

**Do Not Disbelieve, but Believe! (John 20:24-31)**  
**That You May Believe: The Gospel of John**  
**Southern Hills Baptist Church**  
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## **INTRODUCTION**

Welcome. It is good to be together considering God's Word. We will be in John 20 this morning. Go ahead and turn there now and we will be there momentarily.

This morning we are considering the story that the Apostle Thomas is most well-known for. What is Thomas known for, Church? Doubt.

### **Carson's List of Doubt Causes**

In considering the issue of doubt D.A. Carson lists 5 common causes of doubt. Listen to them and see if you have either experienced them yourself or have seen them in others around you.

#### **1. Ignorance/Not Knowing**

One common cause of doubt is ignorance. I don't mean that in a harsh way. I mean that in the sense that there are many who don't believe in Jesus because they know so little of Him. I had a friend who didn't claim faith in Jesus, he didn't claim much of anything in the spiritual realm. He grew up in a home that ignored the matter of religion and the spiritual. Thus he gave it very little thought. Over time that changed though as some of his friends talked to him more and more about Jesus and the Bible. Change didn't occur overnight, but over time the truth of the Gospel took root and he became a believer. His doubts stemmed from simply not knowing much of who Jesus was or his need for Jesus.

#### **2. Systemic Moral Choice**

Another common cause of doubt is rooted systemic moral choice. What I mean by that is that there are some who don't want to believe in Jesus as the Son of God because **if they did they would have to accept all His teachings on how they ought to live their lives** and they want to live their lives on their own terms.

#### **Huxley Example: Sexual "Freedom"**

Here is a quick example of that... Aldous Huxley was an English writer and philosopher who rejected the Christian faith and accepted a worldview of "meaninglessness" in order that he might make his own choices on morality. Listen to what he writes...

*"For myself, as, no doubt, for most of my contemporaries, the philosophy of meaninglessness was essentially an instrument of liberation. The liberation we desired was simultaneously liberation from a certain political and economic system and liberation from a certain system of morality. We object to the morality because it interfered with our sexual freedom..."*

For Huxley, to believe in Jesus was to have to submit his sexuality to God's call for purity. Huxley was more interested in sexual freedom than a Savior and thus he rejected Jesus.

#### **3. Maturation**

Sometimes doubt serves as a function of growth and maturation. This is one that I can relate to. I was born and reared in a Christian home. We were at church 4 times a week often. I grew up hearing the Gospel since before I can remember. There comes a point in growing up, however, when you have to ask yourself if you the faith you hold is your parent's or if it is yours. I had to ask myself if I really believed the Gospel or if I was just living in the only construct I knew of. Clearly, I determined that I was

following Jesus because He was the Savior I so desperately needed, but asking those questions, wrestling with that doubt was a part of my maturing.

#### 4. A Slow Drift

Another cause for doubt can also be found in a slow drifting from Jesus. We have all known someone we thought was solid in their faith, but we start to see them make small decisions that seem to cause them to drift from Jesus. Church becomes less of a priority for them. They start to fade from the fellowship of other believers and start to draw close to those unbelievers. Maybe they even start to have hard times in their marriage and rather than fight for it they run from it. They start life over again, with a significant other that doesn't pursue Jesus. Then one day, when they are a million miles from where they once were spiritually, not from not one big decision, but many small decisions, they start to confess with their mouth what their life has been screaming, they no longer believe in Jesus.

This is a scary one as we all struggle with sin and if we leave it unchecked we could easily find ourselves in this situation, with this kind of doubt.

#### 5. Deep Existential Crisis

One more common cause of doubt is often found in a deep existential crisis, the loss of a loved one, the loss of a job, terminal illnesses, being the victim of abuse, or some other form of intense suffering. Big moments like this in our lives can either see us run to God and trust Him all the more or walk away from Him. For many, times of intense suffering are the root of their doubt.

#### Summary: Doubt is Diverse

These 5 common causes of doubt are not exhaustive, there are many others, of course. Yet, what they display is that **doubt has a diverse set of starting points. And just as the causes of doubt are diverse so are the remedies.** Thus when working through doubt it is important to get the heart of where the doubt is rooted. It wouldn't be helpful to address someone's doubt stemmed in a systemic moral choice by working with them like their doubt comes from a place of ignorance.

