

John 20: Thomas' Interview **10-16-16AM**

In John 20:24-29, we find the record of Thomas meeting Jesus after His resurrection. Specifically, Thomas had not been present when Jesus, on the night of the day He arose, had met with the disciples. Thomas insisted that he see Jesus' hands and side in order to believe. Jesus appeared to him, and Thomas believed. Let us consider the "interview" of Thomas, first by the disciples and second by Jesus. There are two important lessons we can take from this.

What Thomas Missed

We do not know why Thomas was missing from the group that Sunday. When the disciples saw Jesus, they had a great joy. Thomas missed seeing the Lord and having his joy restored. As well, Thomas missed the importance of lifting up his brethren when they were discouraged. When Jesus appeared to the others, He both taught them about His death and resurrection, and gave them an important commission. Thomas missed receiving the teaching and commandments of Christ.

There is an important parallel to us on the first day of the week. We are commanded not to forsake the assembly in Hebrews 10:25-26. When we miss the assembly, we miss the joy of being with the Lord (since communion is with Him by faith). We miss the opportunity to lift our brethren. We miss the instruction of the Lord in the Scriptures, and the commission we have to be faithful.

Thomas' Belief

We sometimes mistakenly think Thomas was a doubter. We ought to instead see him as a man of the appropriate type of faith. Thomas wanted to believe that Jesus had come back. However, Thomas refused to be deceived, even by his close friends. Thomas made a reasonable demand. Finally, Thomas believed when it was met

There is a value of NOT believing. The Bereans were called fair minded for not accepting Paul's words without proof in Acts 17:10-11. We are told that faith comes from hearing the word of God, not the words of men (Romans 10:17). Blind Faith is NOT good.

Thomas exhibits a desire to believe. An example of this desire is found in the blind man of John 9 (35-37), who wanted to believe in the Son of God. IF we desire NOT to believe, no amount of evidence can change our minds. Many people don't believe because they don't want to believe; this is not the cause of Thomas' question.

Thomas also gives us an important example in his fear of being deceived. The bible repeatedly and often says "do not be deceived" (Luke 21:8, 1 Corinthians 6:9, 15:33, Galatians 6:7, James 1:16, Ephesians 5:6, Colossians 2:8). Even when his close friends told him, he refused to accept their word for this important event.

Thomas exhibited a desire for real, valid and reasonable evidence. We are not asked to believe without proof; Proof of God (Romans 1:19-20), or Proof Jesus was the Christ (John 20:30-31). In Isaiah 7, God demanded King Ahaz ask Him for a sign, and when he would not, God said he was offending God. Demanding real evidence means asking for something that is reasonable and relevant. Thomas had seen Jesus die, and to verify this was indeed Jesus, he needed to see those wounds.

Finally, Thomas is an example of believing when the proof is satisfied. We have no excuse to be incredulous: If we won't study; If we won't accept truth; If we won't change.

CONCLUSION

The account of John seems to draw to a close with Thomas declaration that Jesus is God (consider that the book began by telling us the same). Yet there is one last confession present in the book: that of the reader. John makes it clear that the reader has sufficient evidence presented to believe that Jesus is the Christ, and that He is God in the flesh, and by believing this, have eternal life.