

Thomas said in John chapter 20 and verse 25, **“Unless I see the scars of the nails in his hands, and put my finger on those scars and my hand in his side, I will not believe.”**

Yuri Gagarin once said, **“I cannot see God, therefore I do not believe in him !”**

My theme today, is Doubts, Doubts about the Christian faith, Doubts about the Resurrection, of Jesus Christ. Because, after the excitement, of Easter Sunday, and in the cool light of day, perhaps we sit down, and wonder, like those followers, of Jesus 2,000 years ago - Can It All Be True ??

Now, the disciple, Thomas. is sadly remembered. I believe, far more, for his doubt, than His Loyalty, His Courage, His Honesty, and His Faith. For Thomas, as many people since him, wanted proof, for himself, that Jesus Christ, had risen, from the dead. For the truth, of Christ's resurrection, could only be proven, if he both, saw and touched, this risen Jesus - **Seeing is Believing** - as it were. You see, Thomas, was unable, to accept the testimony, of the other disciples, at face value, he was initially, not open to, or able to, receive, the good news, like so many, still today !!

But this, **THIS, DID NOT**, discourage him, wholly, for as Johns gospel tells us, he did not, get up and leave, the disciples, but remained with them, in fellowship, and Worship.

For unlike Thomas, the other disciples, were undoubtedly, excitedly, enthusiastically, Praising, Worshipping God, and rejoicing, in the new, and wonderful knowledge, of Jesus Christ, as a Risen Lord, and Saviour. For not only, had they met with Him, and been given, a gosple commission, but they, **THEY**, had received the Holy Spirit.

Meanwhile, Thomas, had not experienced, any of this, and for a whole week, he was left, with his doubts, his anxieties, his fears, and He puts up with, his friends, whose anxieties, fears and doubts, which had in fact, led them, to be locked away, in an upper room, for fear, of the Jewish, and Roman authorities; **Were NOW, all gone**, wonderfully replaced, by hope, confidence, and Joy. For these disciples, were all smiles, and laughter, at the amazing, realisation, of what, has happened, of what God, had done !!

For Jesus, was alive, His death, on the cross, had not been, an END.....

**But a Beginning !!**

My Friends, for these disciples, Christ's teachings, and the nature of his Mission, were now, beginning, to take on, the mantle, of their true importance, and significance, for the world. For all, that Christ, had told them, before His death, was now, coming to fruition, His words, were **True**. For the Peace, that Shalom, that Christ shared, with those disciples, was the Peace, of Reconciliation, between mankind, and God, won, through Christ's passion, upon the cross, and AND, God's Blessing, poured out, upon his people, in and through, the power, of the Holy Spirit.

So in my opinion, "doubting Thomas", deserves, to be remembered, and respected, for his faith, and Not Just, his Doubt. For his doubt, had a purpose. As one commentator said : **Thomas's doubt, was a cry of Faith, FOR HE WANTED, TO KNOW, THE TRUTH !!**"

And in light, of the Miracle, that is Resurrection, can we blame him, for wanting to find out, the truth for himself ! Yet Thomas, did not idolise doubt, he sought the truth, and gladly believed, when given the reason, to do so. For as Miguel de Unamuno, in his book The Agony of Christianity, says : **A faith, which does not, doubt, is a dead faith.**

The importance and the result, being for me, that because, Thomas, expressed, his doubts, **the answers came**, and they came, in the person, of the resurrected, Jesus Christ. For **NOW**, Thomas, had the opportunity, not only, to see, and believe, but to touch. And yet, **AND YET**, he did not, take this opportunity, for he **did not, need it**, for his eyes, and more importantly, his heart, and mind, had been opened up, by God's Holy Spirit, to the awesome reality, of Christ's, resurrection, and he exclaims - **MY Lord and My God !!** For Thomas, had a living Faith, in Jesus Christ, not a dead one. For his scepticism, had vanished, and Thomas, had moved, from the human relationship, between disciple, and rabbi, into a new one, where he was brought, into the very, presence, of God.

**To Conclude:** My Friends, as Methodists, as part, of the evangelical tradition, we believe, the Bible, to be, the divine revelation, of God, in and to the world, and AND, that we, ourselves, can have, that personal experience, and living relationship, with God, in Jesus Christ; that was, so central, to our Founder, John Wesley.

BUT, does this, exclude, any room, for doubt, in a Christian's life ? **The answer, I believe, is NO !!** For if, in both a believers, and a non believer's life, **doubt**, raises questions, and these questions, lead to answers, and that these **Answers**, are accepted. Then surely, **doubt**, has done a beneficial work, in the questioners life !!

And each of us, either has, or can receive, this presence, of God, for ourselves, as we open, our lives, up to God, as we are honest, about our questions, and our doubts, as we learn, to see, with eyes of Faith. **Because, my testimony**, is that my questions, and my doubts, have, HAVE, and still do, **deepen, my own Faith**. As I search, for the answers, within scripture, within my tradition of faith, within my own experience, and my own reason, and AND, within prayer, and worship, and within the lives, of fellow believers.

For as the Author Robert - Browning, once said:  
**I show you doubt, to prove that faith exists.**

**Finally :** My Friends, the scriptures, and the early Church, have marked, the way, for us, for they testify, to the followers, of Jesus, seeing our Risen Lord Jesus, 500, on one occasion. And God, if we allow Him, can help us, through our questions, and our times of doubt; Just as he did, with Thomas, and has, with many Christians, throughout the centuries.

For it is, as we continue, in this journey of life and faith, **that we see, THAT WE SEE, the risen Lord Jesus Christ**, in our midst, in the lives of others, AND experience Him, in our own lives, as we say, in Faith of Christ  
:

**MY LORD, AND MY GOD !!!!!**

**AMEN.**

## **A Time of Prayer**

Father God, we praise you, for your care and love, your compassion, peace and purpose, for our lives. We praise you for your Son Jesus who died and rose again. For the disciples, and the early church, human like us, who knew the joys, and sorrows of life, and a living faith, that knew true hope in you.

Father God, we thank you for Thomas, for his honesty, to doubt; Lord, when we have doubts, may we draw even closer to you, help us to remember, that we are loved, forgiven, and chosen by you, to be disciples of the Christ. Thank You, for the journey of life, our pilgrimage with you, inspire us, through your word, and through the lives of others, as we walk each day with you, in and by faith, for we know, that Your plans, for our lives, are more than we can imagine or ask for.

For we ask this Prayer in Jesus name.  
Amen.

Friends, perhaps you would like to read, the passage I've spoken from today, for yourself, it's from John chapter 20 and verses 19 – 31, also there is a great song by Martyn Joseph, entitled Treasure the questions, and I'd encourage you to listen to it.

Well thank you for listening, and until we see each other again.  
May may the blessing and peace of God,  
Father, Son and Holy Spirit, be with you, and those you love,  
this day and always Amen.