

Deliverance from Doubt

John 20: 19-29

Many consider this passage to be the “doubting Thomas text.” Doubt is something we all face at various times in life. It is defined as: “*hesitation; to waver or fluctuate in opinion; to be uncertain in regard to truth or fact.*” Doubt carries an attitude of apprehension and fear.

We’re all guilty of doubt; it is within our nature. It is impossible to have faith and doubt at the same time; one will overcome the other. When we allow doubt to grow and remain, it will take control of our lives. We begin to assume the worst in every situation.

Physical doubt is bad enough, but spiritual doubt can destroy us. As Christians we need to rid our lives of doubt and replace it with faith. It is possible to overcome doubt and live a victorious life. We just have to learn to lean on the Lord even when we can’t see any light at the end of the tunnel. Our text reveals how these disciples responded to a doubtful situation. Here we find some [truths](#) that we can hold on to when seeking: [Deliverance from Doubt](#).

I. The Benefits of Devotion (19-23) – This was certainly a difficult time for the disciples. The One they had followed, believed in, and trusted had died upon the cross. They had witnessed the trial, the cruel scourging, and crucifixion. The Lord had died and their world was torn apart. I’m sure there were more questions than answers. Why did Jesus have to die? Why had He not restored the kingdom? What would happen to them without Jesus?

- Even in their confusion they remained devoted to the Lord. They likely kept hearing the words of His promise to rise again. As they have gathered, there is an excitement in the air. Reports are coming in that Jesus is alive! Could it be that all hope wasn’t lost? Had Jesus risen as He said? They were about to receive far more than they ever imagined. They were about to be rewarded for their faith.
- We have the same opportunity to obtain these benefits if we’ll only keep ourselves in a position to receive them. They aren’t found in the world, but at the house of God and in our quiet time with Him. Let’s look at these benefits of devotion the disciples enjoyed.

A. The Lord’s Presence (19) – [Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.](#) As they were gathered behind closed doors, Jesus came and stood in the midst. This wasn’t a dream, it was the Lord; He was there in their midst. Their hope was revived as Jesus stood among them.

- I don't know about you, but I want the Lord's presence in my life. I like it when He is in the midst! If there's ever been a time that we need His presence, it's today. We won't find His presence among the world, but we can find Him here. If you desire the Lord's presence, seek Him at the house of God. He can dispel the doubt in our lives. Our children need to experience His presence. There's nothing like feeling the Lord's presence.

B. The Lord's Peace (19) – As Jesus entered the room He said, “Peace be unto you.” Can you imagine how they must've felt? If they ever needed the peace of God, it was now. They were fearful and afraid, unsure of what the future would hold.

- Aren't you glad for the peace of the Lord? There have been times when I didn't know what to do, as doubt filled my mind, but Jesus showed up and brought peace to my soul. The problem may have still been there, but Jesus gave real peace. When our lives are in turmoil, and doubt has crept in, we need to look to Jesus to calm the storms of life.

C. The Lord's Persuasion (20-21) – And when he had so said, he shewed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord. [21] Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. If any of them hadn't yet got the message, any doubt that remained was removed as Jesus stepped forth and revealed His hands and side. It was really Jesus; He was alive just as He said! All that they had heard and believed was real. Whatever doubt they had was replaced with confidence and complete assurance. They were now settled in their faith and ready to move forward with the Lord.

- There's nothing any better for a fearful heart than a fresh glimpse of Jesus. I've never seen Him with my physical eye, but He has revealed Himself to me! The world may be dark, hell may rage, but I serve a risen Lord. He lives today! He has already conquered all that Satan could muster.

- There is no reason to live in fear and doubt; we are more than conquerors in Christ. When times of doubt come, consider the cross, the empty tomb, and remember His promise to come again. We have no reason to walk around with our heads down; we belong to the Lord!

D. The Lord's Power (22) – And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: Jesus knew He would soon ascend, but He wasn't about to leave them alone without hope. They would soon have the power of God dwelling in them through the Holy Ghost.

