① DO NOT CLING TO ME

v.17 Jesus said to her, "Do not cling to me, for I have not ascended to My Father...

- This is one of the most difficult verses in the N.T.
  - both in Greek translation
  - and in interpretation/meaning
- Regarding the translation, it can be taken several ways
  1. Do NOT touch Me — KJV, LEB, NET, Darby, YLT
  2. Do not hold on to Me — NIV, NRSV
  3. Do NOT Cling to Me — NKJ, ESV, NASB, NLT
- The translation depends on how one interprets ἅπτω
  - hold on to, grasp, seize attach, touch

ἅπτω in scripture:

"of the fruit of the tree in the midst of the Garden, God has said, You shall not eat of it or touch it, lest you die." Gen. 3:3

"And behold a woman diseased w/ an issue of blood for twelve years came behind Him and touched the hem of His garment. For she said w/in herself, if I may but touch His garment, I will be made whole" Matt 9:20-21

"Now concerning the things you wrote me, it is good for a man to not touch a woman." 1 Cor. 7:1
- context would seem to be cling or hold

"The Pharisee thought w/in himself saying, this man, if He were a prophet would have known who and what manner of woman this is that touches Him for she is a sinner
- most likely also cling or hold... maybe
- ★ Either way, 100% of the time, the word ἅπτω is translated Touch

- 36 out of 36 times ἅπτω is translated as Touch (in Strong's concordance... which uses KJV only)

- So why not Keep it touch?
- One reason is because (doubting) Thomas said he would NOT believe unless he touched Jesus' wounds
  - IN addition, Jesus Himself told Thomas to touch His wounds
- ★ Why couldn't Mary touch Jesus, But Thomas was told to touch?
- ★ There are several theories
  - All theories hinge on Two Greek words ἅπτω and γάρ — TOUCH — for/because

1. Jesus ascended between Mary and Thomas... then descended immediately... then ascended 40 days later
   - Reason being is that He needed to present Himself untouched / holy
   - Don't touch, I'm in the process of ascending
2. Jesus is telling Mary not to hold on to Him because there's more to be done... she needs to go tell the disciples to meet Him in Galilee I'm ascending soon, hurry tell others
3. Jesus is saying to stop clinging to Him because physical touch will NO longer be main way to have a relationship w/ Jesus
   - Don't cling to Me, I'm ascending and now you will be w/ Me in Spirit
4. Jesus is telling Mary to not worry or grab Me like you won't ever see Me again... NO need to cling to Me, for I've not yet ascended... I'll be here for a while But, then I will ascend

★ This could make the most sense w/ Jesus words to Mary & Thomas
- Mary: told to stop her enthusiastic clinging and begin to grasp that He will be ascending in a while
- Thomas: stop doubting and touch Me to see I am physically alive

v.17 But go and tell the brethren and say to them, "I am ascending to My Father and to your Father and to My God and your God
- Jesus is going to ascend, but until then, He makes appearances
- Jesus' final departure will be very dramatic - ACTS 1:9-11
  - He has NOT ascended (in finality?) yet

★ This is the message Jesus wants Mary to convey to the disciples
- I have risen...
- But NOT ascended yet

- The phrase: My Father / Your Father, My God / Your God

★ Jesus Does NOT say: OUR Father and Our God (which would show Believers = w/ Jesus)
- Jesus is the μονογενὴς "son" of God
- Believers are children of God
- When Jesus teaches us to pray, He tells us to say "Our" Father

★ BUT Jesus never includes the Believer w/ Him in His unique Relationship w/ God
- seems to indicate a seperate and distinct Relationship that only Jesus has with God/Father

★ There's a similar relationship of the Believers of Jesus w/ God
- BUT NOT The SAME

v.18 Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that He had spoken these things to her
- Mary did what Jesus commissioned her to do
- A huge honor that she was given the privilege to make such an announcement

② CHRIST APPEARS TO THE DISCIPLES

v.19 Then that same day at evening, being the first day of the week
- Again, interesting that John uses phrase "the first day of the week"
- opposed to "the third day"
- emphasis is on new beginnings

