

# His Cosmic Battle Scars of Peace - 2nd Sunday of Easter

by Michael Flowers

---

*Michael Flowers emphasizes the transformative peace of Christ's resurrection and the call for believers to embody this peace in community and mission.*

**Duration:** 23:31

**Scripture:** Matthew 28:19, John 20:19

**Topics:** "Easter"

---

## Description

In this sermon, the speaker describes the tense atmosphere in the upper room where the disciples were gathered after Jesus' death. The disciples felt deep failure, betrayal, and bewilderment as they believed Jesus was another failed Messiah. Jesus appears among them and questions their whereabouts during his crucifixion, highlighting their betrayal. The speaker emphasizes that many people perceive God as a judgmental figure, leading to a constant cycle of trying to improve oneself. However, the speaker argues that the true image of God is one of loving judgment and empowerment, as demonstrated by Jesus' wounds. The sermon concludes by emphasizing the importance of the church continuing Jesus' mission and ministry, with the understanding that failure, sin, and death are inherent to humanity and can only be overcome through a connection with Jesus.

---

## Transcript

Welcome to the second Sunday of Eastertide. Those who are working through a liturgical calendar are giving themselves to 50 days of contemplating, of pondering, of reexamining the scriptures and in prayer, taking those mysteries to the Lord concerning the resurrection. These are weighty matters, you guys.

When we say these things in the Nicene Creed, these one liners, you know, we tend to just think these are the basics. Right. Got it down.

I know Christianity because I've memorized these lines. Oh, man, we're talking about a risen person who is seated at the right hand of the universe, the father of all. And he is a living and breathing first fruits of what we shall all be, in a sense, risen.

Right. He's the first fruits of new creation. And so we have to re-ponder and reset why we're doing what we're doing and why we believe what we believe.

And just what is it again we believe? Oh, man, it's so easy for it to dissipate into just text. Right. It's so easy for it to dissipate.

When Jesus said, I am the way and the truth and the life. Those are not the basics, my brothers and sisters, you know, we get that line because Thomas asked the question. Where are you going? We're going to celebrate Thomas today and some of his questions and his doubts and his skepticism.

We wouldn't get some of those one liners from Jesus unless Thomas had asked the question. Right. Aren't you glad you're there? Amen.

Today's gospel is John 20, beginning with verse 19, and it covers the first two Sundays of Easter. In Jesus upper room appearances to his disciples, the first Sunday Thomas was absent and the second appearance eight days later was just especially for Thomas. Isn't that great that, you know, when you miss church, God will show up for you the next week when you attend.

Yeah, isn't that great? He came to, like, fill you in on what you missed and Thomas missed some things. We all miss things when we miss church. Right.

We miss each other. We miss the Eucharist. We miss a lot of things.

But he shows up the next Sunday and fills in the blanks. Right. Isn't that great? Praise the Lord.

On that first evening of Easter, they are found in hiding for fear of the Jews, for fear of their very own lives. The tense atmosphere is mingled with a collective sense of deep failure. Betrayal, bewilderment.

You see, Jesus has not had his little talk with Peter yet. And he's showing up in the upper room to all of these guys who felt like they were going to be crucified next. Jesus was nowhere to be found.

He was another failed Messiah. Good guy. Amazing person.

The best teaching we've ever had. But he's dead and gone. Doors being shut where the disciples were for fear of the Jews.

Jesus came. Jesus came and stood among them and said to them. Where have you been? Where were you when I was hanging on the tree? Why did you betray me? Why don't you get your act together? Isn't that the voice that you hear a lot of times that you think is God's? That overactive conscience that condemns instead of frees that voice, that voice of judgment inside of us that we say, wow, I just got to get my act together.

I just got to get it. I just got to do it better the next time, better the next time, better the next time. And it's just really the gospel is the myth of Sisyphus, right? You get up to the hill and then all of a sudden that big boulder that you pushed up just rolls back on you and you start all over again.

Right. That's the gospel to a lot of people. You guys, that's the image of God to a lot of people.

And I've had to fight that image all my life because I think that image wants to rise up from within our sinful brokenness and distort the true nature of who God really is. And if you've seen me, Jesus says, you've seen the father, we saw Monday, Thursday, what God is like when he stoops down and gets on his knees and takes a towel and washes our feet, he becomes the servant. That's what God is like.

Jesus comes into that room with those kinds of people, those were the disciples, you guys, and Jesus comes and says, peace. Hi, he says. Shalom, it's a peace that speaks of a transformed reality.

The transformed reality of the kingdom who is embodied in the first of the new creation, Jesus Christ, he is Shalom. It's not a concept of well-being, it's not an absence of conflict, might need to take a little something to take the edge off peace. It's not that.

That's a different kind of peace, but it's not Shalom, right? Shalom transcends any kind of medicated, fabricated, manipulated environment. Shalom is eternal, Shalom is what he gives us, it's a gift and it's what we're going to live in the rest of eternity, Shalom. Oh, this is good news, you guys.

