

Thomas

Riverside Youth Devotional

April 19, 2020

John 20:24-29

²⁴ Now Thomas (also known as Didymus), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. ²⁵ 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."

²⁶ 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!" ²⁷ 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."

²⁸ Thomas said to him, "My Lord and my God!"

²⁹ Then Jesus told him, "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

Thomas is most well-known for this moment of doubt. There are a couple of other instances in John's gospel where Thomas shows that he doesn't quite understand when Jesus talks about the resurrection so this doubt isn't entirely new; but here we see Thomas not trusting the direct word of his fellow disciples that Jesus is alive until he verifies it for himself. Can you think of a time someone told you something that made you think: I'll believe it when I see it?

A week passes before Thomas gets his chance to see Jesus for himself. When Jesus does show up, he appears even though the doors are locked. The disciples weren't expecting him, no one asked him to be there. He chooses to appear specifically to allow Thomas to touch his wounds and believe. Jesus recognizes Thomas' need, and meets him right where he is to fill it.

What are some of the needs that Jesus has met for you these past few weeks?

Jesus tells Thomas that he believes because he has seen Him, but blessed are those who are able to believe without seeing. Hebrews 11 describes faith as believing without seeing. It's easy to believe things that are tangible and easily seen, it can get a lot harder to have faith when something cannot be seen. Think about something like gravity. You cannot see the force of gravity, but you can see and experience its effect constantly. You have faith that if you jump in the air, you'll come back down. A lot of that faith comes from the fact that it's proven to be true every single time you've tried it. You still cannot see gravity itself, but because you see the reality of gravity all around you. In much the same way, God is everywhere and all around us. God is working constantly in our lives. If you have faith in that truth, you begin to recognize all the ways God is with you.

What are some of the blessings you've experienced these past few weeks where God has been at work in your life?

My prayer for you today comes from Hebrews 12:1-3

¹Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, ²fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. ³Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.