

# SERMON NOTES 16 April 2023

## sunnysidechurch

**Bible Reading: John 20:24-39**

### Questions for Discussion

1. In v.26 Jesus greets his disciples “Peace be with you” Despite the feelings of the disciples at the time of the crucifixion and their slow to belief in the resurrection, Jesus does not rebuke them, but gives a positive greeting of “Peace”. How can we have an attitude of “Peace” to those who might have let us down?
2. Is “doubting” Thomas a description which is justified? Isn’t he an example of someone who wanted “first-hand” evidence rather than relying on the testimony of others?
3. Thomas’s declaration of faith “My Lord and my God” is a high point of faith. Read also John 1:1-14. What declaration of faith would you make in the light of the resurrection?
4. “These are written that you may believe” v.31 What is your experience of reading John’s gospel and the other scriptures in your life as a Christian?

### A Prayer

Almighty and eternal God,  
who, for the firm foundation of our faith  
allowed your holy apostle Thomas  
to doubt the resurrection of your Son  
til word and sight convinced him;  
grant to us, who have not seen, that we also may believe  
and so confess Christ as our Lord and our God;  
who is alive and reigns with you  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit  
one God, now and for ever. Amen

### Main points of the sermon

1. I knew someone a long time ago who always saw many issues in a situation when most of us would have had difficulty in seeing 1 or 2 issues. The problem for him was that he could not make up his mind. I see similarities with him and Thomas.
2. Jesus greets his disciples “Peace be with you”. The disciples might have expected a rebuke for their failure to stand by the cross or to be prepared for the resurrection.
3. Thomas needed to examine the evidence for himself. He knew that Peter was not the most reliable of men, and in those days the testimony of women would not have counted. For Thomas there could be no “second hand” evidence.
4. Is it justified to call Thomas “doubting”? When confronted with the risen Christ he gave the great declaration of Christ’s divinity “My Lord and my God”. This is a high point of faith declared by any of the disciples.
5. Jesus gives a message for us “Blessed are those who have not seen yet believe”. John adds “These are written that you may believe...and believing you may have life in his name”
6. What I found with my friend was that when he was face to face with something which was important he made clear decisions, he very much believed in the resurrection and the change that it made to his life.

John Kirkby