



NEW TESTAMENT • LESSON 40  
**DOUBTING THOMAS**

*Jesus calls to faith all those who are His.*



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**MONDAY**

**THE STORY: JOHN 20:19-23**

The disciples believed. After appearing to Mary outside the tomb, Jesus appeared to two disciples on the road to Emmaus. Next He appeared again to Peter, who then informed the others (see Luke 24:34). Even so, the disciples were huddled in a room, afraid of what the Jews might do to them. It is likely the soldiers had already begun to spread the rumor that the disciples had stolen Jesus' body. While they were gathered, Jesus, in His glorified body, came into the room even though the door was locked. Luke tells us they thought He was a ghost, so they doubted. Jesus showed them His hands and side. Luke tells us that Jesus opened their minds so they could understand. Once they understood, they were overjoyed. Jesus breathed on the disciples, and they received the Holy Spirit. This was not a symbol of what was to come later. The disciples were converted, and the Spirit of God dwelled in them. They were then commissioned to spread the gospel, but as Luke 24:48 records, Jesus told them to remain until they were clothed with the Spirit's power.

**TALK ABOUT IT:**

How did Jesus get through the locked door? (We are not told just how Jesus entered through the locked door, but we can be sure He did not have a key! This was a miraculous appearing.)

Why did Jesus show them His hands and side? (Jesus showed them His hands and side where His wounds were. The disciples thought He was a ghost and doubted He was real. By allowing them to touch Him, they would know He was not a ghost. Luke 24:41-43 records that Jesus also ate breakfast with them to help them believe He was alive.)

**PRAY:**

Ask God to help each one in your family quickly believe and not doubt.



**TUESDAY**

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**THE STORY: JOHN 20:24-29**

Thomas had been absent during Jesus' first visit and told his fellow disciples he would not believe unless he could touch the wounds of Christ himself. One week later Jesus appeared again and granted Thomas' request. Instantly Thomas' doubts faded and he immediately believed. The words of Thomas, "My Lord and my God!" from John 20:28, declare his faith in Jesus not merely as a great man but as God. Jesus commended Thomas and left us with a great encouragement to faith in John 20:29 by saying, "Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

We are among those who have not seen but do believe. Jesus was not harsh with Thomas. Rather than rebuke Thomas, Jesus called him to faith.

**TALK ABOUT IT:**

Is it easier to believe if you have seen Jesus? (Yes and no. Seeing the risen Lord can be used of God to help someone believe, but not everyone who saw the risen Lord responded with faith. It is quite possible that the guards who watched over His tomb never believed. Luke 24:16,31 tells us the disciples on the road to Emmaus were blinded from the truth, and then the truth was opened up to them. It is God who enables us to believe. Whether we have seen the risen Lord in person, or only through His Word, we need God to open our eyes. There is

nothing we can do in and of ourselves to guarantee faith. God is the author of our faith. Faith is His free gift to us.)

If faith is God's gift, how can we believe unless He enables us? (We cannot believe unless He touches our hearts and opens our eyes.)

**PRAY:**

Ask God to open the eyes and heart of every member of your family that you all might believe.



**WEDNESDAY**  
**WHERE IS THE GOSPEL?**

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**THE STORY: LUKE 24:36-49**

After His resurrection, Jesus opened the minds of His disciples to understand the Scriptures (Luke 24:45). Jesus explained that He Himself was the central theme of Scripture. Jesus very kindly introduced the disciples to the truth. He did not rebuke them for their former doubts; He called them to faith.

Thomas did not believe. He was in need of gospel truth. Jesus knew what Thomas needed and showed him His nail-scarred hands. Jesus called Thomas to faith and opened His mind. Thomas immediately responded by addressing Jesus as God.

Thomas doubted, but when confronted with the risen Lord who was slain for our sins, Thomas believed. Like Thomas, we need to be reminded of Jesus' death that we, too, might believe. Though we have not seen, we have heard the Word and we can believe.

**TALK ABOUT IT:**

What three parts of the Bible did Jesus say must be fulfilled? (Luke 24:44 tells us everything must be fulfilled that is written about Jesus from the Law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms.)

What should we do when we have doubts about Jesus? (We should call out to the Lord in prayer and ask Him for help to overcome unbelief. It is also good to re-read the Bible. Just as Thomas' meeting with the Lord built his faith, so does our reading the Word of God build ours. See Romans 10:17.)

**PRAY:**

Ask the Lord to help every member of your family to believe and not doubt.



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**THURSDAY**

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**THE STORY: JOHN 20:30,31**

Who will believe? John 20:30,31 adds a bit of commentary. John tells us he did not record every miracle of Jesus but that what was recorded was written so that we might believe. Thomas would not believe until he could see for himself. In His kindness, God reaches out to us in the same way through His Word. The Bible is more than a recollection of history. Hebrews 4:12 tells us that the Word of God is living. When we read the Word, the Spirit of God uses it to transform our lives. In Romans 1:16 Paul said the gospel is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes.

**TALK ABOUT IT:**

Why did God give us the Bible? (That we might believe Jesus is the Son of God and have life in Him.)

Why should we read the Bible? (Some think we should read the Bible because it is the right thing to do. Learning the Word of God increases our faith. Romans 10:17 tells us “Consequently, faith comes by hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.”)

**PRAY:**

Ask God to place a hunger for His Word into your heart that you might desire to read the Bible.



**FRIDAY  
ON THE ROAD TO EMMAUS**

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**THE STORY: PSALM 38:11,12**

David's prayer points forward to another king in the line of David who would suffer similarly. Jesus was deserted by His companions. Even those who followed Jesus watched from a distance (see Matthew 27:55). The religious rulers plotted to ruin Jesus and paid Judas to betray Him.

**TALK ABOUT IT:**

Did David suffer like Jesus? (Yes, David was rejected and had to run for his life from King Saul, and even his own son Absalom wanted to kill him [see 2 Samuel 15:10-14].)

How was Jesus' suffering different from that of David? (Jesus allowed himself to be taken, beaten, mocked, and crucified, knowing that through His sacrifice He was bringing us life and forgiveness.)

**PRAY:**

Thank God for Jesus' willing suffering and sacrifice on our behalf.