#### Not a Universal Doubt Remedy

So with this in mind, as we approach John 20 and the story of Thomas' doubt, **we should be careful not to assume that John is recording this instance to give us a universal remedy to doubt.** If we are not careful we could come to this passage and place expectations up on it that it doesn't have for itself. Instead, we should come to this passage, we should come to Thomas, like we would approach any other friend who is struggling with doubt. We should seek to identify where this doubt is grounded and watch how Jesus addresses it.

To understand Thomas' doubt we need to remember Thomas' spiritual and emotional journey with Jesus.

#### CONTEXT

Like the other Disciples, Thomas had left everything to follow Jesus. When Jesus called upon him to follow He didn't know who Jesus was, but he knew there was something special to Jesus and he was right. Thomas traveled with Jesus for 3 years and in that time he witnessed things that were beyond belief. He witnessed miracle after miracle. He also witnessed the authentic and holy person of Jesus. Jesus, as a person was just different than everyone else. He loved perfectly. He served whole-heartedly. He never stopped living for the glory of God. Jesus' teaching was also something that was new. He taught as one who had authority from God and He reasoned from the Scriptures in ways Thomas had never heard before.

## **Convinced Jesus was Messiah**

Over time the mystery of Jesus' identity began to fall away and Thomas and the other Disciples were convinced that Jesus was the Messiah that Israel had been waiting for, for so long.

## **Then Jesus Died**

Yet now, Jesus had been crucified and Thomas had been there to witness the whole thing. Thomas saw Jesus beaten beyond recognition. He saw Jesus nailed to the cross. He saw Jesus gasp for breath and then take His last. He saw the spear thrust into Jesus' side while Jesus hang there lifeless. He saw the death of the man who he believed to be the Messiah.

## **No Category for a Dead Messiah**

**As Thomas watched Jesus die, his dreams of Jesus being the Messiah died as well.** Thomas, nor the other disciples, had any category for a dead Messiah. Messiahs don't die, they win, they rule, they claim victory, they bring new life, they don't die. **So when Jesus died, all that Thomas had hoped for in Jesus, all the belief he had in Jesus as Messiah was crushed.**

## **Extreme Religious Disappointment**

So what kind of doubt was Thomas wrestling through? Extreme religious disappointment. This becomes even more clear when we read Thomas' response, which we will do in just a moment, but let us first pause and pray, asking God to work through His Word this morning.

## **OPENING PRAYER**

Let's Pray

Dear Heavenly Father,

I stand in a room full of believers who unquestionably all struggle with different kinds of doubt from time to time, strengthen us. We recognize that our faith is fragile and we too could so very easily fall away if it were not for your strong grip on us. Hold us tightly Lord. Hold us through the testimony of Thomas when his doubt was destroyed through his encounter with the risen Jesus.

May your Word have its intended effect on us this morning.

We pray this in Jesus' name,

Amen

## **THE DISAPPOINTED DOUBTER'S DEMAND: SHOW ME THE SCARS (vs. 24-25)**

Let's read the first couple of verses of our passage, starting in verse 24...

### **John 20:24-25**

[24] Now Thomas, one of the twelve, called the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came. [25] So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see in his hands the mark of the nails, and place my finger into the mark of the nails, and place my hand into his side, I will never believe."

So apparently when Jesus showed Himself to the Disciples, the only one missing was Thomas. He wasn't there. So, of course, his friends rush to him to tell him the good news, "We have seen the Lord!" They share that Jesus' tomb is empty and it isn't because someone moved His body, instead it is because He got up and walked out and lives!

## Thomas' Response

Thomas' response?

*"I ain't believing a single line y'all are dropping. I would have to see the scars in Jesus' hands and His side before I would believe."*

And with this statement, Thomas earned himself the title Doubting Thomas. Thomas' everywhere sigh in disappointment.

## What's the Root of this Doubt?

But what was at the root of this statement and this doubt? As I said earlier, Thomas' doubt stemmed from extreme religious disappointment. The man Thomas thought to be the divine Messiah was apparently nothing more than a man. Thomas put all his eggs in Jesus' basket and when Jesus went down so did all of Thomas' hope-filled eggs.

## Illustration: Fallen Pastor

We have all witnessed situations like this on smaller scales. Perhaps a pastor is caught embezzling money from the church or he's caught in an affair that tears apart his family. When sad events like this occur, it is not uncommon for there to be some people in the congregation who struggle with doubt. They looked at this pastor, in ways they shouldn't have. They exalted him in their minds far too much. Nevertheless they start asking themselves questions about their own faith.