This is the God who doesn't come and condemn us. I did not come into the world to condemn, Jesus said. But that the world might be saved through me, why don't we get this right? Speaking to myself.

Because that little voice is in there, this can't be true, he's not like that. To these people with dashed hopes, Jesus comes and says Shalom, and then immediately he shows them why he can say Shalom and how he can give it away now. He showed them his hands and his side.

And that's all they needed to see, because they looked at that horrid Good Friday and they thought, what's good about that? What's so good about Good Friday? His hands and his side. When they saw that, they saw the Lord and they were glad, it says, when they saw the Lord. Jesus can only show up to a group of people who struggle with failure because those are the only kind of people who exist.

Do you know anybody else? Failure, sin, death are us, and that's why we need him who has overcome failure, sin, death, Satan. To be hooked in to him in a communion beyond this temporal world, the Lord be with you and with your spirit is another way to say that, right? Yeah, the Lord be with your spirit. Interconnected and intertwined with us as a holy temple because it took the resurrection and the ascension for him to send the spirit.

He sends the spirit to us. So Shalom is his gift to them. The age of new creation has broken into the world of the dark forces once ruling now conquered.

And so this peace is actually wrought by hard fought, not only an invisible battle, but an invisible battle. It was very visceral and visible, but what you were seeing was a contradiction to what was actually happening. Spoiling principalities and powers, he looks like a total failure.

He looks like a dying man on the cross and that he is. They killed God, but that was the plan. This is the reason that I have come into the world, Jesus says, I came to die because my death is going to be powerful because I'm two natures in one person.

And one is indestructible, it's called the divine nature. And so his wounds, his sacrificial death, whereby the king of glory displays his signs of cosmic battle. This is a warrior, my friends, showing you his battle scars, overcoming principalities and powers.

Who is this king of glory? Psalm 24, we were banging on the front door, Easter vigil trying to get in. Open up your gates, you ancient doors, open up that the king of glory may come in. This is his ascension, that the king of glory, he is the war, the strong one, mighty in battle.

He is the king of glory. Psalm 24, paring out of Psalm 118, that's about Jesus. My brothers and sisters open the gates of righteousness that I may enter in.

That's Jesus talking. And he has become my salvation, the father who raised him from the dead. Jesus was saved from death.

And this is the day, this is the day that the Lord is acted, we will rejoice and be glad in it. It's talking about the resurrection. David saw it.

And so the king of peace has returned from the battle for all existence. This king of Shalom has returned in the upper room. From the battle for all existence.

His wounds are signs that the physical world matters. As his body was physically raised and transformed, so our bodies will be raised and transformed, Paul says, in a blink of an eye. I like that.

That's a faster transformation than what I'm experiencing now. How about you? Glory to glory, but it sure is slow. That transformation is going to be complete because it's God who is at work within you, both the will and to do according to his good pleasure.

It's not even about our good pleasure. It's about his. He's having a really good time in you working for his good pleasure.

That's transforming us from the inside out. We just need to get in touch with that. Then we'd be strong, right, because the joy of the Lord is our strength and the joy of the Lord is indwelling.

The joy of the Lord is a person. Righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. This peace is not a mere subjective state, as I said, or the absence of conflict.

This peace is the declaration in state of cosmic renewal where Satan's sin and death once reigned through the first Adam. Now, victory over the powers and life everlasting reigns through this one new man, Jesus Christ, the new kind of human being. Raised from the dead and bringing us with him many sons and daughters, bringing us to glory.

Colossians 1:19 says this and he is the first born among the dead so that in everything he might have the supremacy. For God was pleased to have all the fullness dwell in Jesus and through him to reconcile to himself some things. To reconcile to himself all things, to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, whether visible or invisible.

His reconciliation was happening more than just down here. All things on earth or things in heaven by making peace. Here it is by making shalom.

He was making shalom. How do you make shalom? You ever tried to make shalom? Got the recipe. Here it is.

Jesus has the recipe. It's proprietary by making peace through his blood. Those are the ingredients by making peace through his blood shed on the cross.

He was whipping up a meal called shalom for us and we get to partake of that every day. Is that the image of God that we have? Is that the Jesus that you've come to worship this morning or was it just a little Anglican Jesus or a Baptist Jesus or a Methodist Jesus? Those Jesus, that's just not big enough. You got

Jesus won't be branded, right? He'll brand us.

I want that branding because it's the image that we all need, the image of God loving. He shows up in a room full of total failures, loving, forgiving, accepting, keeping no record of wrongs. Right.

Love keeps no record of wrongs. Now, wait, I thought he was going to judge me. Judgment is a righteous judgment.

Judgment is so good. Oh, yes, it's so good because of his his love, his loving judgment keeps no record of wrong. That's a paradox.

Empowering towards people plagued with all manner of failures. Now, is that the image of God that we carry and that we contend for? It really is. You have to contend for that.

Or does a cloud of divine disappointment mar your image of who God is because he comes to heal our distortions of who he is by showing us his wounds. Christ sends us to be his bodily presence on earth, an embodied continuity of his ministry and mission. The church is an embodied continuity of his mission and ministry that is his to continue.

