



DEVOTION

Equipped to Serve

By Greg Laurie on Apr 22, 2025

"May he equip you with all you need for doing his will."

-Hebrews 13:21

Fear comes in many forms. Kathisophobia is the fear of sitting. Ablutophobia is the fear of bathing. Anuptaphobia is the fear of being single. Arachibutyrophobia is the fear of peanut butter sticking to the roof of your mouth. Automatonophobia is the fear of ventriloquist dummies.

I don't know the name of the fear Jesus' disciples experienced following the events of Good Friday through Easter, but it was real. And it was paralyzing.

This small group of followers had an enormous task ahead of them, but they were in no condition to undertake it. In fact, they were hiding behind closed doors, scared, confused, and with no idea what their next step should be.

So before He ascended to Heaven, Jesus appeared to His disciples several times to prepare them for what lay ahead. He eased their fear. He gave them the confidence they lacked. He gave them direction and purpose. He gave them hope. And He assured them that He would be with them, wherever they went and whatever they faced. Jesus equipped His followers to carry out His work.

On one occasion, shortly after His resurrection, He miraculously appeared to a group of His disciples behind locked doors. But Thomas, one of the disciples, wasn't part of the group. Later, when the others told him about their experience, Thomas refused to believe.

"But he replied, 'I won't believe it unless I see the nail wounds in his hands, put my fingers into them, and place my hand into the wound in his side'" (John 20:25 NLT).

Eight days later, Jesus appeared again to His followers. This time Thomas was present. Jesus said to him, "Put your finger here, and look at my hands. Put your hand into the wound in my side. Don't be faithless any longer. Believe!" (John 20:27 NLT). He wasn't trying to embarrass Thomas. He was equipping him for the work ahead. If Thomas needed physical proof of Jesus' resurrection, something he could experience with his own senses, Jesus was prepared to give it.

Likewise, on the night Jesus was arrested, Peter failed Him miserably. Three times Peter had an opportunity to stand boldly with Jesus during His trial, and three times he denied even knowing Jesus.

Jesus recognized how heavily that failure weighed on Peter. He didn't want it to hinder or distract Peter from the role he was going to play in building the church and spreading the gospel.

So Jesus restored Peter to ministry. In John 21, Jesus appeared to Peter on the shore of the Sea of Galilee. Three times He asked Peter if he loved Him. Three times Peter answered yes. And three times Jesus instructed him to feed or take care of His lambs or sheep. With that simple exchange, Jesus undid the emotional and spiritual damage Peter had caused with his denials.

Jesus equipped His disciples to change the world in His name. And He still equips His followers for service. He gives us what we need—whether it's forgiveness, inspiration, wisdom, or courage—to strengthen our relationship with Him and encourage us to share His message with others. As the author of Hebrews wrote in the passage above: "May he equip you with all you need for doing his will" (NLT).

Reflection Question: How has the Lord equipped you to do His will? *Discuss this with believers like you on Harvest Discipleship!*