- My pastor's faith doesn't appear to be real after all, what does that say about my faith?
- He led me to Christ, what makes me different than him?
- The faith I thought I saw in him didn't keep him from this evil, am I following the truth?

The disappointment they experience over a pastor's falling causes them to question their own faith.

## Thomas' Greater Pain

Now multiply that feeling a million times over and we have what Thomas felt. I am not trying to minimize the situation of others, but Thomas wasn't just following a person who was pointing him to the Messiah, he was following the Messiah himself, at least he thought he was (He was!). The death of Jesus ripped those hopes away from him and his life had been turned upside down.

## Not Ready to Even Think It

So when his closest friends came to him and told him that Jesus lived, **I am sure Thomas wanted to believe, but the spiritual and emotional wounds of losing Jesus were so fresh he wasn't even going to consider it.**

## Can't Do This Again

Thomas is in effect saying,

*"Look, I can't go through this again. I have been devastated and I am not opening my heart back up to the possibility of hope, to the possibility of having my soul crushed again, unless I have undeniable evidence. I want to see the scars in Jesus' hands and in His side. I won't be fooled. You can't bring me a Jesus doppelganger, a look-a-like, I am going to be looking for the wounds I saw inflicted, just last week. Show me that and I'll believe."*

## Protecting a Broken Heart

Thomas, most certainly, struggled with doubt, but I also believe he was trying to protect his heart from further hurt. That isn't a justification, but something I think we can all understand.

### **One Thomas Defending Another**

Now, this isn't necessary at all, but as a Thomas I do feel it my duty to give a brief defense of my boy Thomas here. Thomas has been stuck with an ugly label that the rest of us Thomas' feel is unfair. I speak for all Thomas' across the globe when I point out that none of the Disciples believed in the resurrection of Jesus (with the possible exception of John) until they had encountered the risen Christ themselves. They all dismissed the testimony of Mary and the other women, just as Thomas did here. The demand that Thomas made was exactly what everyone else got before they believed. So was Thomas' doubt greater than anyone else's? No, it just lasted longer because he happened to miss out on seeing Jesus with that first group. Yet, Thomas is the doubter. Ok, just had to get that off my chest.

Getting back on track here. Thomas was a doubter, along with all the other Disciples prior to seeing Jesus, but the point of our text right now is that Thomas didn't believe in the resurrected Jesus. This would shortly change...

### **THE ASTONISHED DOUBTER'S ADORATION: MY LORD AND MY GOD (vs. 26-28)**

Let's continue reading in our passage, picking back up in verse 26...

#### **John 20:26-28**

[26] Eight days later, his disciples were inside again, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." [27] 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." [28] Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!"

### **8 Days = 1 Week**

Eight days later would have been one-week b/c the ancient Jews counted the day they were in, so Sunday to Sunday would have been eight days. So the Disciples are gathered together again on Sunday. They were still locked up in a home. 10 of the 11 Disciples, along with the women who were likely there, had all seen Jesus. So the only one there to not have seen Jesus was Thomas.

### **Miraculous Entry**

As they stood there in that locked house Jesus appeared there. John doesn't give us any more explanation than that. I am guessing he didn't have any. What more could he say? The doors were locked and yet somehow Jesus found His way in. Did he walk through the walls? Perhaps. His resurrected body has already proven to have supernatural qualities to it.

### **Peace – Pregnant with Meaning**

Jesus then greeted His followers by saying, "Peace be with you." This was a common greeting back in this day, yet, as Matthew mentioned last week, this greeting is pregnant with meaning on this side of the cross. **Peace with God wasn't something that just had to be hoped for, it was actually secured by Jesus' sacrificial and substitutionary work on the cross.** When Jesus says, "Peace be with you." **It isn't just a greeting, it is a promise to all those who have put their faith in Him!**

### **Speaking from Divine Knowledge**

Jesus then approaches Thomas, the one Disciple He had yet to see. Before Thomas can say anything Jesus speaks from a place of Divine knowledge and offers him the exact evidence he had said he would

require one week earlier. **Jesus wasn't there when Thomas exclaimed that he would never believe until he saw the holes in Jesus' hands and side, but Jesus knew.**

### **Jesus Cared for Thomas**

**And more than knowing, Jesus cared. Jesus had great love for Thomas** so when Jesus sees Thomas for the first time He gives Thomas exactly what he needs. Jesus doesn't do this with a "I'm going to shut you up" attitude. **He shows Thomas His wounds that He might bring true and lasting healing to Thomas' broken heart. Jesus is fanning the flickering flame of faith in Thomas' soul.** It was through Jesus' wounds that Thomas was healed.