All authority has been given to me and I'm I'm taking off here, but I'm not going to leave you as orphans. I'm going to I'm going to I'm going to leave. But I want I want you to do something.

I want you to go into all the world and preach the gospel, baptizing them in the name of the father and the son and teaching them to observe all that I've commanded you. And I'll be with you always. And so that sending happens as a parallel to his sending by the father, he says.

He showed them his hands inside and the disciples were glad, he says, peace again, as the father has sent me so, even so, I send you. Wow, it's a parallel sending. We need to get a hold of that.

And when he had said this, he breathed on them and he said to them, receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven. And if you retain the sins of them, they are retained.

I think we all find it hard to forgive. Right. And this is what we have to get a hold of when we see his hands inside and we receive his forgiveness.

If we don't do that on a continual basis, right, it's not a one time altar call. It's a life of reaffirming his forgiveness. You have to fight for that in here.

Now, you know, it's one. I mean, you don't have to fight for his forgiveness from his point. We have to fight to believe it.

It's that fight of faith. Faith is a battle. We have to eliminate a lot of other competing ideas about forgiveness and retribution and payback and withdrawing from another person because they've hurt you and not giving them the time of day and holding them at arm's length.

As long as we're stuck there, we won't be sent into the world as the father sent Jesus. And maybe that's where some of us are at this morning. It's a hard place to be.

I've been there. And I have to fight constantly not to go back there. We're all made of the same stuff.

But we hide and we don't talk about this, how hard it is sometimes to live in the body of Christ. We've been baptized not only into Christ, but we've been baptized into his body. And there's been a lot of people because they didn't they didn't have the foundational image of who God is and what his holy church is, have said that church is optional.

I'm just going to do my own thing. I'm going to be spiritual somewhere off by myself, tending my own garden instead of the garden of the Lord. It's so easy to slip into this.

And that's what Thomas had done after the crucifixion. He wasn't there. He was off doing his other stuff because he didn't want to be associated with those who were going to be crucified the next day.

Thomas was isolating on that day. I don't need to go up to the upper room. I can enjoy God here in my house.

You know, that kind of thing is if those are equivalent options, enjoying God in your house. Yeah, that's great. But don't compare that as an option to I was glad when they said to me, let us go to the house of the Lord.

Those are two different things not to be confused. Thomas was confused. Now, Jesus shows up and throws him a party regardless.

See, Jesus is not stopped by our confusion about what holy churches he's going to show up anyway, and he's going to say, look at my hands and look at my side, remember what I did for you. This is really me. This is really me.

And this will transform you. Stick your hands in. Poke on me.

You know, poke on Jesus if you need to poke on him and poke on him. But let's get this settled. Be believing, Jesus said to Thomas.

It's OK to doubt, but come on, be believing that you're going to take over India, you're going to take the gospel to India. That's what Thomas did. St. Thomas is the patron saint of India.

Glory be to God, his doubts didn't stop him from being an amazing missionary. Thomas is in all of us, you guys. Right.

I got a lot of Thomas in me. Pessimistic, prone to isolate and skeptical, and Jesus loves Thomas. Now, when I look at myself and I'm experiencing those things, I don't love me.

And then I project that on the God. He just saw things that way because, you know, when he was going to raise Lazarus and he was on the way and, you know, hear Jesus say, I'm going and Thomas said, oh, they're all going to kill us, too. That that was Thomas's attitude, pessimistic.

He's prone to isolate. He's he's gone. He's not up in the upper room.

And then he's skeptical. How are we going to get to the father, Thomas? Here it is, I am the way, the truth and the life you see, all of these great things are coming from Thomas, and it didn't stop his reconciliation and his discipleship and his mission accomplished with Jesus. I'm just so thankful for that because Thomas is in me.

And so Jesus appears and. He's revealing to us the paradox of faith. Just like on the cross, you know, and Jesus in one scene and he's saying, my God, my God, why have you forsaken me? And then the resolve father into your hands, I commit my spirit.

Those are the two poles of faith, define abandonment, why? Where are you? How long, oh, Lord, into your hands, I commit my spirit. All within the same three hours that it took Jesus to die, just like we do, we go all over the place, don't we? He holds us between the banks. He'll he'll keep us straight because he's the way, the truth and the life.

Amen. Amen. So, Lord, today we we thank you so much for men and women, Lord, that you call to follow you.

The faithfulness and the unfaithfulness and the denials and the skepticism and questions, all these things don't hold you back from showing up. And encountering us and we encountering you and we just say more of that, Lord, more of that amazing. Risen, grace filled presence so that we may give it out to others and bring others into this glorious image of God.

This Christ likeness that you are forming and fashioning in us day by day. Thank you in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

---

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/28/SID28644.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/michael-flowers/his-cosmic-battle-scars-of-peace-2nd-sunday-of-easter/>

# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

---

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

**[www.sermonindex.net](http://www.sermonindex.net)**