

09/27/26 Message

Part of FollowJourney of Discipleship
September 26, 2026

Message: Barely Believing

Series: Follow

Background

I'm approaching this series as if we are all in the same stage of our journey with Jesus, at the beginning. For some, this will be a review, but for most it will be a guide for what comes next. For all of us, if we'll let God work in and through us, we'll grow closer to Jesus and each other.

—Pastor Chad

Matthew 28:19-20 (NLT)

19 “Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.
20 Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

It's a circle of life with Jesus at the center. When you jump on the circle, it should be your goal to reach out and grab everyone you can and pull them on the circle with you. There's a lot more to it, but it's a great illustration. When you commit your life to Jesus and you commit to following Jesus, then you become His disciple. It's like being a student. You're only a student as long as you choose to be. That's the problem with this thing we call the spiritual journey. So many of us choose Jesus when we need Him, but when life is good, we forget all about Him. We stop being a student!

—Pastor Chad

- The spiritual journey is intended to be a LIFELONG commitment where you start and never stop.

Doubting Thomas

John 20:24-29 (NLT)

24 One of the twelve disciples, Thomas (nicknamed the Twin), was not with the others when Jesus came.

25 They told him, “We have seen the Lord!”

But he replied, “I won’t believe it unless I see the nail wounds in his hands, put my fingers into them, and place my hand into the wound in his side.”

26 Eight days later the disciples were together again, and this time Thomas was with them. The doors were locked; but suddenly, as before, Jesus was standing among them. “Peace be with you,” he said.

27 Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here, and look at my hands. Put your hand into the wound in my side. Don’t be faithless any longer. Believe!”

28 “My Lord and my God!” Thomas exclaimed.

29 Then Jesus told him, “You believe because you have seen me. Blessed are those who believe without seeing me.”

This is about the disciple named Thomas, nicknamed the Twin because his name in Aramaic is Ta’am (literally means “twin”); in Greek, it’s translated Didymus. I’d choose Thomas, it’s easier to say. There’s no evidence that Thomas really had a twin, but some early church fathers believe the name was symbolic of our twin nature. Some believe we all have a twin nature, a dual nature of holding both faith and doubt. Because of this passage, ole’ Thomas became known as Doubting Thomas.

—Pastor Chad

Here’s the problem I have with this and with Thomas... We call him Doubting Thomas like he was “the disciple” with the faith problem. Heck, they all had faith problems! Last week we saw Peter denying knowing Jesus not once but three times. Judas doubted Jesus so much, he turned him over to the enemy where he would be murdered. We could go on and name them all one by one... Sad thing is, we only hear about the 12, but if you evaluated the stories of the many who followed Jesus on the daily, we’d have tons of doubting stories just like this one and these

were the folks who had a first person, first hand relationship with Jesus. They could reach out and touch him; they could talk with him; they witnessed the miracles; they were there and they barely believed! Not because they had reason to doubt, but because our flesh, our human minds can't understand the omniscient, omnipresent, and omnipotent creator of the universe! This week, I'm not here to throw stones at your doubt or make fun of you because there are times you barely believe... I'm here to say I'm one of you! I get it! Nothing is wrong with you. We're human. Period. Thomas wasn't a bad guy. Thomas was human. Period. No stones being thrown here. Ready for the truth? Jesus knows it too and it doesn't surprise him!

—Pastor Chad

Learning from Thomas

- Sometimes followers of Jesus have DOUBTS
 - He has questions. He doubts. He struggles. But he is still a disciple of Jesus!
- Followers of Jesus don't DISCONNECT
 - When Thomas was alone, the others saw Jesus, but Thomas didn't!
 - Thomas didn't stay isolated, he came back!
- Jesus is not afraid of your QUESTIONS
 - Jesus is not offended by your questions. Jesus is not disappointed by your questions.
 - Asking Jesus shows our belief and it reveals our trust when we bring our questions to him.
- Faith isn't about having all the ANSWERS
 - Thomas went from mistrust to trust, from unbelief to belief, from a lack of faith to being full of faith!
 - Thomas was transformed!
- Every disciple must walk by FAITH
 - It's walking a path without knowing where it leads.
 - Blessed are those who believe without seeing Jesus!

It's About You

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Three things we can learn from Thomas:

- It's okay to have questions
 - Bring them to Jesus
- Don't walk away because you have questions
 - Stay connected, keep praying, keep reading, keep worshipping, keep showing up
- Don't let your questions keep you from following Jesus
 - Questions can be part of your journey but shouldn't keep you from your destination

Jesus said: Don't be faithless any longer! Believe!

I kind of hate that we call him Doubting Thomas when we really should call him, Trusting Thomas! The one who said, "My Lord, my God!"

—Pastor Chad

- Where are you struggling to trust Jesus right now?
- What question have you been carrying?
- What disappointment has made following Him harder?
- What is your, "unless I see..."

Jesus isn't telling you to figure it all out today. Maybe he just wants you to take the next step and follow him. Connect with him, connect with His family, the church. Thomas surrendered, he believed and he trusted, and his journey led him to call Jesus, My Lord, My God. That's where every discipleship journey ultimately leads. Not simply knowing about Jesus. Not simply believing that Jesus exists. Full surrender, giving your life to him, believing enough to trust, and trusting enough to follow until you say... Jesus you are my Lord. You are my God. And even when I don't understand, I will follow you! Stop barely believing!

—Pastor Chad