★ Also, this event could be the tradition and origin of Sunday evening service

v.19 The doors were shut where the disciples were assembled
- συνάγω: gathered, assembled
- Base to συναγωγή (synagogē)

★ In the O.T. prophets, the Messiah would be the One to gather God's people
- Messiah would gather God's scattered people (John 11:52, Is 49:6... 48-54)

v.19 (The doors were shut) for fear of the Jews, but Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them, "Peace be with you."
- Again, we see the physical nature of Jesus' body
  - Mary touch / clung to Him
- And the spiritual nature
  - Jesus passed through locked doors and "materialized."
- The phrase "Peace be w/ you" has significance
- Typically, this was a common Jewish greeting Shalom

★ But, Jesus' repetition of the word peace 3x (v.19, 21, 26) could imply the new heavenly peace that Jesus promised

"Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you, not as the world gives do I give to you" John 14:27

"These things I have spoken to you that in Me you may have Peace, in the world you will have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world" John 16:33

- Paul always started his letters w/ the greeting of "Grace & Peace"

εἰρήνη: Peace, harmony, tranquility. Freedom from worry (LXX translates Shalom as εἰρήνη)

★ Also the fruit/evidence you are in the spirit... Love, Joy peace - Gal. 5:22

v.20 When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord
- according to Luke 24:39, Jesus told them "to behold His hands and feet, that it is Myself. Handle Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have." Lit 24:39

★ The risen LORD is the same as the crucified One

v.21 So Jesus said to them again, "Peace to you!" As the Father sent Me, I also send you."
- each Gospel ends w/ a commission from Jesus to His followers.

1. Go make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name (authority of) the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things I commanded you Matt 28:18-20
2. Go preach the Gospel to every creature Mark 16:15
3. Go teach repentance and the remission of sins should be preached in His name Luke 24:47

- Now, the 4th Gospels commission
  - Jesus sends the Believer out the same way Jesus was sent

ἀποστέλλω / πέμπω: To send

★ We are to obey Jesus the same way He obeyed the Father
- Jesus was perfectly obedient in His mission
- Jesus is the model for the disciples

★ Believers are commissioned to carry on Christ's work

v.22 And when He had said this, He breathed on them
- This is the New creation... as prophesied (Is. 65:17)

The Believer, Thy New Jerusalem
- As God breathed life into Adam - Gen. 2:7
- Jesus breathed life into His New creation
- We are His New Creation - 2 Cor 5:17

- This Breathing of the Spirit has caused a lot of confussion in relation to Pentecost
  - Some views on this event
    1. This was a symbolic breath of God which was to come soon
    2. This was a beginning of what was to come
       - this was a foretaste of the coming "outpouring"
    3. John is including the Pentecost event w/ His Gospel, making the event Theological, NOT chronological (Potentially as He might have done in John 2 w/ the cleaning of the Temple)

v.23 and Jesus said to them, "If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them... If you retain the sins of any, they are retained. (ESV says: if you withhold forgiveness of anyone, it is withheld... they are not forgiven)
- With the power and presence of the Spirit in the Believer
- Jesus continues His work

★ A big part of that is letting people know if their sins are forgiven or NOT forgiven

★ Jesus continues letting people know this through His Word AND through His believers
- Jesus made this clear in His farewell address (specifically 14-16) that He will continue His work through the παράκλητος
- Jesus gave "witness" to peoples sins as forgiven — paralytic man (Lk 5:23) or retained — Pharisees against the blind man (John 9:41)

★ This always got Jesus in hot water.
★ It will get the Believer persecuted too

- The Greek is clear that the Believer DOES NOT have the power to forgive sins...

★ But let them know if their sins are forgiven
- Greek has a verb case/condition called the "perfect passive"
- The subject is not the one doing the verb (they are passive, NOT ACTIVE)

★ Also, the sins are in the perfect NOT the simple past Tense (aorist)
- This means the sins are NOT forgiven and done w/... but
  - are in a state of forgiveness
  - They stand forgiven OR

- Based on repentance and faith... our sins stand forgiven
  - Believers must Believe unto the end (Ez. 18, Matt 10, John 15, Rom 11, 1 Cor 9, Heb 6, 10, Rev. 2-3)