The Transformation of Doubting Thomas
John 20:19-29 NKJV

Please turn with me in your Bibles to the twentieth chapter of John's gospel. And let's read verses 19-29.

**John 20:19-29 (NKJV)**

19 Then, the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them, “Peace be with you.”

20 When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord.

21 So Jesus said to them again, “Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you.”

22 And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and 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 Now Thomas, called the Twin, one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came.

25 The other disciples therefore said to him, “We have seen the Lord.” So he said to them, “Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe.”

26 And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, “Peace to you!”
27 Then He said to Thomas, “Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing.”

28 And Thomas answered and said to Him, “My Lord and my God!”
29 Jesus said to him, “Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”

INTRODUCTION

Over the course of our lifetime we have all met people who go by a certain “nickname.” Perhaps some people even know you by a nickname.

Some famous people are well known or remembered for their nickname. If I said, “The King” you would probably know I am referring to Elvis Presley. If I said, “the Duke” you would know I was talking about John Wayne. If I mentioned the name George Herman Ruth most of you probably wouldn’t know who I was talking about, but if I called him by his nickname you would: “The Babe” or “Babe Ruth.” When Michael Jordan was playing in the NBA he was known as “His Airness.”


And then there is Thomas. And when we think of Thomas what nickname comes to mind? (pause) That’s right, “Doubting Thomas.”
Thomas' name only appears **twelve times** in the Gospels. The Gospels mention nothing about his early life or even his call to follow Jesus.

John 21 lists Thomas as one of the seven disciples who went fishing following the resurrection of Christ. This has led some to believe Thomas might have been a professional fisherman before he started following Christ, but we can't know that for sure.

We do know Thomas was also called **Didymus**, which is Greek for “twin.” This would lead us to believe Thomas had a twin brother or sister, but there is no mention of any of his siblings in the Gospels.

But despite all the things we DON'T know about Thomas, the one thing we do KNOW is not something he would want us to remember him by and that is his nickname, **“Doubting Thomas.”**

And let me be perfectly clear, this is NOT a nickname given to Him by Jesus; nor by any of his fellow disciples. In fact, you will not even find the nickname “**Doubting Thomas**” anywhere on the pages of the gospels. **This is the nickname WE have given to him.**

In tonight's message we are going to see how Thomas was completely changed by **the transforming power of the risen Savior.** And hopefully we will all look at Thomas in a different light.
First of all, let's look at......

I. Thomas “The Pouter” (v.24,25a)

v.24 Now Thomas, called the Twin, one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came.

v.25a The other disciples therefore said to him, “We have seen the LORD.”

1. It was the very first Easter Sunday. The disciples had assembled together behind locked doors for fear of the Jews. Jesus had resurrected in the pre-dawn hours of that same day. Now it is evening, and Jesus appears to His disciples.

2. Ten chairs are filled, one chair is empty. We know that empty chair didn't belong to Judas Iscariot because he had betrayed Jesus and in deep remorse over what he had done, Judas had gone out and hanged himself. So there was no space reserved for him.

3. That one empty chair was reserved for Thomas. We are not told why Thomas wasn't there. And it is interesting to note that a week later when Jesus met with His disciples again with Thomas present, Jesus did not rebuke Thomas for being absent the week before. But here is the point: JESUS CAME AND THOMAS WASN'T THERE.
4. Regardless of Thomas reason for not being there that evening, look at all he missed by being absent.

(A) He missed the **PRESENCE** of the LORD. (v.19)

v. 19 Then, the same day at evening, being the first *day* of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled, for fear of the Jews, *Jesus came and stood in the midst*............THOMAS MISSED THAT.

(B) He missed the **POWER** of the LORD. (v.19b)

When John says, “*Jesus came and stood in the midst*” he is revealing that Jesus miraculously appeared in their presence. Remember the door was locked. And there is no indication Jesus knocked on the door and the disciples opened the door and let Him in. *In the power of His resurrected body Jesus was suddenly in the room with His disciples and the door was still locked.* THOMAS MISSED THAT TOO!

(C) He missed the **PEACE** of the LORD. (v.19c)

v. 19c Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them, “*Peace be with you.*” Remember the disciples had been living in fear for their own lives in the three days following the crucifixion. Imagine the comfort of hearing Jesus say, “*Peace be with you.*”

* BUT THOMAS MISSED THAT TOO!
(D) He missed the **PROOF** of the LORD. (v.20)

v.20 When He had said this, He showed them *His* hands and His side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord.