### **Jesus' Healing Wounds**

So Jesus tells Thomas to look at the wounds in His hands and in His side. Upon seeing Jesus, Thomas does a 180 and erupts with words of praise! "My Lord and My God!"

### **A Few Observations on: "My Lord and My God!"**

Let me make a few observations about this response from Thomas.

#### **1. Deity Clearly Confessed**

First, there are a number of groups who wish this verse wasn't in the Scriptures. Groups like the Jehovah's Witnesses who deny the deity of Jesus don't know what to do with this verse. Thomas is clearly proclaiming Jesus to be God and Jesus accepts that worship.

Another group that wishes this verse didn't exist can be found amongst liberal theologians. There are some who suggest that the Disciples never thought of Jesus as deity and that over time as Jesus' legend has grown we have deified Jesus. They explain that the doctrine of Jesus' divinity is something that came along generations later. But here we have Thomas very clearly identifying Jesus as God.

#### **2. Bookend of John**

Second, Thomas' exclamation of Jesus' divinity almost serve as a bookend to John's Gospel. **It is here that John's Gospel comes full circle.** Remember where we started in our study?

#### **John 1:1**

[1] In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

John opens up by introducing Jesus as God. **We have now reached the point where even Jesus' most cynical Disciple has recognized Jesus' deity** and gladly confessing it.

#### **3. Personal Proclamation**

Third, notice how personal Thomas makes this proclamation of praise. My Lord and my God. He doesn't simply pronounce Jesus to be the God or the Lord, but my God and my Lord. This speaks to the fact that **Thomas didn't just have a shift in his thoughts about Jesus, but his entire posture had changed. He was submitting himself to Jesus, his Lord and his God.**

#### **4. Thomas' Journey to Restored Faith**

Now, with all of this in mind I think a question that is fair to ask at this point is, how did Thomas get here so quickly? This is the first time that he seen Jesus and Jesus has appeared in a surprising fashion. I think what most of us may have expected in this moment was, "You are alive!" or "How did you get here?" Thomas moves passed all the statements of initial surprise and goes directly to the final conclusion of, "My Lord and My God!"

### **A Week of Thought**

I think Thomas was able to do this because for the past week the other Disciples had been telling Thomas that Jesus was alive. **Now Thomas had not allowed himself to believe those claims, but that doesn't mean that he didn't think of them all throughout the week.**

### **Talking to Himself**

I am sure Thomas had so many conversations with himself throughout the week.

*"Jesus alive? It can't be true. I saw him dead, but more than that, I saw him mangled. But what if he was alive in some miracle? What then? What would that mean?"*

I have to imagine that over the course of this week and all of this internal conversation and spiritual wrestling Thomas revisited many of the confusing and enigmatic statements from Jesus.

### **Remembering: Show us the Father**

For example, the night before Jesus died, so just a few days before the other Disciples had bore witness to Thomas that Jesus was alive, Jesus was talking to the Disciples in the upper room and said this...

#### **John 14:8-11**

[8] Philip said to him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us." [9] Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? [10] Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own authority, but the Father who dwells in me does his works. [11] Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else believe on account of the works themselves.

Whoever has seen me has seen the Father? At the time I am sure the Disciples had no idea as to what that meant. Now, between verses 25 and 26 Thomas is wrestling with his doubt and all that the other Disciples had told him. Thinking to himself,

*"That whole, 'You have seen the Father if you have seen me' statement makes more sense if Jesus is alive. If Jesus has authority over death itself I shouldn't look for some spiritualize meaning in those words, Jesus is making a clear announcement to be God!"*

### **Remembering: Your Sins Are Forgiven**

Here is just one more experience that was possibly rattling around in Thomas' head as he wrestled with his doubt and the claims of the resurrection. Do you remember back in Mark 2 when a paralyzed man was carried by 4 friends to see Jesus? The house Jesus was in was packed to the gills. Standing room only. There was no way for these men to get in and get before Jesus that they might present their friend and ask for healing. So these men clime to the roof of the house and remove part of it and lower their friend down in front of Jesus.

