

Easter 2026 Study Guide

Bible reading: John 20:24-29 (ESV)

Now Thomas, one of the twelve, called the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, “We have seen the Lord.” But he said to them, “Unless I see in his hands the mark of the nails, and place my finger into the mark of the nails, and place my hand into his side, I will not believe.” Eight days later, his disciples were inside again, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.” Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side. Do not disbelieve, but believe.” Thomas answered him, “My Lord and my God!” Jesus said to him, “Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”

Observation questions

1. What was Thomas’s specific condition for belief when the other disciples told him they had seen the Lord?
2. How did Jesus respond to Thomas’s demand for physical evidence eight days later?
3. What was Thomas’s final declaration to Jesus after seeing and touching him?
4. What does Jesus say about those who believe without the benefit of seeing him physically?

Interpretation questions

1. Thomas’s initial refusal to believe is framed as a choice, “I will not believe.” [52:49] What does this tell us about the nature of faith and the role of the will in accepting truth?
2. Rich describes the resurrection as the “receipt” for divine love. [01:06:18] How does the physical, historical reality of the resurrection serve as proof for the forgiveness of sins and God’s victory over death?

3. The earliest Christians were willing to die for what they said they saw, not just what they believed. [48:58] How does the concept of eyewitness testimony, as opposed to abstract belief, change the weight and credibility of their claims?
4. Jesus tells Thomas, “Do not disbelieve, but believe.” What might be the difference between a simple absence of belief and an active, chosen state of disbelief that Jesus is addressing?

Application questions

1. The story of Thomas presents doubt not as a shameful condition but as an invitation to honest inquiry. [53:50] What is one area of your faith where you have honest questions or need more evidence? What would a “reasonable” investigation of that question look like for you this week?
2. The resurrection is described as an event that, if true, redefines death, forgiveness, and our entire purpose. [01:05:22] If you truly lived as someone who believes death has lost its victory, what one fear or anxiety would you be able to let go of today?
3. Christians have gathered on Sundays for two millennia to read Scripture, pray, and sing about the empty tomb. [07:34] How does being part of this long tradition of gathering with others shape your own faith in a way that private belief cannot?
4. Jesus pronounced a blessing on those who believe without seeing. [01:03:59] What does it look like to actively choose to believe in God’s love and Christ’s victory, even on days when you feel more like a skeptic than a believer?
5. The sermon suggests that faith and reason are not enemies but necessary partners. [50:18] How can you better engage both your mind and your heart when you encounter things in the Bible that are difficult to understand or accept?
6. The invitation was given to “come and see” and investigate the claims of Jesus by reading the Gospels. [01:02:35] What is one step you could take to personally examine the evidence for yourself, whether it’s committing to a reading plan or discussing your questions with someone you trust?