

Now Follow Him
2020-03-15

John 20:24-31

Now Thomas, one of the Twelve, called the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see in His hands the mark of the nails, and place my finger into the mark of the nails, and place my hand into His side, I will never believe."

26 Eight days later, His disciples were inside again, and Thomas was with them. Although 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, and see My hands; and put out your hand, and place it in My side. Do not disbelieve, but believe." 28 Thomas answered Him, "My Lord and my God!" 29 Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen Me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

30 Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; 31 but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name.

Gospel of John written so readers know who Jesus is (God in human flesh, only Savior), who we are (sinners in need of Savior), so we would believe in Christ and have eternal life in His name. John 20:30-31, Matthew 16:13-16, John 3:18, 9:35-38

- In last 2 chapters John calls all his readers....now follow Jesus.
 - As we follow Jesus, He will remove our doubts and overcome our failures.

In the 40 days between resurrection and ascension, Jesus used extraordinary measures to remove the doubt believers had about the truthfulness of resurrection. Luke 24:41-43

- Eating fish destroys "ghost" or "disembodied spirit" hypothesis.
 - Same body (they id) but combination of natural and supernatural.
 - All Christians bodies will be transformed into this type of glorified, eternal body. 1 Corinthians 15:35, 42-44, Philippians 3:20-21

Jesus used sight, hearing, touch, mind to remove any doubt. John 20:24-28

- Thomas needed empirical evidence and Jesus compassionately responded.
 - Jesus loved Thomas and wanted him full of faith....same with you.

Not necessarily believe if see miracle or see/touch/hear Jesus, many Jews didn't!

- Faith (gift of God) given through written testimony of Jesus' life, death, resurrection of those w/him then (New Testament Bible). John 20:29-31, Hebrews 11:1, quotes (at end of notes)
 - Jesus will remove your doubts if 1st believe then follow Him. Gospel

All Christians, no matter how devoted to Jesus, sometimes sin/fail Him. 1 Corinthians 10:12

- Peter's courage failed (denied 3x) but not his faith (God's grace).
 - Question not "will you fail" but your response to failure.
 - pity party/run away (fishing): repent and follow Him
- Like with Peter, Jesus forgives your failures/sin and will never give up on you or let you go. John 21:15-17, 19b, Mark 1:16-18, Hebrews 13:5b
 - After 3 years of Peter's failures, sin and messes, Jesus said same words along same lake to Peter as when 1st met...."Follow me."
 - As we follow Jesus, He will remove our doubts and overcome our failures.

John inspire saving belief resulting in lifelong walk of faith. John 20:30-31, 21:19b

- "Follow Me" present tense imperative meaning "Keep on following."
 - To follow Jesus is to walk in His steps, live as He lived, serve others as He did...even in midst of sickness/disease (coronavirus).

Walk wise (be example of good disease management) but use your health to serve, not to hide. Philippians 4:6, Matthew 25:34-36 & 40, Corrie ten Boom

- Choose prayer and serving others over worry and self-focus.
 - One leads to peace, other to panic.
- Where disease spreads fear, we must be bold in our faith.
 - Share your hope not found in remaining healthy on earth.
 - Jesus rescued from universal epidemic of sin and its results.
 - Wonderful opportunity to show that Christian faith motivates courage, sacrifice, compassion, and love in times of danger.
By God's grace.....walk in faith not fear!

"For I do not seek to understand that I may believe, but I believe in order to understand. For unless I believed, I should not understand." Anselm

"We behold JC in the gospel no less than if He stood with us. Therefore, if we decide to see JC, what will make us happy and blessed, let us learn to believe where we do not see." John Calvin

"Worry doesn't empty tomorrow of its sorrows, it empties today of its strength." Corrie ten Boom