



ALL SAINTS
PRESBYTERIAN

SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE

FOR ALL SAINTS SMALL GROUPS

“Certainty & Trust” | Rev. Josh Keller | April 11

John 20:19-20, 24-31

On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, “Peace be with you.” 20 When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord...

24 Now Thomas, one of the twelve, called the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came. 25 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.

Key Points and Discussion Questions from Josh’s Sermon:

Introduction

The 2nd Sunday of Easter: Thomas Sunday. How much *certainty* is possible? It depends on what type of certainty one is seeking. Today we consider two different kinds of certainty: the kind Thomas wants, and the kind he receives.

1. What kind of certainty does Thomas want?

- o *Something that is Risk-Free, A Sure Bet, 100% Reliable, Personally Verifiable.*
- o Consider how Thomas’ apostolic life unfolds long after this encounter with Jesus. In what sense does this perspective make his doubting stance seem more understandable? Do you identify with Thomas in his angst over the implications of Jesus’ resurrection?
- o How does the text describe Thomas’s conditions for proving reliability? Is he willing or unwilling to act on second-hand testimonies about Jesus? How might this translate to your own relationship with Jesus? Will you take someone else’s word for it? How does that help you? Hurt you? Is there a right or wrong way, here?
- o Josh shares the ironic example of his former Uncle’s trust in his wife’s faithfulness while doubting the trustworthiness of the New Testament. Discuss. What was Josh’s main point?
- o Considering Josh’s discussion of Western philosopher’s Descartes and Nietzsche, in what sense is doubt a legitimate pathway to trust? What does Josh declare in the end result of doubting everything? Do you agree? Disagree? How so?

2. What kind of certainty does Thomas receive?

- o In what sense is Thomas newfound certainty related to evidence? Is Jesus stingy or lavish with Thomas demands?
- o What is the purpose of the evidence God provides Thomas (and us)? (Read John 20:31)
- o In the end, does Thomas even examine all the proof Jesus offers him? What does that say about what Thomas did and didn’t really need?
- o Consider Thomas’ declaration about Jesus in verse 28? What sort of certainty has Thomas received? How does it differ from the certainty he originally sought?

Closing Consideration:

- o Is it possible for us to have biblical (relational) certainty in Jesus without trusting him first?
- o What “proofs” are you requiring from God in order to personally “bet your life” on him? Upon inspection, how necessary are they? What do you really need? Is it possible you already have it?