

Resurrection Aftershocks

John 20.24-29

Let's continue to consider a few post-resurrection appearances of Jesus this Easter season because there is so much there! You don't need to answer each question; do what you can, not what you cannot!

Pastor Eric

Group Discussion: Do you consider yourself a pretty trusting person or someone who's more cynical?

Recall John 20.19-23 because it paves the way for the next section. Even though that brief story reads like all the disciples were there, someone was missing. Now read verses 24-29. Why do you imagine Thomas wasn't with the disciples in the story prior? What did Thomas miss out on?

We don't know where Thomas is when the others catch up with him, but he's not very receptive to their good news. Why not? Why doesn't Thomas just take their word for it? Thomas doesn't only want to see Jesus' wounds he wants to touch them. What is getting at? Is that just an expression, or is he serious? If he's serious about that, why does it matter to him?

What happens a week later? John isn't clear about it, so do you think Thomas actually touched Jesus? Look at Caravaggio's masterpiece. What nuances of meaning does it suggest? What is written on Thomas' face?



Source: *Wikipedia Commons*

Jesus tells Thomas to stop his unbelieving and believe (verse 27). But is it fair to call Thomas, "Doubting Thomas?" If he is doubting, is he much different than the other disciples or the women who went to the tomb? Note the insight from Luke 24.11. Can you relate to Thomas? How do you think you would do in those circumstances? Would you demand to see Jesus with your own eyes before you believed?

Thomas reacts with amazing words in verse 28. What strikes you about those words? Note how these words confirm several earlier statements in John. Note John 1.1, 14. Note John 5.23, John 10.30, and 14.9. How does Thomas' sudden exclamation connect to those earlier statements? Note the parallel words spoken of God on his throne in Revelation 4.11 and many of the verses in Hebrews 1.

There's a blessing Jesus pronounces in verse 29. Who is blessed, and what are they blessed for? Jesus' words seem a little random. Why does he make that comment? Now read verses 30-31. What insights do you glean there about seeing and believing versus not seeing and believing? What does John intend his writing do in the lives of those who read it?

Did the Scriptures play a role in leading you to faith in Jesus? How do they continue to play that role in your faith? How might the Scriptures be an effective means to lead others in your life to believe in Jesus?