

5. Which question for those on the verge of turning from their faith (from the outline) helps you the most? (Or maybe you have a question that is even more helpful. What is it?)

6. How is belief about deciding (you may want to reflect on your own decision to receive and follow Christ)?

7. Looking back over this week's sermon and study, what one thing is most important for you to remember and apply?

Missional Application

God calls us to be patient with doubters as we bear witness to his Son, whom we have seen only with the eyes of faith.

Christ Connection

Although Thomas doubted the testimony of the other disciples, he was blessed to encounter the risen Jesus for himself. He saw Jesus in his resurrected and glorified body and the signs of Christ's unfailing love for his people (his scars). Though we have not seen Jesus with our eyes, with Thomas we confess by faith that Jesus Christ is our Lord and our God.

Jesus the Risen King (Part 2)

"How to Believe When You Have Doubts"

John 20:24-31

How to Believe in Jesus Without a Doubt(s)

1. Stay Connected.

You're never beyond having your faith rocked by difficult events.

2. Air out your doubts.

Every generation thinks their doubts are unique, and in some ways they are.

If you're going to chuck your faith, don't be lazy! Find someone who actually knows what you're talking about and air it out.

Be honest with yourself and with your friends and family. Don't use doubt as an excuse when it's really about sex or money or partying.

Questions for those on the verge of leaving their faith:

- On what do you base your new, emerging convictions?

- What if you questioned your new, emerging convictions with the same vigor you questioned your Christian faith?
- What is the best of Christianity that, if you're honest with yourself, you need to leave behind because there's really no grounds for it in your new convictions?

3. Understand the nature of belief.

- Belief is **not** about absolute certainty.

Seeing isn't believing.

- Belief **is** about deciding.

When the verb form "to believe" occurs in John, it's usually followed by the preposition "into." Believe into Jesus. Put your faith in Jesus.

God calls us to **put** our faith **in** Jesus. That's a decision.

"Do not become unbelieving, but [become] believing."

Jesus rebukes Thomas for failing to believe the witness of the other apostles.

"Thomas's absence allowed him to function as an example of a future believer, who had to rely on the testimony of the disciples...as eyewitnesses to the person and work of Jesus Christ." (Edward Klink)

"Christ demonstrates his victory over death, not by feats of strength, not by more and more spectacular miracles, but by wounds: nail holes, spear marks. Behold, the lamb who was slain." (Mark Buchanan)

Personal Reflection & Small Group Questions

Please complete this study on your own, then bring it to your small group for discussion.

1. Looking back over your notes from this week's sermon, what particularly caught your attention, challenged, or confused you?
2. What is more likely to rock your faith: the loss of a loved one, an intellectual faith challenge, or losing the sense of God's presence or love?
3. Read John 20:24-31. Imagine yourself as one of Jesus' disciples, trying to convince Thomas that Jesus is alive. What would you say and how would you feel?
4. What are some of the ways you do battle with the secular spirit of our age that would have you doubt your faith and the truth of God's Word?

Family Discussion Questions

1. Why do you think Thomas doubted that Jesus had risen?
2. Why is it okay to have doubts as a follower of Jesus?
3. How can we address our own doubts in healthy ways within our family?