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Our Need to See the Evidence

“One of the twelve disciples, Thomas (nicknamed the Twin), was not with the others when Jesus came. They told him, “We have seen the Lord!” But he replied, “I won’t believe it unless I see the nail wounds in his hands, put my fingers into them, and place my hand into the wound in his side.”- John 20-24-25 NLT

We live in a “show me” world.

We have access to so much technology that finding answers to our questions on the internet is only a matter of seconds away. We are inundated with real-time news feeds from all over the world, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Here is a question to consider; with all of this access to information at our fingertips, has faith become an irrelevant and old-fashioned concept? Should we even care about faith at all? Jesus speaks to these questions in John 20.

Thomas was a devoted disciple of Jesus. The other disciples had already seen Jesus in His resurrected body, but Thomas hadn’t been present at the time. So, when the others told him about Jesus, he was skeptical and wanted to see for himself. Thomas had his doubts and his doubting earned him the name “doubting Thomas,” which has been handed down through the years.

I really think Thomas gets a bad rap. Yes, he had his doubts, but Thomas was willing to speak up and voice his concerns. He had not checked his brain at the door. He was thinking logically and he wanted proof.

In many ways, Thomas is the disciple that a lot of us can relate to. He needs to see the evidence. He does not want to follow blindly, but he wants to know that what he says he believes is true. And then Jesus shows up.

Have you ever had that happen? You know in your mind that Jesus is always there, but your circumstances and lack of faith keep you from truly embracing and trusting Him. Can you imagine how Thomas must have felt when he saw Jesus and saw for himself the holes in His hands and feet from the nails of the cross? What a moment!

- Was he afraid because he had doubted Jesus?
- Was he feeling guilty because he had not believed?
- Was he in pure shock that Jesus was actually standing in front of him?

We don’t know what Thomas was thinking, but we do know how he responds: “Thomas answered him, “My Lord and my God!” There is a lot of meaning in those words he spoke: asking for forgiveness, acknowledging that Jesus is Lord, and gratitude that Jesus had done just what He said He would do. Plus, Thomas knows that if the resurrection is true, it changes everything!

Jesus responded to Thomas with, “...have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.” This is an important statement for us to consider. Jesus understood his doubt, but He used this interaction to reveal that it is by faith alone that anyone will be made right with God and experience the gift of His forgiveness and grace. It allows us to live with confidence that there is nothing that can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus, but apart from faith, it means nothing.

You might be someone who is a bit skeptical, a bit unsure of your faith. You may have a lot of questions. Deep down inside, you want to know God. You want to know for yourself. The risen Lord has something for you. He can turn your skepticism into belief.

Just come to Him with your questions. Come to Him with your doubts. Ask God to open your eyes to the reality of His love and grace. You, too, will be able to say, “My Lord and my God!”

Adapted from a sermon by George Wright, Senior Pastor, Shades Mountain Baptist Church

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Register Today - Men of Shades Night at The Barons

Men of Shades, Wednesday, June 22 is our night with the Birmingham Barons at Regions Field! We’ve reserved the Home Run Porch for a fun night for the entire family. This is a Men of Shades event for EVERYONE - dads, sons, moms, daughters and your unchurched friends, co-workers and neighbors. And it's only \$10 per person for everyone age 9 and older! You can enjoy the game plus hot dogs, hamburgers, baked beans, potato chips, cookies, soft drinks and water. We’ve got a special offer for single moms and their children as well. Click on this link <https://www.shades.org/events/mens-ministry-family-barons-game> for all the details or call the Men's Ministry office at 205-822-1670 to register. We have to give the Barons our final count this week, so sign up today and join us on Wednesday, June 22 for Men of Shades night at The Barons!

For more info on how to get involved with Men of Shades, visit www.shades.org/men

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