

GOING DEEPER STUDY NOTES (April 30, 2023)

FOR PERSONAL OR GROUP STUDY

This morning we welcome our dear friend Monsignor Ecker, on loan from St. Paul's Cathedral. Next Sunday Curt will be there. This exchange and relationship began during Pastor Rick Murray's years. Monsignor is one of Yakima's true treasures. He is a pastor to the entire city. He leads with compassion. He has a genuine love for Jesus. He has a deep commitment to our community, and the people in our community. He is a leading voice, and has been through all of his years, for bringing Christians together, bringing our city together. This morning we will be introduced again to the disciple Thomas. A few things we know about Thomas: he was a twin, he was cautious, he had his doubts, he also had incredible faith. Jesus saw beyond Thomas' questions, fears, and doubts and welcomed him in as one of His core groups. Jesus invites us too, doubts, questions and all.

The Disciple Thomas (John 11:5-16 and 20:19-29)

^{11:5} Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. ⁶ So, when he heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was. ⁷ Then after this he said to the disciples, 'Let us go to Judea again' ⁸ The disciples said to him, 'Rabbi, the Jews were just now seeking to stone you, and are you going there again?' ⁹ Jesus answered, 'Are there not twelve hours in the day? If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. ¹⁰ But if anyone walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him.' ¹¹ After saying these things, he said to them, 'Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I go to awaken him.' ¹² The disciples said to him, 'Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will recover.' ¹³ Now Jesus had spoken of his death, but they thought that he meant taking rest in sleep. ¹⁴ Then Jesus told them plainly, 'Lazarus has died, ¹⁵ and for your sake I am glad that I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him. ¹⁶ So Thomas, called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, 'Let us also go, that we may die with him' ... *(That was before Jesus' death ... now after ...)*

^{20:19} 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. ²¹ Jesus said to them again, 'Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you.' ²² And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³ If

you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you withhold forgiveness from any, it is withheld.'

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.'"

WHAT DOES IT SAY?

1. What does this passage tell us about Jesus? About Thomas?
2. Why does this passage say about those who have doubts?
3. What does this passage tell us about Jesus' resurrection?
4. How did Thomas respond when he met Jesus, alive again?

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

5. What does, "for your sake I am glad I was not there" mean?
6. What does, "Let us also go, that we may die with Him" mean?
7. What does, "Unless I see in His hands the mark of the nails, and place my hand in His side, I will never believe" mean?

WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO YOU?

8. Share a story of someone who was willing to suffer for Jesus?
9. If you had been one of Jesus' followers and had seen Him die on a Friday and then you saw Him alive again the following week, how would you have reacted? Discuss.
10. Why is the physical resurrection of Jesus important?
11. Can a Christian have questions/doubts? Do you? Discuss.
12. What two questions would you like to ask God?
13. How can you be more honest with God? With others?

As you spend time praying remember that prayer is meant to be the most natural, and empowering, part of your day. Ask God to help you be honest with Him and with others, even about your doubts. Pray that God will strengthen your faith. God will because He loves you.