



WHEN IN DOUBT

If you have a pattern of having someone share their *Story of Faith* (life before Jesus, encountering Jesus, life since/lately with Jesus) and/or sharing *Evidences of God's grace*, begin with that, followed by a time of thankful prayer for Christ's work in the individual's life/the grace in your lives.

OPENING COMMENT

The portion of Scripture that we are looking at this week in John's gospel deals with the issues of doubt and unbelief. Skepticism can so easily turn to cynicism and ultimately shipwreck a person's faith. Where is Jesus in all of this? Does He care?

READ THE TEXT: [John 20:24-29](#)

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

²⁶Eight 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." ²⁷Then 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." ²⁸Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" ²⁹Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. The Apostle Thomas is widely known as *Doubting Thomas*. As an ice-breaker, share some unflattering or funny nicknames that you or those in your life have had.
2. What have been the most common forms of doubt that you have come across in your own life and interaction with others? (E.g. God's goodness; God's existence; Doctrines of the Faith; Yourself/your faith)
3. Read Jude 22. How should Christians and the church approach those with doubts?
4. What does this text tell us about Thomas?
5. What does this text tell us about Jesus?
6. When Thomas exclaims, "*My Lord, and my God!*" it may be the most beautiful, thorough, and clear confession of faith in the entire Gospel (which is saying something because the point of John's gospel is that people would believe). What is your understanding of this statement? What does it mean to confess Jesus as your Saviour and Lord?
7. Cultural or nominal Christianity is often defined as those who believe in Jesus to some degree but whose lives are not surrendered to Him as *Lord* (master). Would you agree that this is an issue in the western church today? Is the old adage you can't have Jesus as your Saviour without making Lord true?
8. Why are those who believe without seeing blessed by Jesus? Read 1 Peter 1:8-9 and discuss.

CONCLUSION

When Thomas has a genuine encounter with the resurrected Jesus his doubt and unbelief give way to joy and faith. When in doubt, what we need more than anything is to encounter Jesus and to be grounded in the hope of gospel.

SHARE & PRAY

- Share how you can pray for each other in light of this study.
- If faith doubts have been shared in your group, pray for each other.
- Conclude by spending some time praying for one another, for the areas of growth and grace you are seeking, and the needs among you.

*An additional resource called *Doubt your Doubts* was posted on the blog on our website that may be of some practical help to your group:

<http://central365.org/resources/blog/dealing-with-doubt/>

