

Through Doubt to Faith

John 20:24-31

Thomas might have been the only disciple not surprised by the cross. He tended to be pessimistic about things. (John 11.16)

Doubt is not sin

For people like Thomas understanding is very important, which means that asking questions is important. Unfortunately, the church has often made it sound like it's wrong to ask questions.

Jesus doesn't rebuke Thomas for doubting. Instead he takes his doubts seriously and helps him walk through them.

Doubt has its uses

Doubt generates questions, and we learn by asking those questions.

But once Thomas was convinced, he changed his mind. He believed.

Doubt, like faith, is a choice (v27)

We choose what we believe or don't believe. Those choices may or may not have good evidence to support them, but they are our choices.

God doesn't make anybody believe. He presents himself to us and challenges us to believe.

Doubt can lead to faith (v28)

In the end Thomas cries out, 'My Lord and my God!'

And faith leads to blessing (v 29)

John is writing for people, like you and me, who haven't had the privilege of seeing the resurrected Christ in the flesh. But he wants with all his heart for us to believe. That's why he wrote his book.

Take ways

1. Thomas absolutely refused to say that he believed when he did not believe. Sometimes we are tempted to say we believe because our friends want us to, or our spouse, or our family. It's better to work through our doubts to real faith.
2. Once Thomas was sure, he went all the way with his faith.
3. In a post-pretty-much-everything age we need to make space for people to explore their faith and grapple with the hard questions without being judged just because they ask questions.