

THOMAS: LET'S NOT BE TOO HARD ON HIM

John 20:24-29

(24) But Thomas, one of the twelve, call Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. (25) The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, except I shall see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into His side, I will not believe. (26) And after eight days again His disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you. (27) Then said He to Thomas, reach hither thy finger, and behold My hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into My side; and be not faithless, but believing. (28) And Thomas answered and said unto Him, "My Lord and my God." (29) Jesus said unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen Me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.

Introduction

Thomas was absent when Jesus revealed Himself to His disciples in Jerusalem on Easter Sunday evening. Upon hearing their assertion that Jesus had been resurrected and that He had visited them, Thomas remained skeptical and obstinate. He demanded physical evidence. To use the words of scientists, he demanded "empirical verification." The following Sunday, one week later, again the disciples were in a room with the doors shut and Jesus appeared to them and greeted them. This time Thomas was present. Jesus invited Thomas to touch His hands and His side. He then commanded Thomas to stop doubting and to have faith. Thomas heeded the Savior's words and gave to Jesus one of the most direct and lofty confessions of faith recorded in the New Testament. Jesus commended him and offered a blessing to all who, unlike Thomas, trust Christ without the benefit of seeing His resurrected body.

Thomas has often been vilified by Christians, because of his early doubt and has been given the nickname "doubting Thomas." Of course, he made some mistakes; so did all of the disciples. To be honest, we need people like Thomas. We need those who have "healthy skepticism." We need those who exhibit "concerned caution." I want my pharmacist to be a Thomas. I definitely want my anesthesiologist to be a Thomas. Sometimes they can appear to be "nitpicking," and can even get on your last nerve, but many times they save the day. I know sometimes they go overboard, but they give us the correct balance between faith and reason and between spirituality and practicality. Thomas was more of a pragmatist than a pessimist. Now let's look at the text.

Exposition

1. He Handled His Grief Alone-A Serious Mistake.

(He Retreated To His Man Cave.)

(He Withdrew From Christian Fellowship.)

2. He Missed The Initial Appearance Of Jesus.

(You Miss A Lot When You Miss Church.)

(You Miss A Lot When You Are Not In The Fellowship.)

3. He Admitted He Had A Problem.

(That's The Only Way To Get Help.)

(He Kept It 100% Real.)

(Thomas Was A Pragmatist.)

(He Was A Green/Gold Person-True Colors Label.)

4. Jesus Called Him Out.

(It Is Good To Be So Close To Jesus That He Will Call You Out When Necessary.)

5. Jesus Met Thomas At His Level Of Faith.

(Jesus Did Not Become Defensive-Jesus Disclosed.)

(Jesus Showed Signs Of His Authenticity.)

(We Must Do Likewise.)

6. Sometimes We Need Individualized Attention.

(Jesus Will Give It To Each Of Us.)

7. Thomas Confessed The Divinity Of Christ.

(Thomas Saw Jesus With The Eyes Of His Face.)

(We See Jesus With The Eyes Of Our Faith.)

(We Are More Blessed.)

Closing Thoughts

Isn't it amazing that the weakest disciple made the greatest confession of faith? He said, "my Lord and my God!" In addition, without Thomas' skepticism, Jesus would have had no need to respond and the blessing to future believers, such as you and I, would have not been expressed. Yes, we are blessed, because we believe without seeing His resurrected body. We believe the credible record of the witnesses of His resurrection, the Holy Bible. Give God Glory! Give God All The Glory.

Theological Notes

1. Thomas' confession of faith was monumental. Previously, Jesus had been addressed with many wonderful titles: Son of God, Lord, Master, Rabbi, Son of David, and Messiah. Never before had he been called "God." No Jew would call another human being God, unless he really believed it to be true. If it were not believed to be true, it would violate the first and third commandments.

2. Private and corporate worship both have their places. One does not take the place of the other. There are times we need to enter our closet and shut the door. (Please read Matthew 6:6.) We must, however, not forsake the assembling of ourselves together. (Please read Hebrews 11:25.) Jesus did not go to Thomas' house; He went where the saints were meeting together. Some things only happen in private worship. Other things only happen in corporate worship. Please do not neglect either. We are blessed because we can assemble in-person or virtually. Thank God for technology!

Related Scriptures

John 1:1

John 11:16

John 14:5

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