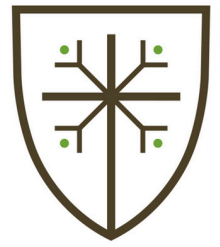


SERMON NOTES



Eastertide

AN EASTERTIDE SERMON SERIES
Easter Sunday - Pentecost

April 27, 2025

SERMON INFO

TITLE

"Solid Scars"

PREACHER

Rev. Josh Keller

TEXTS

Acts 5:27-32

Revelation 1:4-8

John 20:19-31

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Where do you most often encounter the mood of cynicism Josh described?
2. How has your experience of encountering Jesus given you hope despite this cynicism?

SERMON IN SUMMARY

This week, Josh led us in a look at the story of Thomas and his encounter with the resurrected Lord. While Thomas often gets the label of "doubter," his cynicism (or realism) is not so very far from the way we all feel at times in a disillusioned world.

Cynical Mood

There is a pervasive mood of cynicism in our culture today. Sometimes it is institutional cynicism—that power is ever only used for more power. It infects the political and religious spheres after one too many leaders let us down, one too many scandals are exposed. It even, and perhaps especially, invades our friendships, family relationships, and marriages. It is hard not to become disillusioned or cynical in our world today.

Thomas had lost hope and needed something solid to believe in, just like we seem to have lost our hope and long for something solid. He met the resurrected Jesus standing in front of him and knew immediately that his hope was not in vain.

Solid Scars

The gospel passage in John revolves around Jesus' scars. Even though Jesus could walk through walls, his resurrected body was more solid, more real, than the physical world around him, yet he still had the scars of his death. He carries them into eternity. Scars represent our ability to perish, be deformed, and fade. Quite simply, they represent our broken humanness. Jesus keeps these marks because solid scars proclaim the solidity of God's love for you into eternity. They remind Thomas, the rest of the disciples, and us that Jesus is exactly who he says he is—fully God and fully man, bearing the weight of sin—and you can hope in him. When Thomas saw Jesus, he was changed. His response is not one of broad conviction, identifying Jesus as "the Christ" or "the Messiah." Instead, it was personal—"My Lord and my God." His hope had been made real when his Lord appeared to him in the flesh.

Showing Up

Even though cynical and despairing, Thomas remained with the disciples. He continued to show up. God's call to us is to continue to show up, that we might, like Thomas, encounter Jesus in those things that are as solid to us as his scars were for Thomas—the Word, the Sacraments, the Body of Christ gathered.

Thomas demanded a sign before he had seen Jesus. He demanded to see and to touch the scars as proof of Jesus' resurrection. But when he finally stood face-to-face with him, he didn't need to touch them. He just knew instantly. Often the proofs we demand and the things we think we need are not what God knows we need.

After their encounter with Jesus, all the disciples are changed, not just Thomas. They go from huddling in a locked room, afraid of those who had put Jesus to death, to boldly proclaiming Christ and the truth of the Gospel. An encounter with the risen Christ changes the Christian and plants in us the courage and conviction to obey God rather than man.