

STOP DOUBTING AND BELIEVE

Scripture: John 20:24-29

Definition of a Miracle: Contrary to human possibility. Events that have no natural explanation.

Resurrection of Jesus was that kind of a miracle, which is totally unexplainable by any human or natural means.

Do you believe in miracles?

Today let us study from the disciple of Jesus, Thomas – Doubting Thomas

A. WHO WAS THOMAS

1) **Twin:** We are not aware of his background in the Scriptures. But his name suggests – Thomas in Aramaic, Didymus in Greek means Twin. Twin was his nickname.

2) **Courageous Man:**

John 11: Lazarus dies in Bethany, disciples are reluctant because of the previous experience v8

But Thomas says a Brave statement v16 'Let us go also that we may die with him.'

3) **Honestly expressed his feelings**

Night before crucifixion John 14:1-4 After Jesus washed the feet of his disciples. All this talk of going and coming is too much for Thomas (vague and mysterious)

V5 Lord we don't know where you are going, how can we know the way?

If he did not understand, if it did not make sense to him – He would clarify. He wouldn't make a confession of faith if it wasn't true

He is completely honest – doubts, confusion, fears

4) **Devoted to Christ**

Intensely loyal, deeply committed to Christ. If need be he was ready to lay down his life for Christ.

B. SITUATION AT EASTER

First Easter Morning: believed or doubted ?

1) None of the disciples believed at first

- Very simply they were not expecting Resurrection

Only people who expected were Jewish leaders and Enemies of Jesus. (Tomb to be sealed)

- Resurrection was the farthest thing in their mind

Mark 16: Women came to the tomb on Sunday morning to anoint his body. They never expected Resurrection.

John 20:2 Mary thought some one stole his body. Angel said that He is not here, He is risen.

Luke 24:11 They did not believe the women because their words seemed like nonsense

- They could think about all the good times they had with Jesus but they could never believe what he said 'Resurrection'

- 2) Thomas was not present when Jesus appeared to the disciples

John 20:19-25 We don't know where he was?

Different people mourn differently and respond to tragedy, some like to be with friends and some privately with thoughts.

C. WHAT WAS HAPPENING WITH THOMAS?

- Doubts came from devotion to Christ

- Its one thing to doubt virgin birth in a classroom but its something else to lose someone you love and wonder if there is God still alive

- 1) Thomas was not a sceptic

2 kinds of doubters – sceptics who don't believe and there is nothing you can do to make them believe; Doubt springing from wounded heart. Sceptics enjoy doubt, talk about it, laugh about it and are angry if refuted. They are not looking for answers but argument. Eg. Pharisees Math 16:1-4. Jesus calls them evil and adulterous generation.

- 2) Thomas' doubt sprang from a broken heart

- I don't believe but I am willing to believe if I can see it for myself

- Wounded believer

- Thomas had seen many miracles of Jesus but this he wanted to see and believe for himself

- 3) Thomas was not unwilling to believe but unable to believe

- He was willing to believe provided he saw felt by himself

- He wanted to be sure it was Jesus and not dream/vision

- Some people are satisfied with the testimony of others. Some are not. Thomas was not.
- Unless I put my finger in his wounds...
Thomas desperately wanted to believe if only he could be sure

D. LESSONS FROM THOMAS' LIFE

1) Jesus invited Thomas to see for himself

- Thomas' bad reputation: Doubting Thomas but not Jesus
- After 8 days Jesus meets Thomas and other disciples and speaks to the one who has weak faith, not to the one who has an evil heart. John 20:27 **"Stop doubting and Believe"**
- Jesus knew what exactly was going on with Thomas he came just so Thomas could be sure. Jesus did not put him down! He said go ahead and clear your doubt!
Doubters are welcome to the empty tomb
When you are ready Jesus will be there waiting for you
- Anybody can have doubts but it will be healthier if we can admit our doubts
- Our Lord welcomes every sincere person and invites the doubters to check out the evidence for themselves

2) Strongest doubters often becomes the strongest believers

- Deep doubt is a prelude to a deeper faith
- Doubts are like ants in the path of faith
- Honest doubts once resolved become a bedrock of unshakeable faith
- History of Church – Greatest doubters become strongest believers
- Honest doubters can bring their honest doubts to the empty tomb

3) Blessings come to those who believe what God has said

- Come to the empty tomb and see it for yourself
John 20:28 "My Lord and My God" – greatest testimony given by any Apostle
- It's a climax of the Gospel of John
- It came from a man who had strongest doubts
John 20: 29 Blessed are those who have not seen but yet believed!

I Cor 15:17 If Christ was not raised from the dead – faith is futile

4) Don't let your doubts keep you from Jesus

- No one can remain neutral for long
- Don't be like Cat on the fence
- This Easter Sunday is a wonderful day to make that choice. It's a great day to stop doubting and start believing.
- Because with God all things are possible
- You know Jesus died and was raised from the dead for your sin and mine

Jesus says "Stop doubting and Believe"