

**When You Doubt
Your Father!
John 20:19-20; 24-29**



Observations

As We Navigate Through This Pandemic, Questions Arise To God's Children

- *“God, where are you?”*
- *“God, are you who I always thought you were?”*
- *“God, when are you going to stop this?”*
- *“God, don't you care about what's going on?”*
- *“God, what am I supposed to do (I've got a family)?”*



**Look at
John
20:19-20**

“On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you!” After He said this, He showed them His hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord.”



John
20:24-29

“Now Thomas (also known as Didymus) one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, “We have seen the Lord!”

But he said to them, “Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe.”



**Verses
26-29**


“A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you! Then He said to Thomas, Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side, Stop doubting and believe.”

Thomas said to Him, “My Lord and my God!” Then Jesus told him, “Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe.”




Observations

- **The disciple Thomas always seems to get a bad rap for his doubts in the resurrection story (doubting Thomas, he has been called)**
- **But today I want to show you that he was as committed as the other disciples and his story gives us some food for thought and meditation when we face doubts in our lives as children of God**



Children Of God Experience Doubt!

- Doubt enters the mind of a parent whose child is struggling with life, school, socialization, their future
- Doubt enters the mind of a single Christian with no eligible marriage partner in sight
- Doubt enters the mind of a wife who has problems becoming pregnant
- Doubt enters the mind of a young man or woman who's trying to provide for his/her family, especially, when the other parent is not around
- Doubt enters the mind of a retired couple who now has to face more obstacles than they had planned for, in their retirement years



Thomas Was Not Viewed In Scripture as “The Weak Disciple”

- In John 11, Jesus told his disciples He had to go to Bethany because His friend, Lazarus, was sick
- Most of the disciples warned Jesus of going to visit Lazarus at that time, in Judaea, because of all of the negative drumbeats and the anger that was beginning to grow against Him
- But this is how Thomas responded; John 11:16

“Let us also go, that we may die with Him.”

So Here Was A Guy Who Volunteered to Lay Everything On The Line For Jesus!

**In John
Chapter 14
When Jesus
Promised to
Go and
Prepare a
Place for His
Disciples:**

- It was Thomas who asked the question that all the disciples wanted to know, in verse 5:

“Lord, we don’t know where you are going, so how can we know the way?”

- It is to answer this question, that Jesus gave us one of the most famous verses in the Bible we all know and love:

“I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” verse 6

So What Lessons Does Thomas’ Story With Jesus Teach Us?

#1 Beware of the Low Times in Your Life

- The scriptures don't tell us *WHY* he was not with the other 10 disciples on the initial Sunday evening after the resurrection, that Jesus met with them
- We know that some of us grieve differently than others. Jesus knows that, and it's interesting that He did not rebuke Thomas for not being with the other disciples when He first appeared to them



Remember: Guard Your Low Times

- During the low times in your life is not the time to make rash decisions (impulsively), without thinking and praying them through (a decision to move, buy a car, get married too quickly or get divorced, quitting your job)
- Thomas was experiencing a “down time in his life.”
 - Jesus had been crucified
 - Thomas’ life was no doubt in jeopardy

His hopes for Jesus’ movement had been crushed

- Don’t give in to doubts in the midst of disappointment! Recognize them for what they are. Your faith > doubts

James 1:6 James says if you lack wisdom, *“Let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind.”*

Be Honest About Your Doubts Like Thomas and John the Baptist Were

- ▶ Thomas had not been there when Jesus first appeared to the disciples, so he says in verse 25:

“Unless I see the nail marks in His hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe.”

Thomas Was Not the First Child of God to Have His Faith Challenged With Doubt; Matthew 11:2-5

“When John, who was in prison, heard about the deeds of the Messiah, he sent his disciples to ask Him, “Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else?”

- ▶ This is a different spirit in John the Baptist from the same man in John 1:29 who gave testimony of Jesus



Observations

- ▶ Doubt is a season of life that all children of God pass through at some time or another (Don't remain in the same season)
- ▶ One of the points in this lesson is to give God a chance to answer your doubt, like He did with John the Baptist (Jesus sent John an encouraging message, Matthew 11:4-5, “Go and show John again.....”)
- ▶ In Thomas' story, Jesus shows up in Thomas' presence a week after He appeared to the other disciples the first time. So be patient with God, Psalms 27:14, “Wait on the Lord; Be of good courage.....”
- ▶ Thomas eventually returned to his friends, the disciples. He didn't remain alone in his grief (Don't remain alone)




#2 Draw Your Strength From Others

- ▶ While Thomas was by himself, his doubts were greater
- ▶ He missed his “*faith building resurrection moment*” when he didn’t assemble with the disciples
- ▶ What happens to a piece of coal when separated from the rest of the pieces in the fire?.....It goes out!




Observations

- ▶ During these times of adjusting our worship services, in the present crisis, we now understand, more fully, the practical advantages of why God has commanded that we gather together in scripture, Hebrews 10:24-25
- ▶ There is an encouragement and an exhortation in the spirit that we gain when we communicate and worship together
- ▶ During these uncertain times, it is important to stay connected with spiritual people (that's what the disciples did during their uncertain times, John 20:19)
- ▶ Discussing the present crisis with your spiritual family can encourage you, inspire you, and remind you that God is still on the throne. That is not everyone's perspective! (Lysol, Pine-Sol)
- ▶ There is nothing that happens in this world without His knowledge nor His care for His children, Romans 8:35-39



#3 Let the Lord Answer Your Doubts

- It is no coincidence that Jesus doubles back to the disciples a week later, verse 26, making sure this time that Thomas was there with them
- 99% of the narrative this time is between Jesus and Thomas (Jesus first greets all of the disciples, but the main focus of His conversation is about increasing the faith of Thomas)
- Notice that Jesus addresses every piece of evidence that Thomas said he would need for his faith to be restored (nail marks in hands, place his fingers where the nails were, and put his hand into His side)



What is Faith?

- *“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, THE EVIDENCE OF THINGS NOT SEEN” Hebrews 11:1*
- Jesus gave Thomas the evidence for which he had asked thus removing his doubt; Thomas said to Him, *“My Lord and my God!”*
- Isn't it good to know that you serve a God that will increase your faith with “EVIDENCE” for some of the doubts in your life
- He knows your peculiarities and circumstances like he knew Thomas' and the answers you need for the doubts you have

Sometimes it's a scripture, a teacher, an experience you are given by God

Remember God is no respecter of persons, Acts 10:34-35



Faith is Not a Blind Leap!

- It is walking in evidence with His divine guidance
- My wife and I, over the years, have remarked at how God at certain periods of our lives has “checked all the boxes,” of our peculiarities and increased our faith

When doubting a career move or position

When doubting an environment for our special needs son to grow

When doubting the paths of certain medical diagnoses (which decision to make) What doctor should care for me?

When stumbling blocks seem to be ever present

This is When You Pray for Evidentiary Faith From Jesus!



**To See God's Will For Your
Doubts, You Have To Be
Willing To Walk With Him!
(He's not a Genie That
comes from a bottle)**

"Trust in the Lord with all of thine heart; and lean not unto thine on understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths." Proverbs 3:5-6



The Plan Of Salvation

Hear **Hear the Gospel**
1 Corinthians 15:1-4

Believe **Believe the Gospel**
Hebrews 11:6

Repent **Repent of Sins**
Acts 2:38

Confess **Confess Christ**
Acts 8:37

Baptism **Be Baptized**
Acts 8:38
