

The Final Days of Jesus
CONQUERING DOUBT

Wednesday, April 8
Reading: John 20:19-31

John 20:26 *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!"* **27** *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."* **28** *Thomas said to Him, "My Lord and my God!"* **29** *Then Jesus told him, "Because you have seen Me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."*

Mary and the other women had reported to the disciples the news that Jesus was alive, but they refused to believe it (Matthew 24:11). They feared that they might be the next ones to be arrested and killed, so they hid behind locked doors. Suddenly Jesus appeared in the room and proved to them that He had truly risen. Then He gave them their commission. He was sending them into the world to preach the forgiveness of sins and salvation in His name. And He repeated His promise to send the Holy Spirit to give them the power for this mission.

Thomas was absent when Jesus appeared and the other ten disciples try to convince him that they have seen Jesus. However, Thomas states he will not believe until He can put his fingers in the nail marks in Jesus' hands and put his hand in Jesus' side. A week later, Jesus appeared again and offers the proof that Thomas had demanded. Thomas immediately declared Jesus as His Lord and God. Those who say Jesus never claimed to be God should look at this passage. This was a perfect opportunity for Jesus to say, "Wait a minute, Thomas. I'm a good teacher, but I'm not God." But He does not! Jesus accepts the worship of Thomas because He is God the Son.

John ends by giving the purpose of His gospel: "But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name."

LESSON ONE: "Peace Be With You." This was a common greeting in Jewish society. With the resurrection of Jesus, 'peace' would take on a deeper meaning. The night before the crucifixion Jesus had spoken of peace. "Peace I leave with you; My peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid" (John 14:27). Christ's peace is a reality in believers' lives because He died and rose again. How is Christ's peace different than what the world calls peace? What is preventing you from experiencing God's peace in your life?

LESSON TWO: "Blessed are Those Who Have Not Seen and Yet Believe." We call him "doubting Thomas" but all the disciples doubted and needed proof before they would believe in the resurrection. To Thomas' credit, it appears he did not need to put his finger in Jesus' wounds. He proclaims Jesus not only as Savior but as God! Jesus then pronounces a special blessing on all those who will never see Him but still believe. That is you and me! The opposite of doubt is faith. Do you need "proof" before you will follow Jesus? Or will you worship Him and proclaim Him as your Lord and God? If He is Lord, you must obey His commands. If He is God, He is worthy of your worship and service. "THE LORD IS RISEN - - - HE IS RISEN INDEED!"