

## **“Thomas Answers Jesus” -- Believe – Easter 2 -- John 20: 19-31**

### **Welcome:**

We should know that God loves when we ask questions. Jesus encouraged questions in his teaching and storytelling. It shows an important part of our faith when we ask Jesus questions, just like in our everyday life of asking questions and learning. When we ask questions, it gives us the understanding and growth that we need to learn every day. We all have different questions and that is OK. God welcomes all questions and will answer them.

### **Story Time:**

Last week we learned of an amazing event – Easter Sunday -- Christ is Risen. The Resurrection of Jesus. After he died on the cross for our sins, he rose from the grave so that we may live with him in Heaven for ever.

This week we learn that God likes questions. When we don't understand something and want to learn something new, we ask questions. Like asking a question in school, we can ask Jesus questions to help grow our faith. Our faith will grow because we know that God loves us and will answer our questions.

Jesus' disciple Thomas was often called “Doubting Thomas”. Thomas knew that Jesus had died but didn't know he was alive. He needed to know that Jesus was real. As a follower of Jesus, Thomas still had many questions. He needed to see and touch Jesus' wounds to believe it for himself. When Jesus appeared to Thomas, he answered all Thomas' doubt and answered all his questions.

Thomas teaches us that it is ok to ask questions, even to Jesus.

### **Reading:**

Find your favorite Bible and turn to **John 20: 19-31** and begin reading.

As someone reads to you (or you read to yourself) try to listen for words you do not recognize.

You can draw what you hear or draw a picture when you are finished.

### **Scripture Reading:**

**John 20:19-31** New International Version (NIV)

#### *Jesus Appears to His Disciples*

<sup>19</sup>On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you!” <sup>20</sup>After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord.

<sup>21</sup>Again Jesus said, “Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.” <sup>22</sup>And with that he breathed on them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit. <sup>23</sup>If you forgive anyone's sins, their sins are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven.”

#### *Jesus Appears to Thomas*

<sup>24</sup>Now Thomas (also known as Didymus<sup>[a]</sup>), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. <sup>25</sup>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.”

<sup>26</sup>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!” <sup>27</sup>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.”

<sup>28</sup>Thomas said to him, “My Lord and my God!”

<sup>29</sup>Then Jesus told him, “Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”

### *The Purpose of John's Gospel*

<sup>30</sup> Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. <sup>31</sup> But these are written that you may believe<sup>[b]</sup> that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

#### **Questions to ponder:**

Who suddenly appeared in the room? (Jesus)

What did Thomas want to see before he would believe Jesus was alive? (the nail marks on Jesus hands and the marks on his side)

What did Jesus show the disciples so they would know it was him? (his hands)

Who in this story believed without having seen Jesus in person? (we do: "these are written that you may believe...")

#### **Review and Reflect the Lesson:**

##### **Wonder about the story:**

In the story today Thomas wondered if Jesus really was alive. I also wonder why the doors were locked. I wonder how Thomas felt when he was left out and heard the other disciples saw Jesus. I wonder how it felt to touch Jesus' wounds. I wonder what we would do if we saw Jesus right now. I wonder what we would say to him. What do you wonder?

The important thing is to not forget that Jesus died on the cross and then and rose from the grave. He then appeared to the disciples to commission them by breathing on them and giving them the Holy Spirit. It is written so that we believe in Him so we will have life with Him forever.

##### **See the story:**

Some things we can't see if it is there or not, like air. How do we know that air is there? We know this because it feels our hearts so we can breathe and live each day. We just believe that it is there even though we can't see it. That is what we call faith. Just like God's love. God's love feels us up even though we can't see his love. We can feel it in our hearts, and it makes us happy. And for this we are Blessed.

Thomas needed to see and touch Jesus' wounds to help him believe that Jesus was alive. Walk around your house and touch the things that help you see Jesus. It could be a bible, some water for our baptism, flowers for his creations, someone's arm for God's people, a hymnal or song book to sing praise, cross for remind us of God's love and Jesus resurrection, etc. Jesus is all around us, even though we can't see him.

##### **Share the Story:**

In our *new normal world*, we live in right now, we may feel left out from Jesus at times. Not able to go to church to hear and learn more about Jesus. Not sure why things are happening in these days and wonder why things are like they are or if they will be better. It is harder to hear and see the stories of Jesus. You may be feeling left out like Thomas did when he was not with the disciples and Jesus came the first time. After you read the story for today you too can help others not feel left out, share the story with them or another story of Jesus you know.

#### **Extra Readings for today:**

Acts 2: 14a,22-32

Psalm 16

1 Peter 1: 3-9

#### **Prayer:**

Dear God,

Thank you for answering our questions. Help us to remember that we learn by asking questions and listening for your answers. Thank you for sending Jesus to die and rise again. Amen