

Instructions

Group leaders, take some time before your gathering to look over these questions. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you and pick 3-5 questions to discuss, which pertain to your group's unique needs and style.

For the video related questions, look up the video in RightNow Media. You can do this on a phone, tablet, computer, or SmartTV device. You can easily find the video by clicking on the "Revolution Church" channel within the app. If you or a group member needs access to RightNow Media, please email info@revolutionky.org.

Series Synopsis

Christ is Risen! He is alive! The tomb is empty! I am free! Now what? What happens next? We experience the resurrection of Jesus Christ and know he has broken the power of sin and death, yet these things still remain. That is because the work of the resurrection continues. The work of reconciliation and salvation is ongoing. It is all a work in progress, we are all works in progress. And we can all experience the ongoing grace of Christ that transforms us, that resurrects us, in many seasons of life. Join us as we turn to the people in Scripture that Christ visited after his resurrection, to see how Christ transformed their grief, fear, doubt, and shame. Even as we experience these things under the reality of COVID-19, these testimonies remind us that God is faithful and give us hope that God is still making us new.

Message Synopsis

Thomas has long been known as the doubting one... the one who must actually see and touch the marks on his hands and sides before he will believe the Jesus is alive again. But the word for "doubt" here is *apistos*, meaning unbelieving, and not as much skepticism or uncertainty. According to the Fourth Gospel, Thomas had not been with the other disciples when Jesus appeared to them behind locked doors. He had to experience it for himself in order to believe the gospel, in order to have faith. Faith is a gift, grown from a real, personal encounter with the incarnational, relational, and resurrected Christ.

Key Scriptures

John 20:24-29

Questions Related to This Week's Message

Consider watching the following video at home before meeting with your group to help encourage and enhance your discussion.

"Doubt" by David Zahl (located in the "Renovation Home Groups" channel)

<https://www.rightnowmedia.org/Content/VideoElement/122418>

1. In our Lenten I AM series, we noted that the gospel of John was written so that we may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing, we may have life in his name. That is, life for the current believers of the text and also for those who are yet to believe; future, Gentile believers like you and me. Like Thomas, believing looks like a personal experience with the resurrected king that leads to a personal confession, "my Lord and my God."

- a. Have you ever had a friend tell you something about Jesus or the faith, but you had a hard time believing or understanding it? Did you long to or desire to experience it for yourself?
 - b. What was that like and how did you work through it?
2. What questions do you still have about Jesus Christ, the Son of God? Have you found life in his name? What keeps you from fully receiving it?
 3. David Zahl says that doubt is not the opposite of faith, control is. In fact, doubt can enhance and influence our faith in a positive way. How have you seen this true in your own life – both doubt influencing your faith and control opposing it?
 4. David also talks about the difference between intellectual and emotional doubt. Intellectual doubt can lead us to explore our faith deeper, while an emotional connection to doubt is often rooted in anger, cynicism, and opposition toward God. Can you notice both of these kinds of doubt in your life (about anything, it doesn't have to be about God)? How does each kind of doubt affect you, hinder you, or enhance your life and faith?

Family-Related Questions:

1. “Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 18:3). Children have a wonderful gift (and also danger) of believing things just because they are told. They are trusting by nature and often have undeveloped reason to challenge their beliefs the way adults do. However, faith in our parents' beliefs soon gives way to doubt that seeks its own understanding.
 - a. If your children are younger, how can you teach them to ask hard and healthy questions about their faith, even questions to which you (or anyone else) don't have an answer? How can you encourage their seeking, so their faith isn't entirely dependent upon your own beliefs?
 - b. If your children are older, how can you give your children the freedom, skills, and resources to help them explore and establish their own beliefs, without imposing your own beliefs, without criticizing their doubt, and without denying your responsibility to “teach your children the way they should go” (Proverbs 22:6)?