

TITLE AND NUMBER: 234 Doubting Thomas

REFERENCE AND KEY VERSES: John 20:24-29



Now Thomas (called 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 it.' 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 have believed.'

LOOKING FURTHER: Matthew 21:28-32; Matthew 14:25-33

What does the Bible passage tell us?

Doubting is not necessarily wrong. It shows that we are curious and don't want to be influenced by other people's opinions but are anxious to make our own decisions. It is not surprising that Thomas doubted the other disciples' story that Jesus had risen from the dead. It was an amazing and unique event. However, as soon as Thomas saw Jesus, he doubted no longer, declaring Him to be 'My Lord and my God' (v.28).

There was once a priest who prayed for 'the honest doubter'. He felt it was far more important for someone to admit honestly that they were unsure than to say they believed when in fact they didn't. Jesus told a parable of a man whose son was to go and work in the vineyard. He said he wouldn't go but then went. His other son said he would go but then didn't. Jesus said that the first son made the right choice (Matthew 21:28-32).

If we have doubts about the existence of God or the things that Jesus did, it is important to try to find out the truth. The Bible is our best guide, especially the New Testament, but also the prophecies about Jesus in the Old Testament. Prayer is important too. You might ask how you can pray if you are not sure of the existence of God. That is not a problem. God can speak to you through other people, through books and even directly, without you being sure at that point that He is there. When we have doubts, we can remind ourselves of times when God has helped us and when it could only have been God because only He knew our situation.

Thomas had the privilege of seeing the Risen Lord. Most of us can only feel His presence and come to understand that He lives in us. Jesus recognised that having faith without actually seeing Him is difficult and for that reason He is especially pleased with us (v.29).

Reflection

- Do you sometimes think that this time you have gone too far and God will never forgive you? Tell him sincerely that you are sorry and want to change and He will forgive you and help you.
- Try and treat those for whom you are a father figure or a role model as the father in this parable treats his sons, with love and forgiveness.

Write or draw something you read in this Bible Study that stood out to you.



Do you have any questions about this week's Bible Study?



How does this week's message apply to your life?



What can we learn about God from this week's passage?



What would you like to ask God this week?



Has God responded to your prayers this week in the way you had hoped for? It's okay to talk to God about this.

