

the gospel of

JOHN

all intents and purposes

DISCUSSION GUIDE

WEEK 14: THE DOUBTS WE HAVE

Read the Text

John 20:24-29

²⁴ Now Thomas, one of the twelve, called the Twin,^[a] 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.”

Main Point

Doubt is a familiar feeling to most Christians. ***Whether we doubt God’s existence, His character, or His Word, we are all prone to falling into doubt from time to time.*** In this passage, we see one of Jesus’ own disciples fall into doubt! Thomas is one of the most famous doubters, but the truth is that the Bible is filled with followers of Jesus who doubted – including some of Jesus’

closest friends like Peter and John! The hope we can gain from this is that ***just because we doubt does not necessarily mean we aren't a Christian.*** So what should we do when we find ourselves doubting? Thomas actually offers us a great example. ***When we are honest about our doubt, and confess it to God, and process it in Godly community, there is hope that the Spirit will help us overcome it.*** And as we see with Thomas, Jesus can handle our doubts. He is faithful and kind, and knows exactly what we need and He meets us where we are at with gentleness and grace.

Reflect Together

1. ***Who is God?*** Consider Jesus' gracious interaction with Thomas after he said he'd never believe. What do you think of Jesus' response to Thomas' doubt? Does it surprise you at all?
2. ***What has He done?*** How has God met you in your doubts? What's a specific time when you doubted and God met you either through His Word, His people, or His Spirit?
3. ***Who are you?*** When are you prone to doubt? How do you respond to your own doubt and how do you handle it? For example, do you feel shame about it? Does it draw you closer to God, or do you hide away from Him?
4. ***What are you to do?*** How can you better protect yourself in moments or seasons of doubt? What's helpful for you?: For example, Bible reading, silence and solitude, prayer, processing openly in Godly community? How can your MC and/or DNA work together to be a safe place for people to bring their doubts?

Abide Together

Pray together about what came up during discussion. If anyone is particularly struggling with doubt right now, pray for them and remind one another of God's truth and his grace for us when we doubt.