

SERMON NOTES Sunday 7 April

sunnysidechurch

Bible passage John 20.19-end

Introduction

- Thomas: one of 12 disciples
- John 11: Thomas says 'Let us also go, that we might die with him'
- John 14: Thomas asks, 'Lord we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?'
- John 20: Thomas meets the risen Lord and responds by saying 'My Lord and my God!'

Questions

- Nothing wrong with questions, they do not mean that we lack faith
- Need to be honest: are they real questions or ways of deflecting or deriding?
- John 20.27 Greek says 'do not become faithless but faithful'
- Need to recognise that we won't have the answer to many questions in this life
- Answers to questions may not actually be what we need: Thomas really needed God's peace

Meeting Jesus is what makes the difference

- Through Bible
- Through testimony of others
- Through Holy Spirit in us and others

Conclusion

- 'I do believe; help me overcome my unbelieve' (Mark 9.24)

Some questions for discussion

1. What questions would you like to ask God?
2. Read John 20.19-end. What strikes you about this story?
3. Rebecca said that Thomas thought he needed answers but what he needed was Jesus' peace. Do you agree?
4. How might questions help us become faithless or faithful?
5. In what ways did meeting with Jesus make the difference to the disciples including Thomas?
6. How did you first meet Jesus? In what ways do you meet with Jesus today?
7. The father said: 'I do believe; help me overcome my unbelieve'. (Mark 9.24) How does this resonate with you?
8. What is God asking you to do as a result of what he has said to you through this passage? It might be something to pray about, something to think more about, something he wants you to talk to someone about or something he wants you to do. Make a note of it so you don't forget!

'Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you.

I do not give to you as the world gives.

Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.'

John 14.27

Why not spend some time asking the Holy Spirit to fill you with the peace of Christ and a sense of Jesus' presence? What does Jesus want to say to you?

Revd Rebecca Fardell

"We do not know... how can we know the way?"
Courageous master of the awkward question,
You spoke the words the others dared not say
And cut through their evasion and abstraction.
Oh doubting Thomas, father of my faith,
You put your finger on the nub of things
We cannot love some disembodied wraith,
But flesh and blood must be our king of kings.
Your teaching is to touch, embrace, anoint,
Feel after Him and find Him in the flesh.
Because He loved your awkward counter-point
The Word has heard and granted you your wish.
Oh place my hands with yours, help me divine
The wounded God whose wounds are healing mine.

Malcolm Guite