If the disciples had any doubts that this truly was their resurrected Savior, those doubts were gone when Jesus showed them his scars.

**BUT THOMAS MISSED THAT TOO.**

(E) He missed the **PROMOTION** of the LORD. (v.21)

v.21 So Jesus said to them again, “*Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you.*”

Now that Jesus’ mission of redemption has been completed, He promotes His disciples to the great tasks of taking the gospel into all the world. **BUT THOMAS MISSED THAT TOO.**

(F) He missed the **PROVISIONS** of the LORD. (v.22)

v.22 And when He had said this, He breathed on *them*, and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit.”

Jesus knew the disciples could not accomplish this great mission of preaching the gospel throughout the world by their own human power. The success of their mission would be by the power of the Holy Spirit. **BUT THOMAS MISSED OUT ON THIS PROVISION INITIALLY, BECAUSE HE WASN'T THERE.**

5. And so when the other disciples told Thomas, “*We have seen the LORD*” and they told Thomas everything the Lord said and did, you know Thomas was greatly disappointed and pouted that he had missed it all.
Next we see......

II. Thomas “The Doubter” (v.25)

v.25 The other disciples therefore said to him, “We have seen the Lord.” So he said to them, “Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe.”

1. Despite the reassurance and testimonies of the other ten disciples, Thomas could not bring himself to believe. He even goes so far as to say, “I will NOT believe.”

2. Now before we are too hard on Thomas, we’ve got to remember when the other disciples first heard Jesus was alive, they didn’t believe it either.  

   Mark 16:11 tells us that when Mary Magdalene told the disciples she had seen Jesus, “they did not believe.”

3. The only reason the ten now believed Jesus was truly alive was because they had seen Him with their own eyes and heard Him with their own ears. So Thomas is simply wanting the same proof they had already received.
4. Thomas loved Jesus. He believed in Jesus. But his last memory of Him was seeing His torn, bleeding body hanging on the cross and later being buried in a tomb. He wanted to believe! He truly hoped what the others were saying was true! But until he could examine the nail prints in Jesus' hands and feet and the scar left by the spear that had been thrust through Jesus' side, he could not allow himself to believe.

5. Do you struggle with doubts in your spiritual life? Do you still have a hard time putting all your faith and trust in Jesus? Are you looking for “a sign” or waiting on some supernatural experience before you will fully believe and trust in Jesus? You need look no further than the testimony of God's word!

Well we have looked at Thomas “The Pouter,” and Thomas “The Doubter.”

Finally, let's look at...
III. Thomas “The Shouter” (vs. 26-29)

26 And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, “Peace to you!”

27 Then He said to Thomas, “Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing.”

28 And Thomas answered and said to Him, “My Lord and my God!”

29 Jesus said to him, “Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”

1. What you see here is virtually an “Instant replay” of what happened eight days earlier. The disciples are gathered in the same room behind locked doors. And just as He had done previously, “Jesus came and stood in their midst.” And just like before, Jesus greeted them with the words, “Peace to you.” The only thing that’s different is that this time Thomas is present.

2. It is very obvious Jesus has His attention focused on Thomas rather than the other ten. Jesus immediately tells Thomas to do what he had told the other disciples he needed to do in order to believe. Jesus invited Thomas to physically examine His nail scarred hands and put his hand in His spear pierced side. Jesus then admonishes Thomas to let go of all his doubts and believe!
3. At that point Thomas shouted one of the greatest confessions in all the Bible, “My Lord and my God!”


In fact there are several Churches in India today that trace their history back to the time of Thomas. Eventually Thomas was speared to death by enemies of the gospel. Thomas courageously died for the LORD he once doubted.

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C O N C L U S I O N

I believe the LORD included this account of “Doubting Thomas” for a special purpose. You see, Thomas had to face an issue each one of us has to face: Is Jesus the resurrected Son of God or isn’t He?

You and I will never get to see the physical body of Jesus in this life. We cannot examine His nail-scarred hands and feet or touch His spear-pierced side. But through the experience of “doubting Thomas” the scriptures provide us with all the proof we need that Jesus is not a dead man in a tomb, but that He is alive and well, as He sits at the right hand of His heavenly Father awaiting the day He returns to get His Church. “Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”