

Listening for the Promise

WEEKLY DEVOTIONAL

Second Sunday of Easter – April 16, 2023

*“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.’”*

–John 20:27-29–

So often the disciple Thomas gets a bad reputation. He is seen as being foolish and labeled as “Doubting Thomas.” Those are unfair assumptions made of Thomas. He was not with the other disciples in the upper room, the first time the risen Jesus had appeared to them. Is it really any wonder that Thomas would have a hard time believing his fellow disciples that they had seen Jesus alive? As far as Thomas and the others were aware, dead people tend to stay dead. You and I wouldn’t have acted any differently than Thomas.

No doubt that Thomas believed in the risen Lord and served as one of the greatest leaders and pillars of the early Christian Church. In fact, when Jesus had been informed of Lazarus’ death, the disciples were hesitant to return to Jerusalem because they were afraid of the Jews. It was Thomas who said, “Let us also go, that we may die with him” (see Jn. 11:11-16).

Thomas *did* believe in his risen Lord. He was still in a deep state of grief, so much so that it overshadowed the truth. He allowed unbelief to cloud his faith. It isn’t anything new that we human beings like to have physical proof of something. The other disciples had seen Jesus eight days earlier. Jesus invited them to touch him and see for themselves that he was not a ghost; he was in the flesh, risen from the dead. Thomas needed that. So Jesus invited Thomas to touch his wounds. And as Thomas did, he believed. Thomas’ faith was reignited as he exclaimed, “My Lord and my God!” (v. 28) We need that reignition of faith, too.

We need daily reminders that our sins are forgiven. God reminds us that we can’t save ourselves. We need Jesus to cash that in for us. Like Thomas, we need our faith reignited.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, forgive us when doubt and fear begin to overshadow the truth and our faith. Thank you for giving us faith to believe and trust in your promises. In Jesus’ name, amen.

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