

NEXT STEP: STUDY & SHARE

READINGS

Acts 5:27-32

Psalms 118:14-29

You are my God, & I will exalt you. (v28)

Revelation 1:4-8

John 20:19-31

PRAYER OF THE DAY

O God of life, you reach out to us amid our fears with the wounded hands of your risen Son. By your Spirit's breath revive our faith in your mercy, & strengthen us to be the body of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior & Lord, who lives & reigns with you & the Holy Spirit, one God, now & forever. Amen.

SERMON TEXT- John 20:19-31

¹⁹ When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, & the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came & stood among them & said, "Peace be with you." ²⁰ After he said this, he showed them his hands & his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. ²¹ Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." ²² When he had said this, he breathed on them & said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³ If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained." ²⁴ But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, 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 the mark of the nails in his hands, & put my finger in the mark of the nails & my hand in his side, I will not believe." ²⁶ A week later his disciples were again in the house, & Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came & stood among them & said, "Peace be with you." ²⁷ Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here & see my hands. Reach out your hand & put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe." ²⁸ Thomas answered him, "My Lord & my God!" ²⁹ Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen & yet have come to believe." ³⁰ Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. ³¹ But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, & that through believing you may have life in his name.

LISTENING TO . . .

GOD- *Christian life is rooted in the Father, Son, & Holy Spirit*

1. How does v19 tell us the summary & content of the Gospel? See *Romans 5:6-11; 2 Corinthians 5:18-19; Ephesians 1:3, 6:15; Colossians 1:20-21*
2. How is St. Thomas' request any different from the others (vv20-21) or not? How is his exclamation (v28) the climax of the St. John's gospel? See *1:1-14, 2:11, 5:19-47, 6:10-14, 25-51, 8:12-20, 42-59, 20:30-31, 21:24-25*

EACH OTHER- *Sharing & growing with our brothers & sisters in Christ*

3. Miracles don't teach or cause us to believe. They confirm what is already taught or believed. St. John only picks out 7 miracles (*2:1-11, 4:43-54, 5:1-9, 6:1-5, 16-25, 9:1-41, 11:1-44*) & 7 "I am" statements (*6:35, 8:12, 10:7, 10:11, 11:25, 14:6, 15:5 cf. Exodus 3:14; John 8:58, 18:4-5*) to make his point (v31). How do these miracles support what St Thomas exclaims in v18?
4. What are some of the things you doubt in your faith life. What about them makes them seem doubtful to you? Take your time & think through them. What memories, associations, & connections do these doubts share with other things in your life? Realize that doubting isn't the same thing as unbelief or refusal to believe or rejection of true faith. Pray about these things & ask God to help you accept & trust his truth about these matters, even though you struggle. Ask that the fog of doubt give way to the great cloud of witnesses (*Hebrews 11:1-12:12*) See *Mark 9:17-27, esp. v24; Hebrews 11:1, 12:1-2* Make an appointment to talk to your pastor if necessary.

NEIGHBORS- *Bearing fruit for those not yet our brothers & sisters*

5. Read *1 Peter 2:24, Isaiah 53:1-12, esp. v5*. How do Jesus' wounds make him "authentic" to pre-Christians?
6. Faith is both in our hearts/minds & "hands on" (vv20, 27). How can you put faithfulness in others' hands? How does weekly worship & daily Bible reading help? How do the motions (i.e. making the sign of the cross & bowing etc.) help?

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Second Sunday after Easter

04.27.25

Series: Growing into New Life

Rev. Jared Stillions, STS

Encounters with the living Lord Jesus

Sore Eyes

For St. Thomas seeing is believing; for us believing is seeing

-Notes-

KEY VERSE: So the other disciples told him, “We have seen the Lord.” (v25)

-NEXT STEPS MEMORY VERSE-

Blessed are those who have not seen & yet have come to believe.
(John 20:29)

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