

Believe - Easter 2022
Pastor John Carmichael

[Jhn 20:24-31 NASB95] 24 But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. 25 So the other disciples were saying to him, "We have seen the Lord!" But he said to them, "Unless I see in His hands the imprint of the nails, and put my finger into the place of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe." 26 After eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors having been shut, and stood in their midst and said, "Peace [be] with you." 27 Then He said to Thomas, "Reach here with your finger, and see My hands; and reach here your hand and put it into My side; and do not be unbelieving, but believing." 28 Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!" 29 Jesus said to him, "Because you have seen Me, have you believed? Blessed [are] they who did not see, and [yet] believed." 30 Therefore many other signs Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; 31 but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name.

- It's hard to believe anything anymore. I was a principal of a Christian school for 1 year. Up to that time, I believed people told the truth. That experience taught me differently.
- Believing is a central part of experiencing God.
 - [Jhn 3:16 NASB95] 16 "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.
 - [Rom 10:9-10 NASB95] 9 that if you confess with your mouth Jesus [as] Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; 10 for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.
- We have a hard time believing anything anymore. Post-modernism has a belief issue. Everything is questionable: news, history, medicine, health information, financial, and even spiritual issues. We have been lied to and we have an understandable issue with believing anything.
- All of us have or are struggling to believe. You are not alone in struggling to believe.
- In John 20:14-31, Jesus shows up to connect, comfort, and challenge Thomas (sometimes unfairly called Doubting Thomas) and the other disciples.

What can we learn on this Easter Resurrection Sunday from Jesus' interaction with Thomas that will help get with the issues of believing God?

There are three lessons from this interaction that will help us believe God.

- I. Jesus wants us to stay connected as we learn to believe.**
 - a. V. 24-26
 - b. Thomas was with the disciples on the Lords Day. (8 days after the resurrection.)
 - c. The tendency is to separate from others when we are struggling.
 - d. When we are challenged in our faith; stay connected
 - i. Church – community of believers.
 - ii. Small groups – fellowship and relationship.
 - e. [Rom 15:1 NASB95] 1 Now we who are strong ought to bear the weaknesses of those without strength and not [just] please ourselves.
 - f. This can only happen when we stay connected.
- II. Jesus wants us to receive comfort as we learn to believe.**
 - a. V. 26
 - b. Jesus showed up to specifically speak to Thomas. He did come to Thomas.

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- c. Many times, we think God has rejected us we are struggling. Thomas showed some signs of believing (he was there; he said he would believe under certain conditions.)
- d. If we are called to bear with the weak (Romans 15:1), He does so more!
- e. We are comforted by:
 - i. His Presence
 - ii. His Peace
- f. Receiving His comfort will help us as we learn to believe.

III. Jesus wants us to accept the challenge as we learn to believe.

- a. John 20:27-30
 - b. We are challenged to believe:
 - i. Savior – v 27-29
 - ii. Signs – v 30
 - iii. Scripture – 31
 - c. Jesus connects with us and comforts us where are right now. He also loves us enough not to allow us to stay there.
 - d. He wants us to grow in our believing in Him. We can experience the salvation, healing, and deliverance He has for us as we believe.
 - e. Learning to believe will help us conquer the fear of the devil, sin, death, and any evil that comes against us.
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- **No matter where you are in your believing in Him, He will connect, comfort, and challenge you.**
 - **If you will continue to pursue Him, He will continue to pursue you. He loves you right now.**