### **Who Can Forgive Sins, But God?**

Does anyone remember what Jesus told this paralyzed man? "Your sins are forgiven" (Mark 2:5). Now the Jewish religious leaders who were present heard this and objected among themselves, saying, **"Why is this man speaking like this. He is blaspheming! Who can forgive sins, but God alone?"**

### **Over Their Heads**

**This is a good question. Who can forgive sins?** Surely when Thomas and the other Disciples heard Jesus say this, forgive that man's sins, they had questions. On who's authority did Jesus do this? Only God could forgive sins. So much of what Jesus said flew right over the Disciple's heads in the moment.

### **If He is Alive...**

Now here is Thomas, living between verses 25 and 26, wrestling with doubt and a situation like this is recalled to His memory.

*I never understood why Jesus told that paralytic his sins were forgiven. Why would He have the authority to do that, but if what John, Peter, and the others are saying is true, what if He really is alive? What if He has overcome that barbaric death? Then Jesus is the one to forgive sins!*

These are the kinds of conversations I have to imagine that Thomas was having with himself. **He was going back and thinking through what it would mean for Jesus to be alive and he connected the dots. If Jesus lives then He is God.**

### **Wouldn't Let Himself Believe**

Yet, Thomas couldn't let himself believe Jesus was alive. He had seen all the gory details of His death and emotionally he wasn't ready to get his hopes up again.

### **Immediately Knew What It Meant**

Then Jesus appeared to Thomas and the other Disciples and in a moment Thomas knew exactly what it meant, Jesus was God. "My Lord and My God!"

### **A Changed Man - The Wall Fell Down**

**The wall that Thomas had built around his heart to guard it from further disappointment or hurt had been toppled. The hope that had been crushed was brought back to life bigger and better than ever. The man who one week earlier said he would never believe Jesus was alive would now be so sure of Jesus' life that he would willingly lay down his own life and he one day would.**

Thomas was a changed man. He was changed by a **patient, gracious, and living Savior!**

### **THE CONVERTED DOUBTER'S ROLE: EVIDENCE FOR FAITH (vs 29-31)**

Lets pick back up in our passage now to hear Jesus' response to Thomas' confessed faith...

#### **John 20:29-31**

[29] Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

[30] Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; [31] but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

I think a lot of people miss what is going on in Jesus' response here. Many read this passage as if Jesus is rebuking Thomas' faith as weak because it took seeing Jesus and the superior faith is one that doesn't see at all, but takes a blind leap of faith. Let me offer an alternative interpretation/understanding of Jesus' response to Thomas.

### **Probably a Statement not a Question**

First, the question asked by Jesus, "Have you believed because you have seen me?" isn't a question in the original Greek. There is no punctuation in the Greek. This was an interpretive decision. I think the question makes it sound like an admonition as well. We could just as accurately translate this passage by making it a statement, "You have believed because you have seen me." It is a statement of fact. It is a



statement of fact for all the Disciples (except perhaps John) who didn't believe until they encountered the risen Jesus.

### **Not a Lesser Faith**

**Thomas or the other Disciples didn't have a lesser or weaker faith because this form of evidence was brought before them.** They had a pretty difficult hill to climb, I mean they saw Jesus brutally murdered. Belief in the resurrection would be tough for them, especially since they weren't looking for it. Thus Jesus determined that for them this is how He would reignite their faith.

### **Blessed Are Those...**

Jesus also understood however that this wouldn't be the normal method of bringing people to faith, thus He gives a blessing. This is where he says, "Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed." Jesus understands faith without seeing before Jesus, as the Disciples did, brings its own challenges and thus promises a blessing for it.

### **Not an Endorsement of Blind Faith**

**Let's also note that Jesus isn't saying here that the less evidence one has for faith the greater the faith is. Jesus isn't calling people to make blind leaps in following Him.** That is how many in our culture today portray the idea of faith. It is the following of some personal, internal, gut hunch that lacks all external credibility. **Again, not what Jesus is saying, and John points to this in verses 30 and 31. He writes that many of Jesus' miracles were recorded for us that we may read the eyewitness testimony of them.** John's Gospel, his eyewitness account has been given to us that we don't have to follow Jesus blindly. We have evidence.

### **Thomas is Evidence – Denied Jesus**

One such evidence is found in Thomas' testimony. Here we have a man who denied the resurrection of Jesus. He boldly and brashly said he wouldn't believe unless he could see Jesus and his wounds himself. Thomas wasn't going to settle for someone's words. He wasn't going to settle for a Jesus look-a-like. He wanted the real deal and he wanted a first-hand experience with the risen Jesus.

