

Sermon Title: **His Hands and His Side**

Bible: John 20:19-29

Where & When: Sunday Service at Gilroy UMC on May 19th, 2019

Audience: about 35 English-speaking Church Members

Opening Prayer

Gracious God, as you appeared to the disciples, you come to us. With your power, you are saving us. With your love, you are with us. With your hands and your side, you show us the life and the hope. Please be with my lips and guide us to touch you. In Jesus' name. Amen.

1. Doubting Thomas?

Do you have a nickname? Many people have nicknames. One disciple, Thomas, had a nickname; he was Doubting Thomas. That's because Thomas was not able to believe the resurrection of Jesus, without evidence. After seeing and touching the mark of the nails in Jesus' hands, and putting his hands into Jesus' side, Thomas gained faith in the resurrection. Because of that, my sermon title could be "Doubting Thomas." But I want to focus on Jesus. I would like to see and touch "His Hands and His Side."

2. Trinity

There are many ways to know God. There are many names for God. The most famous and the most mysterious name would be Trinity; God is One, and God is Three: God the Father, the Son Jesus, and the Holy Spirit. These days, some Christians call God Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer, because they want to use inclusive languages.

God the Father, or Creator, is one way to see God. I have been to the California-Nevada Annual Conference as a lay member from one local church before. There was one worship service for confessing our sins against Native Americans. One Native American United Methodist pastor shared Native Americans' faith, the root of their belief through Creator God, who creates the Heavens and Earth. The greatness of the Heavens and Earth, and the beauty of nature can lead us to experience God's presence.

The Holy Spirit, or Sustainer, is another way. The twelve disciples spent three years with Jesus. They walked together, talked, and ate together with Jesus. Our experience cannot be the same as the disciples. However, through the Holy Spirit, we feel the presence of God. We were born in different places and times. Our life stories and our faith journeys are so different. But we are here together to worship the same God.

What brought me here to serve this church? I came from Korea. I am able to explain some choices that I made, but I cannot explain every reason for why I am here. I do not know why, but I know how to live this life. I am thankful for the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the Sustainer, and I am blessed to stay here and serve this church. And I hope and believe that the Holy Spirit, the Sustainer, leads us toward God's love and God's will.

3. The Son, Jesus

Do you love your mom and dad? Which one do you love more? My answer is that I love both my mom and my dad with the same mind. But, I find myself talking on the phone with one more than the other. So, I can say which one is more friendly or more easy to talk with. (I am not sure if you watch basketball. If you are parents of the two brothers, Steph Curry and Seth Curry, which uniform do you want to wear? Or which team do you want to root for? This might be easy for us, but it might be hard--or fun?--for parents).

Among the Trinity, I have the closest relationship with the Son, the Redeemer. That's because the Son, the Redeemer, had the body of a human. God became human, like us. Jesus was hungry, and should have breakfast. Jesus had his family.

Jesus had friends and disciples. Some people loved him, but some people were against him. He experienced betrayal and suffering as well.

4. His Hands and His Side

When people asked Jesus to show signs such as healing and feeding five thousand people, Jesus healed the sick, and fed a lot of people, but He had mixed feelings about it. That's because many people followed Him because of the signs and the miracles, not for Jesus. I used to be like these people.

I have been mad a lot against God before. I could not control my anger. So I stayed in silence. But the silence was not the solution. Actually, God's love bothered me a lot. So, I went to a retreat center. In this center, I had to be silent all days except meal times. Silence is the rule of this retreat center. While I spent time with silence. Jesus came to me and bothered me. Grace and Love were not what I wanted. Leave me alone. I might like to have the miracles to reset my life. At night, during the time of prayer, the silent prayer, Jesus came to me. My anger exploded at Jesus. Probably, the Roman soldier had no choice but to pound the nails into Jesus. However, with my anger, I pounded the nails on purpose. I pierced Him again and again. But Jesus did not escape from my anger; He stayed there,

and hugged me more and more beyond my anger. Then, I bowed down and burst into tears.

The mark of His Hands, the mark in His Side was not only what the Roman soldier made, but also what I made. Jesus healed the sick, and opened the eyes of the blind. But He did not heal His body. He still has the mark of the nails in His hands, and the mark in His Side. I cannot erase my past from my life. I cannot change my past. I wanted to put that into my unknown unconsciousness. But it is impossible. What I can do is to look at it with different perspectives; to carry it with me like Jesus has the marks in His hands. Jesus showed us how to have the mark of the nails in His hands and His side. I believe that we have many miracles in our life. I also believe that we have many sufferings. Even good people can have miserable sufferings. Sometimes, bad people can have miracles. I do not understand why. But, can we still follow Jesus? Regardless of the miracles or sufferings, I hope that you and I follow Jesus. That's what Jesus showed us with his hands and his side, even after the victory, even after the resurrection.

Closing Prayer

Gracious God, you showed us the mark of betrayal and suffering through your hands and your side. After resurrection, you still carry the mark of the nails. We

are vulnerable, so we too have the mark of suffering. Please be with us and guide us to follow you. In Jesus' name. Amen!

Possible Qs.

1. Among God the Father, the Son Jesus, and the Holy Spirit, which one is the closest to you?
2. Do you have any marks in your life like Jesus?
3. Do you have any struggles to follow Jesus?