- Are you a child of God this morning? If so you have the Holy Spirit within you as well. We have the power of God dwelling within us constantly. We don't have the Lord in person, but thank God we have Him in power! The more that we love Him, serve Him, and walk with Him, the more power we can enjoy.
- His power doesn't rest on those who are unfaithful, but if we'll remain true to God, we can have the fullness of His power. I think you would agree that there are benefits associated with being devoted to Christ. Look to Him in times of doubt and claim His promises.

I. The Benefits of Devotion (19-23)

II. The Burden of Doubt (24-25) – Just as there are benefits associated with devotion, doubt brings a heavy burden. It robs us of our peace, joy, and confidence in the Lord. Notice the burden of doubt in Thomas' life.

A. Doubt Brought Deception (25) – *The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe.* The others told Thomas about seeing the Lord, but he wouldn't believe without seeing Jesus himself. Thomas likely wondered if all he had heard was true. Was Jesus really the Messiah? Could he really believe all that Christ had said? In his doubt, Thomas allowed Satan to deceive him.

- A seed of doubt questioned the authority of the Lord. Have we not all been there? Have there not been times when we doubted our faith? Has Satan ever told you that what you believe couldn't possibly be true? If Satan can deceive us and cause us to doubt, he has defeated us spiritually. When he brings accusations, remind him of the truth!

B. Doubt Brought Dissention (25) – *Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe.* Thomas made a demand to see the nail prints and thrust his hand in Jesus' side to believe. He was no longer walking by faith, but by sight. It appears that he was almost ready to abandon his faith.

- Satan likes to use that tactic today. People demand physical proof to believe. I can't explain the virgin birth. I can't explain how a man can die and live again. I can't explain how Jesus takes a heart of sin and changes it forever. There's a lot I can't explain, but I believe it all! If we aren't careful, doubt will breed dissention, causing us to question the deity of Christ. Just praise God for what you know and trust Him for what you don't!

C. Doubt Brought Despair (24) – But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. Do you remember the benefits of devotion when dealing with doubt? Well, Thomas wasn't there and he missed out on the blessings the others received.

- Now Thomas has gotten a bad rap down through the years. I'm not sure why he wasn't there, but often we are no better. It takes far less to create doubt in our hearts than it did for Thomas. Many times when trouble comes, we get out of church. I've never understood that. If we ever need God, we need Him in times of trouble.
- Thomas' doubt hindered him from being in the Lord's presence. He missed what Jesus had for Him. You will never regain what you miss when you aren't in church. God may have sent exactly what you needed, but you weren't there to receive it. It is important to be faithful to the house of God! Don't blame others if you aren't faithful unto the Lord. Doubt will rob you and defeat you, but there is hope. Notice:

I. The Benefits of Devotion (19-23)

II. The Burden of Doubt (24-25)

III. The Beauty of Discovery (27-28) – I'm glad we serve a merciful God. Jesus came again when Thomas was there. It was then that Thomas made a discovery that forever changed his life. When we learn to look to Jesus rather than wallow in doubt, we can find great joy.

A. It Restores Our Fellowship (27) – Then saith he to Thomas, reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing.

The Lord came and called for Thomas. He got to see and touch the Lord. Doubt will hinder our fellowship, but when it is removed, we can come nigh to the Lord. The Lord desires us to walk and talk with Him.

B. It Renews our Faith (28) – Upon seeing Jesus, Thomas identified Him as my Lord and my God. The name Lord means Master. Thomas was identifying himself as a servant of the Lord. He was declaring his faith in Jesus as the Christ. He was no longer doubtful, but confident of the Lord he served.

- You can't focus on Jesus in faith and continue in doubt. We all will have those seasons of doubt, but if we can be reminded of Jesus, our faith can be renewed! Have you looked at the Lord lately? He has not changed. He is still all that we need and more.

How is it with you today? Has doubt clouded your view of the Lord? Has life brought a trial that you fear you can't overcome? Jesus said, "Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." Trust in Him today!