

What Thomas Missed John 20:24-31

INTRO: Twice before in John's Gospel, we have met Thomas.

The first time we met him was in chapter 11. The occasion is the sickness of Lazarus (11:1). Mary and Martha desired that Jesus come to their home and heal Lazarus. To get to their home, Jesus must enter into hostile territory where He had recently been sought by the authorities (11:8). In verse 15, Jesus says to the disciples: "Let us go unto him." It is then that Thomas says: "Let us also go, that we may die with him" (vs 16). In this verse, Thomas exhibits energetic faith.

The next time we hear from Thomas is in chapter 14 verse 5 where he comments on the words Jesus has just spoken in verses 14. Here we see him as being skeptical. He ignored the promises just given and responds in a despondent manner.

The last time we hear from Thomas in John's Gospel is here in the 20th chapter.

I. VSS 24-25, ABSENT "T"

- A. Vs 24, Thomas missed a very important meeting of the church, and friends, he missed a lot. One of our dear ladies here at Elliott said she did not want to be absent from church because she was afraid she'd miss a blessing.
1. Thomas, "one of the twelve," missed Sunday night worship. "One of the twelve" designates Thomas as one of the twelve Apostles.
 2. Why did Thomas miss church on that Sunday night? Why do God's people stay away from church? Maybe he said:
 - a. "I'm too busy."
 - b. "I'm too tired tonight."
 - c. "I've got paper work to catch up on."
 - d. "Our church is not politically correct, so I'll stay away."
 - e. "I'll just stay home and read my Bible."
 - f. "If Peter is going to be there, I'm not going, not after what he did."
 - g. "I hear it's going to rain."
 3. What did Thomas miss by staying away that Sunday night?
 - a. He missed the Lord. The Lord met with the church, and Thomas was absent (Mt 18:20).
 - b. He missed the glory of that meeting. Glory was given

- to God for Christ was alive (Eph 3:21).
 - c. When you miss the services, you miss the presence of the Lord Jesus who walks in the midst of His churches (Rev 2:1 Note 1:20).
 - 4. When folks are absent from church, they miss a meeting with the Lord.
 - 5. He made a big mistake— he withdrew from church fellowship.
- B. Vs 25, The other disciples, full to overflowing with the joy of knowing Christ is alive, share with Thomas the good news.
 - 1. “We have seen the Lord.” This they repeated over and over.
 - a. They witnessed to Thomas. They told him that the Lord who had been crucified and buried was alive.
 - b. That’s the witness we are to give. We are to tell others that Jesus is alive.
 - 2. Thomas stubbornly tells them that he must see and feel the nail prints and thrust his hand into the spear pierced side of Jesus to believe. Tennyson wrote in his *In Memoriam*: “There lives more faith in honest doubt, Belief me, than in half the creeds.”
 - a. For Thomas, hearing about him, even from those who had seen Him, was not enough.
 - 1- Thomas wants to see.
 - 2- Thomas wants to feel.
 - 3- Thomas refused to say he believed something he did not believe. He would not say that he understood what he did not understand. He had to be absolutely sure.
 - b. Thomas wants to put his fingers into the print of the nails, and he wants to thrust his hand into the spear pierced side of Jesus, and then he says, he will believe.
 - 3. The first word “print” in this verse is the Greek word *tupos*, and the second word “print” is the Greek *topos*. These words mean “to make an imprint or impression.”
 - a. The word *tupos* is used in I Thes 1:7 for the word ensamples meaning a pattern or impression.
 - b. The Thessalonian Christians had the marks of Calvary. They were branded with the marks of the

cross. Their lives were reminders of the crucified, buried, and risen Lord. What kind of impression does your life make.

II. VSS 26-29, THE CONFESSION OF THOMAS

- A. Vs 26, "After eight days," or the following Sunday evening. The disciples of Jesus were once again gathered together. Possibly in the upper room.
1. At this meeting, Thomas is present, probably because of the witness of the others. It is also possible that Thomas gathered with them because he had no other friends and no other place to go. This time Thomas did not forsake the assembly (Heb 10:25).
 2. Verse 26 is almost a word for word repetition of verse 19.
 - a. The doors were shut, barred, and locked as before.
 - b. All of a sudden, Christ appears as before, and He once again says: "Peace be unto you."
- B. Vs 27, The Lord knew the words Thomas had spoken (vs 25).
1. The Lord's omniscience, without doubt, made a deep impression on Thomas.
 2. Every eye turned upon Thomas and Jesus to see what would happen next.
 3. Think of the size of the wound in the Savior's side: large enough for the hand of Thomas to be put in it. Think of what He suffered for you and for me.
 4. The question is asked did Thomas feel the nail prints and put his hand in the Savior's side? The Lord told him to, and I believe he did although at this point that would not have been necessary for him to believe.
 5. "Be not faithless, but believing."
 - a. "Shake off this habit of doubting, questioning, and discrediting every one. Give up thine unbelieving disposition. Become more willing to believe and trust" (Ryle).
 - b. Many of us need to shake off our faithlessness.
- C. Vs 28, Thomas said to Jesus: "My Lord and my God." This was no mere outburst. It was an expression of faith aimed at Jesus.
1. This is the only place in the Gospels where anyone calls Jesus "God."
 - a. Jesus had revealed Himself as the all-knowing one:

- the Omniscient One.
 - b. Thomas now sees Jesus as his sovereign, his God, his Messiah.
 - c. For a Jew to call, Jesus God was remarkable.
 - 2. Have you confessed Him as your Lord and your God?
 - 3. When Thomas was convinced, he was convinced all the way, and he dedicated the rest of his life to whole-hearted service of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- D. Vs 29, For those who would come to believe after the age of signs and miracles, Jesus says: "Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."
 - 1. "Faith which results from seeing is good; but faith which results from hearing is more excellent."
 - 2. The excellency of faith by hearing is attested to over and over in scriptures:
 - a. Rom 10:14, 17.
 - b. I Pet 1:8.

III. VSS 30-31, THE PURPOSE OF THE GOSPEL

- A. Vs 30, The appearance of Jesus to His disciples after His resurrection was a sign to them He was alive.
 - 1. Jesus had done many other sign miracles in the presence of His disciples.
 - 2. John is now old, and he recalls in his mind these miracles:
 - a. Water turned to wine.
 - b. Healing of the nobleman's son.
 - c. The healing of the impotent man.
 - d. The feeding of the five thousand.
 - e. Resurrection of Lazarus, etc.
 - 3. Think of it— many other things not recorded were done by our Lord Jesus Christ.
- B. Vs 31, The things that John did write about Jesus were written to bring folks to a saving knowledge of Christ.
 - 1. It is through believing that you receive life and are born again (Jn 3:16, 18, 36).
 - 2. You become a child of God by faith, believing that Jesus Christ is the crucified and risen Son of God.

CONCLUSION: Do you believe that Jesus died for you?