



SERMON STUDY

GUIDE

Small Group Guide: Acts 1.3 & John 20.24-29

Open with Prayer:

Sermon Summary:

After the resurrection, Jesus spent forty days presenting Himself alive "by many proofs" (Acts 1.3), and God has always used periods of forty days for sacred, transformative moments. One of the 40 Day encounter was with Thomas, a deeply devoted disciple who had witnessed the horror of the crucifixion with his own eyes and could not simply accept a secondhand report of resurrection. The sermon walked us through the three stages of saving faith: knowledge (knowing the facts), assent (agreeing the facts are true and personal), and trust (placing the full weight of your life on what you believe). When Jesus appeared to Thomas eight days later, He did not shame him. He met him right in the middle of his doubt, and Thomas leaped from knowledge all the way to trust with the declaration, "My Lord and my God!" (John 20.28). Jesus then spoke a blessing over all of us who would believe without seeing (John 20.29).

Discussion Questions:

1. Read John 20.24-29 aloud as a group. What details stand out to you that you may not have noticed before?
2. Thomas sat with his doubt for eight full days before Jesus appeared again. What do you think those eight days were like for Thomas? Have you ever gone through a season where you were waiting on God to show up and the waiting itself felt like a test of faith?
3. Thomas had *seen* the crucifixion firsthand. How does understanding what he witnessed help explain his response in verse 25? Have you ever had an experience where what you saw with your own eyes made it harder to trust God?
4. The sermon described *three stages of saving faith*: knowledge, assent, and trust. Which stage do you find yourself sitting in most often, and what tends to keep you from moving to the next one?
5. In verse 27, Jesus offers Thomas exactly what he asked for. He does not scold him or skip over him. What does this tell us about how Jesus responds to honest struggle and doubt?

6. Thomas' declaration in verse 28, "*My Lord and my God*," is one of the strongest confessions of faith in all of Scripture. What do you think changed for Thomas in that moment? Was it just seeing, or was something deeper happening?
7. Jesus says in verse 29, "*Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed*." That blessing is for us. What is one area of your life right now where you are being asked to believe without seeing?

Key Takeaways:

- **Faith is not the absence of evidence.** It is the conviction that there is evidence beyond what your eyes can currently access (Hebrews 11.1).
- **Jesus does not shame your doubt.** He walks toward it, meets you in it, and offers Himself as the answer.
- **Genuine saving faith is not the elimination of doubt.** It is the triumph of trust over doubt.
- **The eyes of faith do not ignore the wounds.** They look at the same suffering and see the place where God does His greatest work (Ephesians 1.18).

This Week:

- This week, identify one situation in your life where you have been "stuck at the tomb," where what you have seen or experienced feels like the final word. Write it down somewhere private. Underneath it, write Thomas' confession: "My Lord and my God."
- Each morning for the next seven days, read that confession out loud as a prayer, asking God to open the eyes of your heart (Ephesians 1.18) to see what faith sees.
- When your group meets again next week, be ready to share what shifted in your perspective, even if the circumstance hasn't changed yet.