

LEADER NOTES

Review the Guidelines each time you have a new member join your group or once a month.

- **Help the group see.**

This story is not really about Thomas being difficult. It is about Jesus being willing to meet an honest doubter. Jesus did not shame Thomas. He came after him.

- **Keep the tone honest and calm.**

Some people in your group may relate more to Thomas than other disciples. Let them know that questions are not the enemy. Refusing Jesus is the deeper issue.

- **Draw attention to what Thomas already knew.**

He heard the testimony of the other disciples, but he still held back. That matters. Many people are surrounded by truth, hear truth, and still keep their own conditions or beliefs in place.

- **Slow down on Thomas' confession.**

"My Lord and my God" is the turning point. He does not just admit that Jesus is alive. He surrenders to who Jesus is.

- **Bring out the wounds of Jesus.**

The risen Christ still bears the marks of the cross. His resurrection is not disconnected from His sacrifice. The wounds remind us this was real, costly, and done for us.

- **Gently surface the conditions people still place on Jesus.**

Some want more proof. Some want control. Some want Jesus close enough to help but not close enough to rule. Help your group identify where they may still be holding back.

- **Remind the group that faith is not pretending to have no questions.**

Faith is responding to Jesus as He reveals Himself. Honest doubt can become real belief when a person stops resisting and starts surrendering.

- **Make verse 29 personal.**

Most of us have not seen what Thomas saw, yet Jesus speaks blessing over those who believe. That gives real hope to people who are still working through questions but are open to Christ.

Share & record prayer requests.

Ask a volunteer to close in prayer.

Follow up throughout the week.

PLEASE TAKE ATTENDANCE

TARGET

Topic: Meeting the Risen Jesus

Take Away: Jesus does not push honest questions away. He meets people in their doubt and leads them to real faith.

God Stories: A God Story is an undeniable encounter or experience that creates an impact or breakthrough in a person's day-to-day life.

Ice Breaker Question: Share a time when you were slow to believe something until you saw enough to know it was true.

This Week's Passage: *John 20:24-29*

Share background: *Jesus has been crucified, buried, and has already appeared alive to Mary Magdalene and to most of the disciples, though Thomas was absent and therefore skeptical of their testimony.*

First-century Judaism did not expect an individual bodily resurrection before the final resurrection at the end of the age, making the disciples' claim both shocking and theologically unsettling. Eyewitness verification mattered deeply, and Thomas's demand to see and touch Jesus reflects common standards of proof in an oral, testimony-based society. The disciples are gathered behind locked doors out of fear of Jewish authorities. These men were ordinary Galileans with no power, having lost both their rabbi and their livelihoods. Into this fear, doubt, and confusion, the risen Jesus appears...and now the story from God's Word.

Tell the story. Rebuild the story. Read the story from God's Word.

Head Question: *In this passage what does Jesus say and do that shows He is not worried by Thomas's doubt but is leading him toward belief?*

Heart Question: *Right now, where do you see yourself in this story: hesitant, searching, guarded, ready to trust, or fully surrendered?*

Hands Question: *What would it look like for you to move from doubt or hesitation to open faith in Jesus? What response do you need to make because He is risen??*

ASSIGN NEXT WEEKS STORY: John 14:15-27