

Small Group Curriculum

When in Doubt • WEEK 3 • John 20:24-29

Doubt is a close companion on the journey of faith. Our faith goes through seasons, as life does, sometimes flourishing, other times seemingly dormant. This happens for any number of reasons - navigating life changes and transitions, experiencing societal unrest, enduring personal loss, betrayal, or suffering, facing church hurt, injustice, or immorality, believing bad theology or false promises - and sometimes God himself undoes images we had of him or what life with him would be like. People who have experienced the Spirit in profound ways still walk through doubt. Knowing God is a lifelong process of maturing in our faith. We see in the disciple of Thomas an example of when doubt can lead us not away from our faith, but closer to the living Jesus.

REMINDERS

- Team Night: If you are a current or prospective volunteer, join us for Team Night to hear where God is taking our church, huddle with your volunteer team, and enjoy tacos with one another. Sunday, March 8th 4-6:15pm. More info and registration [here](#).
- All upcoming events can be found [here](#).

ICEBREAKER

Option 1: Do you tend to be gullible or skeptical?

Option 2: Do your family traditions include Santa or another make-believe character? Why or why not?

INTRODUCTION

In John 20, Mary Magdalene discovers the empty tomb and meets the risen Jesus face to face. She is the first to tell the disciples of the Good News, that Jesus is risen and will be ascending to the Father. Later, when the disciples are together, Jesus appears to them.

Thomas has been following Jesus with the twelve disciples for three years. Earlier in the gospel of John, we see Thomas' commitment to Jesus when he urges the other disciples to follow him, even to death (11:16), and his honesty with Jesus when he confesses that the disciples do not understand where he is going (14:5).

DISCUSSION

Read [John 20:19-31](#).

- What do the disciples experience without Thomas present?
- What do the disciples tell Thomas? How does he respond?
- How much time has passed when Jesus appears to them again? What does Jesus invite Thomas to do? How does Thomas respond to Jesus?

AWAKENING

RESPONSE

Thomas follows Jesus, sees him crucified, doubts, then meets the risen Jesus and worships him as Lord and God. Think of your own life walking with God.

- When have you echoed Mary Madalene's exclamation, "I have seen the Lord!"?
- When were the seasons of doubt? Of waiting? Are you in one now?
- How has Jesus drawn near to you? How have you experienced his presence in the midst of doubt?
- What encouragement do you need from your community?

PRAYER

For now, we see dimly, but one day we will see Jesus face to face and he will dwell bodily with us. Meditate on these verses and pray for one another with hope that Jesus draws near to us.

Psalm 23:1-4

The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing.

*He makes me lie down in green pastures,
he leads me beside quiet waters,
he refreshes my soul.*

*He guides me along the right paths
for his name's sake.*

*Even though I walk
through the darkest valley,
I will fear no evil,
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff,
they comfort me.*

Psalm 34:17

*The Lord is close to the brokenhearted
and saves those who are crushed in spirit.*

1 Corinthians 13:12

For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.

1 John 3:2

Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

Revelation 21:3-4

And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Look! God's dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. 'He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death' or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."