John 20:19 to 21:25 at bit.ly/GCEDGospelOfJohn from **2hr 44min 13sec to 2hr 53min 53sec** (9min 40sec).

3. Discuss

Choose questions for discussion.

New Church Concept Affirmative Doubt

There are two attitudes of mind, one leading to insanity; the other to wisdom. The first is when a person cannot believe until convinced by things he grasps in his mind and perceives with his senses. This is the negative attitude. The second is when someone regards affirmatively doctrines from the Word, believing they are true because the Lord has spoken them. This attitude leads to wisdom, and is called the affirmative attitude. See *Arcana Coelestia* 2568

FaithBuilder 3 | Lesson 29 | Gospel of John

BrainBuilder—Doubt

Choose questions to get everyone thinking

1. Have you ever doubted another person's word—e.g. someone says you've won lots of money, or something impossible has happened?
2. How do you feel when someone doubts your word?
3. Have you ever doubted the Lord's Word?
4. Have you heard the expression "doubting Thomas"? What does it mean? Where does it come from?
5. The Writings say there are two kinds of doubt: affirmative doubt and negative doubt. People in affirmative doubt—who wonder if something is true from an affirmative attitude, can have their doubts dispelled. But people in negative doubt are not satisfied by answers, but go on to have new doubts. (See *Arcana Coelestia* 2568, left.) Can you think of a time when you doubted from a positive or negative attitude? How are these different?

Watch a Video

Watch the conclusion of the Gospel of John from John 20:19-John 21:25 from *The Life of Jesus . English . Official Full HD Movie*, at bit.ly/GCEDGospelOfJohn. (Enter link in the web browser bar at the top of your screen.) **Start the video at 2hr 44min 13sec. End at 2hr 53min 53sec; 9min 40sec.** Events include the commissioning of the apostles, doubting Thomas, breakfast by the sea, the Lord's conversation with Peter. You might want to pause the video to discuss each section.

Note: You may find it helpful to have Bibles open to **John 20-21** for the discussion.

Discuss

Choose questions for discussion.

1. After the Lord's resurrection the disciples huddled behind closed doors, perhaps fearing for their lives after the crucifixion. Compare this with a time you were anxious and afraid—perhaps closing the doors of your mind to others. In what way might the Lord show Himself to you at a time like this?
2. Jesus showed the disciples evidence of his injuries from the cross. Many believers today cling to relics such as nails "from the cross." In what ways do you look for proof that the Lord really is there, with you?
3. Jesus sent out His disciples, just as He walked among us. In what ways does He commission each of us to continue His work today?

4. How does the Lord “breathe” on us. How do we receive the Lord’s Holy Spirit?
5. What is the relationship between Jesus and the Holy Spirit? (See right)
6. Look at John 20:23. What did Jesus commission the disciples to do? In other gospels He asked the disciples to preach, teach and baptize. Which of these actions does He commission us to take today?
7. How do we forgive sins in ourselves, or others? Or, in other words, how do we send them out of our lives?
8. Can sins be forgiven in an instant? Why or why not?
9. Thomas was not with the disciples when the Lord breathed on them. He doubted that they had seen the Lord and asked for proof that Jesus Himself had appeared. In what ways do we ask for proof that the Lord is with us?
10. Compare the kind of trust a person has in the Lord where there is tangible proof of Him (e.g. a miracle), and when there is no specific proof. Which kind of trust does the Lord want? Which is better and why?
11. When Thomas saw and believed he said, “My Lord and my God”—i.e. Jesus is God. It is the only place in the New Testament Jesus is clearly identified as God Himself. How easy is it for us to identify Jesus as the God of the Old Testament? Why might this be difficult?
12. John 20:30 says Jesus did signs that were “not written in this book.” Why doesn’t the Lord reveal everything *to us*?
13. In what way does the relationship between Jesus and His disciples come full circle in the final days on earth after His resurrection by the shores of the Sea of Galilee? (Hint—think of how and where He called His disciples.)
14. This disciples didn’t recognize the Lord on the shore. Are there times when the Lord has been with you and you have not recognized Him?
15. Jesus asked Peter, “Do you love Me?” In what ways does He ask this question of us?
16. Jesus said, “Follow Me.” How can you follow Him?

Jesus Sends Out His Disciples

FOR TEACHER REFERENCE

“As the Father sent Me,” He says to His disciples, “I send you.” Jesus, who came forth from love, now sends His disciples forth in love—not to teach or baptize, but to love. This final commission, however, will not be possible without the Holy Spirit—His continual inspiration. He therefore adds, “Receive the Holy Spirit.” It is this Spirit—God’s presence with them—that will make it possible for them to go forth in love, forgiving sins and loving others as Jesus has loved them. That is why Jesus breathes on them and says, “receive the Holy Spirit.”

The Holy Spirit, then, is not a separate Divine Person of the Trinity who comes to us in some mysterious way. It is the breath of God. It is as much a part of God as our own breath is part of ourselves. In the language of Sacred Scripture it is Jesus Himself, fully glorified and united with the Father, coming forth into our lives as the Divine Truth. But this truth is now fully united with Divine Love (the Father). This “coming forth” is received by each of us not only as an ability to understand truth, but also as an ability to see how it might apply to our lives. This is the “inspiration” of the Holy Spirit, the breath of God in our lives.

From *The Gospel of John* by Rev. Dr. Ray Silverman, unpublished manuscript.

New Church Concept Holy Spirit

“This holy thing which proceeds from the Lord, and flows into people through angels and spirits, whether manifestly or not manifestly, is ‘the Holy Spirit’.... It is the Divine Truth that proceeds from the Lord.... It is said that ‘He will lead into all truth’.... It is the Divine Truth that proceeds from the Lord.... It is said that ‘He will lead into all truth’...and also that when the Lord departed from the disciples, ‘He breathed into them, and said, Receive the Holy Spirit’ (John 20:21-22). The respiration signifies the life of faith; consequently the inspiration or breathing of the Lord signifies a capability imparted to people to perceive Divine Truths, and thus to receive the life of faith.”
Arcana Coelestia 9818.14-18

Forgiveness of Sins

Sins are not forgiven by repentance with the lips, but by repentance in life. A person’s sins are continually being forgiven by the Lord, for He is absolute mercy. But the sins cling to the person, however much one things they are forgiven, and the only way to have them taken away is to live in accordance with the commandments of true faith. The more a person does this, the more are sins taken away, and the further they are taken away, the more they are forgiven. *New Jerusalem and Its Heavenly Doctrine* 165

All from the Lord

They said that ‘they had labored all the night and had taken nothing,’ which signified that from self or from one’s own [proprium] nothing comes, but that all things are from the Lord. *Apocalypse Explained* 513.16