

Thomas

“The Disciples”



Thomas is represented with the vertical spear and a carpenter's square. Tradition says that Thomas erected a church in East India with his own hands.

Do you ever doubt? I do. I think it is normal to doubt and I don't think it is wrong. Doubting isn't always just about the resurrection of Christ. We probably doubt something frequently. Sometimes we need to doubt, and even if we don't need to, we have learned something by seeking the truth.

Thomas has always had the reputation of being a doubter even to the fact that people who don't even seem to know who Thomas was, know that the name means someone who doubts. If we read about Thomas, we find that this reputation is not entirely deserved. He was a very positive person in many ways.

Faith is to believe what you do not see; the reward of this faith is to see what you believe.

Saint Augustine

John tells us that at one time many of the apostles feared for their lives because the authorities wanted to get rid of Christ. He was causing too much trouble for them. When Jesus was going to Judea they didn't want to go.

The authorities had supposedly said they were going to stone Jesus and the disciples didn't want to be near him. But Thomas spoke up and said *“Let us also go, that we may die with him.”* (John 11:16.) That was not a doubter, but a man of great conviction.

He was not afraid to follow. At another time, Jesus said that He was going away to prepare a heavenly home for His followers. Thomas didn't know where Christ was going so he spoke up and asked to be shown the way so that he could go also. Again, he was a man of conviction. Thomas was willing to follow, wherever that might be.

“Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.”

John 20:29

After the crucifixion, Christ appeared to many of the disciples. They

questioned. *“Master, are you going to restore the kingdom to Israel now? Is this the time?”* He answered *“You don't get to know the time. Timing is the Father's business. What you'll get is the Holy Spirit. And when the Holy Spirit comes on you, you will be able to be my witnesses in Jerusalem, all over Judea and Samaria, even to the ends of the world.”*

They wanted to learn, but instead they were told they would know someday. How often children ask a question and they want to know an answer. This must have been very confusing to the disciples. They had just seen Christ hanged on a cross and buried. Now He was alive. They thought they knew everything. They were witnessing something they couldn't understand. How could a person be raised from the dead and then act as though there was some greater power. Who was this Father He was mentioning? Imagine yourself in the shoes of the disciples; in the shoes of an everyday laborer. What was the Holy Ghost? They didn't seem to know anything about the Trinity at this time.

They had seen Him alive after the crucifixion, and yet they questioned. Can we think we would have been any different than Thomas and the other disciples? We have so much more knowledge available to us today with all kinds of technical advances, and yet we can't raise someone from the dead, and we can't see any Holy Spirit. We accept the Trinity, but do we understand it with our finite minds?

You know the rest of the story. Thomas wasn't there when Christ appeared

to the disciples the first time. Thomas wasn't willing to accept the appearance of a man he thought had been crucified and buried from the other disciples. Thomas wanted proof. He wanted to put his hand in the palm of Christ's hands and feel the side where the soldiers had thrust the sword. He had to see it for himself.

He was probably at the crucifixion, even perhaps at a distance. He knew about the sword and the nails. Why couldn't he just accept it on faith? This Christ had been dead, and was now alive.

Christ then appeared to Thomas when he was with the disciples a second time. They were assembled in a room with the doors closed. Christ appeared to them, and talked with Thomas and told him to put his hand in His hand and put his hand in His side, and to believe. Thomas did. He responded, *"My Lord and My God."* I wonder, if Thomas asked himself, "How does He know that I questioned?" "What kind of power does this man have?"

Now we come into the picture. Christ went on to say to Thomas, *"Because you saw me, you believed, blessed are they that have not seen, and yet believe."* We are blessed because we have not seen Christ figuratively, but we believe. We see Christ every day in everything round us and in other people, but we don't see His body. All we have to do is believe. He asks nothing else. But, if we believe, we will want to serve.

Because the disciples went out and preached the Word, many others were saved. Proof of that is a Christian faith



that has lasted through many wars, devastating situations, and unkept promises on the part of mankind. Many of these people never had the opportunity to see Christ as Thomas had, but they believed. Christ has never failed. He was there at Golgotha. He was with Thomas in the room after his resurrection. He is here with us today, right now.

We sing a song "I Have Decided to Follow Jesus" by Sundar Singh. It is a simple song with few words, but the ones we sing are quite a commitment. Do we really mean it? With His grace, we can go forward just as Thomas did.

I HAVE DECIDED TO FOLLOW JESUS

*"I have decided to follow Jesus;
No turning back, no turning back."*

*Though I may wonder, I still will follow;
No turning back, no turning back."*

*The world behind me, the cross before me;
No turning back, no turning back."*



Prayer: Dear Heavenly Father, thank You for Your witness to the disciples at the time. Thank You for giving Your life on Calvary so that we might have eternal life. Dear Father, just as You gave the disciples Your Holy Spirit, help us to recognize that we also have that gift and help our doubts to be turned into positives. In Thy name we pray. Amen.

1. Are we like Thomas? Do we ever doubt?
2. Is it all right to doubt? Is doubting always negative?
3. Do we also seek to do God's will and follow in His way when it is not popular?
4. Many times Thomas showed his belief. How can we show our belief?
5. How can we show the world that we love Jesus?

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