

“Seeing is not Always Believing”

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How many times have you told someone something, and they didn't believe you? We can learn from others, but sometimes it's difficult. It's just the way things seem to work in life and in faith!

Open to John 20. Easter evening the disciples were together, with the doors locked because they were afraid that the same fate Jesus had. Despite Mary's *“breaking news”* of having seen the risen Christ, they were still hiding behind locked doors. They were shaking in their boots *“for fear of the Jews.”*

Look at verses 19-20, *“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.” When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord.”*

It wasn't until Christ showed the disciples His hands and side that they *“saw the Lord.”*

The disciples told Thomas they'd seen the Lord, but Thomas didn't believe them! Look at verses 24-25, *“Now Thomas, one of the Twelve, called the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came. 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.”*

This Sunday after Easter is many times known as “Doubting Thomas Sunday”. But Thomas was not the only doubter, so was Mary and the disciples. At times we're all doubting Thomas's. That's until we really see and believe in the Risen Christ! Through His amazing and completely unmerited grace He enters into your life and speaks your name and says to you, *“Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you.”*

Has the Risen Christ appeared in your life and said this, bringing you peace and a mission? Even if He's done this, you probably still have times when you doubt and have trouble believing. You probably have areas in your life where you need to cry out, *“Lord I believe. Help my unbelief.”*

A week later the disciples were in the house again but this time Thomas was with them. And the doors were still locked! The second half of verse 26-29, *“Although the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.” 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.” Thomas answered him, “My Lord and my God!” Jesus said to him, “Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”*

The Christian life is a journey, not a destination. And that's the one thing that makes it so exciting! We have so many examples from the Gospel of what people saw but they had conditions on their belief. Seeing is not always Believing!

Only when Jesus comes into your life and takes on a personal significance, will you be willing to go out and become an “eyewitness news reporter” for Christ, telling others, *“I have seen the Lord!”* We must experience Christ for ourselves, no matter what others have told us. We have to finally “get it” and when we do, our faith will

“come to life!” Believing is experiencing the Resurrected Christ through the Holy Spirit’s power and faith.

Open to 1 Peter. In this letter, Peter writes in 1 Peter 1:3, *“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.”*

Go to verses 8-9, *“Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.”*

Go back to John 20. Adding to and building on the words of Jesus, *“Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”* John tells us in verses 30-31 the purpose of the Bible in relation to believing, *“Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.”*

Believe in the resurrected Christ! Be in His Word and prayer daily. Then even in an unbelieving world, let the Holy Spirit fill you, and be Jesus’ active witness. Christ is alive! Even in the smallest of thoughts, words, and actions, He speaks through you.

The victory of the Resurrection is yours. It brings hope, strength, and peace. In place of death, it brings life. Celebrate the Resurrection presence of Jesus Christ today and every day. Proclaim boldly, like Thomas, *“Jesus is My Lord and My God!”*