### **Died for Jesus**

Thomas received just that. History shows us that man who said he wouldn't believe went out preaching the Gospel to those in Greece and India and was eventually killed for continuing to preach the hope found in Jesus. Tradition tells us that Thomas was run through with a spear. His commitment to Jesus was unquestioned. **Now, what would cause this stout cynic who demanded verifiable evidence of the resurrection of Jesus to passionately follow Jesus to his death? It would take Thomas having received that unique, verifiable evidence, right?**

### **Following the Evidence to Jesus**

Brothers and Sisters, we don't follow Jesus blindly. We follow Jesus based upon the preponderance of historical evidence, the self-authenticating truth and beauty of the Gospel, and the internal calling of the Holy Spirit.

## **CONCLUSION**

I think it would be wrong to end our study this morning with our focus set on Thomas. Jesus is the hero of this story. Let me close with 2 reminders we get from Jesus' pursuit of Thomas.

### **1. Jesus is Patient Towards Doubters**

First, Jesus shows great patience and grace towards Thomas. Thomas brashly exclaimed he wouldn't believe in Jesus unless his terms were met. Who is Thomas to be the one setting the terms? **Jesus could have appeared to Thomas with an "I'll show you" attitude, but that isn't what He did in the slightest.** Instead, Jesus came and gave Thomas what he needed to find healing for his broken heart and wounded soul.

### **Gracious to Doubting Peter**

Jesus consistently shows this patient and gracious love towards doubters. Do you remember when Jesus sent the Disciples to the other side of the sea so He could be alone and pray for a while in Matthew 14? That night the Disciples were on the water and they were trying to sail against the wind and the waves, making no progress and off in the distance they saw a figure walking on the water. They immediately supposed it was a ghost b/c who walks on water?!? But Jesus called out to them and calmed them down. Peter told Jesus that if it was really Him that He would call Peter out on the water that he might walk and meet up with Him. Jesus told Peter to do so and Peter began walking on the water. Before he got too far however the wind and the waves that were crashing around him caused him to fear and his confidence in Jesus started to fade and thus he started to sink into the water. Peter cried out to Jesus to save him.

What did Jesus say in this moment?

*"Peter, what is your problem?!? Why are you doubting when I am standing in front of you standing on water? What more do you need? I told you that you could do this and you still didn't believe."*

No, that isn't what Jesus said. Here is what he really said...

#### **Matthew 14:31**

[31] Jesus immediately reached out his hand and took hold of him, saying to him, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?"

Do you hear the compassion? He reached out His hand to lift Peter up and pursued Peter's heart. The key is that Jesus didn't just walk away. He helped and pursued Peter in his weakness.

### **Compassionate to You in Your Doubt**

Jesus will do the same for you when you find yourself struggling with doubt. Regardless of where your doubts have grown from, know this, **just as He did with Peter, Jesus is reaching out to you to lift you up as well. Our Savior has proven over and over to be patient with doubters like you and me.** So when we battle doubts, let's do just that, battle them, seeking answers in God's Word, and know that we serve a Savior always ready to pull us back up after we have fallen.

## **2. Jesus Gave Evidence for us to Follow**

Finally, **Jesus didn't leave us with unverifiable stories that would cause us to have to trust him from a place of blind faith.** In His kindness, Jesus lived His life in public view with 12 men who followed Him everywhere He went. They walked with Him, ate with Him, slept with Him, they were by His side day in and day out that the might record all they saw, heard, and experienced. That you might know what Jesus was doing, what He accomplished, and most importantly, who He was and is. While you probably won't get the chance to stand before Jesus as Thomas did on this side of eternity, the men who did have written about it that you may know and that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah, the Son of God come to save and redeem the chosen of God.

Jesus calls us to believe in Him that we may find salvation for our lost souls, but He doesn't call us to believe in Him blindly. **He has left behind a great number of first-hand witnesses who not only wrote of the truth they saw, but lived lives that showed the extreme depth of commitment they had.**

### **Jesus is up to the Challenge**

We will all struggle with doubt at various times and in various ways, but thankfully Jesus is up to the challenge to take on your questions and speak to the complexity and difficulty that we face in this life. At the end of the day His call to you is the same as the one He gave to Thomas...

*Do not disbelieve, but believe!*

### **Let's Pray**