

Fifth appearance after his resurrection. Corresponds with **Mk 16:14f; Lk 24:36-43**. Evening of resurrection day. Comparing with Mark's account, he uses this opportunity to discuss the mission of the apostles with them, and this serves to help in interpreting this account in John.

WHO is this promise to?

Others were present besides the apostles, **Lk 24:33**. But *only the apostles are the intended recipients of this promise*.

1. **“Apostle” = one sent**. “..as the Father has sent Me (**Heb 3:1**), I also send you.” Cmpr **Jn 17:18**, a similar statement *clearly* of the apostles.
2. **If Mk 16:14f the same appearance** (see notes in Evidences lesson), it is clear there that it is the “eleven” who are charged and equipped to carry out that charge.
3. While **“disciples”** is used in a wide sense to include those among the Jews who favored him, it is also used in a narrower sense to refer to the twelve, e.g., **Mt 10:1; 11:1; Lk 9:12...14** (note in this context there was a “crowd” who could be called disciples). Frequently used this way by John - **Jn 6:3 13:22; 16:17,29; 18:1,2**. Context and harmony must determine.
4. **Who did “receive the Holy Spirit”** in connection with the forgiveness of man's sins? The apostles, **Ac 1:5,8..2:38**.

WHEN were they to receive it?

They did NOT receive the Holy Spirit immediately:

1. Luke says they were to stay in the city until they received the promise, **Lk 24:49**. This was just before his ascension, **forty days after the appearance recorded here**.
2. In **Ac 1:4-5,8** they were told they would receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit **“not many days from now.”**
3. They received the Holy Spirit to **equip them for their work which began on the day of Pentecost, Ac 2**.
4. **No such action** as connected with receiving the HS (“forgive... retain sins”) **until Pentecost**.

WHAT would it enable them to do?

“If you forgive the sins of any...”

1. **Only God can forgive** sins against God, **Mk 2:5-12**
2. The apostles, however, **declared** sins to be forgiven through the preaching of the gospel, and this is the assurance those sins were forgiven. **Ac 2:36...38...41...47.**
3. **Verbs for declaration of action: Ac 10:15; Isa 6:10** compared with **Mt 13:15; Jer 1:10.**

CONC

NOT

- Promise to all Christians to receive the Holy Spirit
- Empowering “the church” to forgive sins

IS

Commission to the *apostles* to preach the message of salvation in Christ and the promise of the HS to enable them to do so!
Mk 16:15-20...Ac 2:14...37,38; 10:41-43

Notes

ERRONEOUS VIEWS

- Lenski. See notes on John.
- Errors in interpretation in other works as well.

OTHER POINTS

1. The “keys” Jesus conferred on Peter in Mt 16:18 is here conferred on all the apostles:
 - **Mt 16:18** - “Whatever you shall bind...loose”
 - **Jn 20:22** - “If you forgive...retain”
2. “breathed upon them” - ?
 - a. *emphusaO* - Jn 20:22*
 - b. In Sept.:
 - **Gen 2:7** - “God...breathed into his nostrils the breath of life”
 - **Isa 40:24** - “He merely **blows** on them, and they wither”
 - **Eze 21:31** - “**I will blow** upon thee with the fire of my wrath”
 - **Eze 37:9** - “Prophecy to the breath...**breathe** on these slain, that they come to life”

Thus:

- Of God as the active agent, either of life (**Gen 2:7**) or death (**Job 4:21; Eze 21:31**)
- Of an agent he employs, fig. a wind (**Eze 37:9**)

c. The breathing on them accords with the Hebrew practice of using *actions* to foretell future events, or even to communicate. See Macknight, Essay VIII, p. 710ff.

Some examples:

- **Gen 37:34** - tear clothes and put on sackcloth...deep grief
- **1Ki 11:30,31** - tore Jeroboam's cloak into 12 pieces...division of the kingdom
- **1Ki 22:11** = horns of iron...military conquest (false prophet)
- **Mk 11:12** - curse fig tree..destruction of Jer., rejection of nation
- **Jn 13** - wash feet...humility
- **Jn 9:6** - clay spittle, anoint eyes...healing
- **Ac 21:11** - Agabus binds himself with Paul's belt...Paul's imprisonment

d. Sig. here that Jesus the source of the reception of the Holy Spirit that would enable them to do the work he was sending them to do? **Jn 14:16,26; 15:26; 16:7.**

He had just been crucified three days ago. That had filled them with fear and despair. Now he is alive and telling them that as the Father sent him, he was sending them. To a similar reception and fate?? He had told them they would face rejection and persecution (Jn 15:18-21; 16:1-4,32-33). In view of this, they might have some reluctance to the mission being given them. Especially one with such import ("forgive" and "retain" sins). By breathing on them does he signify that he would give them the power to effect this mission? "Receive" is imperative.

3. "Receive" = *imper. act. aor.*

"The imperative...is always future in time, though it may apply to the immediate future...The original significance of the imperative was demand or exhortation; but it was not confined to this idea.

The imperative is used in: (Davis, *Beg. Grammar*, pp. 168,170)

1. Commands or exhortations
2. Prohibitions
3. Entreaties

Burton, *Moods & Tenses*, pp. 80-81

“The Imperative Mood is also used to express consent, or merely to propose an hypothesis. ... An Imperative suggesting a hypothesis may or may not retain it imperative or hortatory force.”

4. “have been forgiven”

NASB fnt, “I.e. have previously been forgiven”

As to the “future perfect tense” giving a translation of “shall have been bound” see *Plain Talk*, vol 20, No. 10, p.7. Turner there presents the support of Wilber T. Dayton in his D.Th. dissertation (N. Baptist Theological Seminary), the Williams translation, and Marshall’s Literal English Translation. However, Moule, *Idiom Book of NT Greek*, p. 18, questions it, and Hendriksen in his footnote on Jn 20:23 simply mentions that there has been a lot of discussion about it, but in a footnote on Mt 16:19 says such “yields a very difficult and unnatural sense.” A.T. Robertson in his *Grammar of the Greek NT*, p. 361, says, “The future perfect passive occurs in the N.T. only in the periphrastic form in such examples as *estai dedemenon* (Mt. 16:19), *estai lelumena* (Mt. 18:18), *esontai diamemerismenoi* (Lk 12:52).” He does not give a translation.

None of the major translations so translate. The NIV does have a footnote on Mt 16:19 on “be bound,” i.e., “Or, *have been*.”