

# Resurrection: Doubting Thomas Believes

John 20:19-31

## Introduce It

Today we are continuing in our Easter season and celebrating the resurrection of Jesus! To start, I want to see if you know about this awesome word we are going to talk about today. In our Scripture passage today, Jesus uses a special word to describe you and me. It's important to make sure we understand what certain words mean so we can understand what Jesus is talking about. Can you tell me what the word blessed means? In the dictionary blessed means happy.

What does it feel like to be happy? Would I make this face if I were happy? *(Make a sad face.)* What about this face? *(Make an angry face.)* What about this face? *(Make a tired face.)* No, I would probably make a happy face like this, wouldn't I? *(Smile.)* Let's see what God has in store for us today as we look to his Word, which is true and perfect!

**Read John 20:19-31** *(Pass out the verses to children to have them help you read. You can use the helpers or read some yourself if you don't have enough capable readers.)*

## Hear It

In our Scripture today, which disciple struggled to believe that Jesus had really risen from the dead? Yes, Thomas. The other disciples had already seen Jesus. They got to talk to him, to hear his voice, and to see the wounds in his hands from the nails of the cross. How do you think they felt when they saw him? *(Allow the children to respond.)* They must have been so excited! They had already heard that Jesus was alive from Mary Magdalene who had seen and spoken to him. And John and Peter had already seen the empty tomb. Imagine how excited they must have been because they got to see the risen Jesus! I'm sure that's all they could talk about with anyone. "You know Jesus, our friend, the one that died? He's not dead! He's alive!"

But who does our Scripture say was missing? That's right; it says that Thomas was missing. So, when Thomas heard about Jesus's appearance, how do you think he felt? Thomas might have felt a little left out. And then, did you catch it? He had to wait a whole week before he saw Jesus! You know what it's like to wait right now. You've had to wait to see friends or family members, we are waiting to go to the park to play or to a restaurant to eat, or to hug our friends! Imagine everyone around you was able to do those things, but you couldn't yet. How would you feel? You'd feel left out, frustrated, disappointed, sad, angry even. Well, imagine how Thomas felt! All his best friends saw Jesus come back from the dead, but not him. So Scripture tells us he decided he would not believe unless he saw Jesus,

but he also might have felt a little disappointed. He might have wondered why Jesus didn't wait to appear to all of them. He might also have thought the other disciples were crazy! Or maybe he thought they were just trying to play a trick on him. Think about it: If someone you loved had died and all your closest friends told you that person had come back to life, how would you feel? Would you believe them? You might wonder if your friends had gone crazy!

But this situation was a little different. Thomas had seen Jesus do miracles! Jesus healed people, he fed 5000 people from 5 loaves of bread and 2 small fish, he brought Lazarus back from the dead. Most of us haven't seen our friends do those things. But it wasn't just that. Jesus had taught his disciples that he would rise from the dead. But still, Thomas didn't believe what the other disciples said about Jesus. What does Thomas say must happen before he will believe? Yes! He tells them that he must touch Jesus's wounds or he will NOT believe that Jesus has risen from the dead! Thomas was given the opportunity to believe that what Jesus promised had come true, his friends told him the good news. But Thomas chose not to believe something so miraculous. He insisted that he needed to see Jesus for himself to believe.

So, what does Jesus do with Thomas? Does he let Thomas stay in doubt? Does he appear to the other disciples again and tell them to keep trying to convince Thomas that he's alive? Does he scold Thomas and tell him how disappointed he is in him because he wouldn't listen to his friends? No! Jesus is kind and patient with Thomas. Jesus reappears to the disciples, this time with Thomas in the room. Jesus even invites Thomas to touch his wounds.

But what does Thomas say when he actually sees Jesus? Does seeing Jesus change his mind? Yes! Thomas chooses to believe in Jesus and all that he has done! It's wonderful. He says, "My Lord and My God!" He throws out his previous conditions for believing and believes! I imagine he might have even fallen on his knees or face to worship.

Jesus is happy that Thomas believes him now, but Jesus also says that everyone who believes without seeing him will be blessed! They will be happy! Their hearts will be filled with joy because they believe and know Jesus, even though they've never seen him face to face. This isn't a happiness that goes away, like how we can be happy one minute and sad or angry or frustrated the next because we don't get our way. This is a happiness that sticks, that is permanent, that never goes away because you know the risen Jesus and you know that you are loved and forgiven by him and safe in him!

What about us? Have we seen Jesus face to face? No. But do we believe in Jesus? Some of you may still be deciding, but some of you already believe. When you believe in Jesus, even though you haven't seen him, you are blessed. Jesus fills your heart with happiness because you know and love him even though you've never seen him. Trusting God can be hard, but we can trust that His Bible is true, and when we believe what he's said and done through Jesus, we know how much he loves us. That makes it easier to trust him, especially when life is hard, like it is right now when you can't go to school, when you can't see your friends, when things don't make sense, and when people hurt you. We can always trust that Jesus is alive and he loves you and is for you. And that's a beautiful thing!

## Talk about It

*:: Why are people happy or blessed for believing in Jesus without seeing him? (Jesus honors their trust by filling their hearts with hope, love, and peace.)*

*:: If you had been Thomas, would you have had a hard time believing what the disciples were telling you? (Share how you might have reacted if you'd been Thomas.)*

*:: How did Jesus react to Thomas when he doubted that Jesus had risen from the dead? (He was patient and kind. He revealed himself to Thomas.)*

*:: How does Jesus react when we struggle or doubt the way Thomas did? (He's the same now as he was then: patient and kind. He gives us the faith to believe.)*

## Pray about It

This is what we celebrate during the season of Easter, and this is why we gather for worship every Sunday... because Jesus is alive! Remember, Easter is not just one day, it's a 50 day celebration where we shout joyfully to the Lord for winning the victory over death. So we are going to do this together during the whole season of Easter!

When I say, "Hallelujah! He is risen!" You respond by saying, "He is risen indeed Hallelujah!" Let's practice that.

Leader: Hallelujah! He is risen!

**Children: He is risen indeed! Hallelujah!**

Let's pray together.

**Dear God,  
Thank you for sending Jesus,  
to win the victory over sin and death.  
Because he is risen,  
we find life and hope in him.  
Help us to love Jesus,  
to trust Jesus,  
and to live for Jesus.  
We pray in Jesus' name,  
Amen.**