

Bible Verses

Q1

John 11:14-16, 38-44 ESV - 14 Then Jesus told them plainly, "Lazarus has died, 15 and for your sake I am glad that I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him." 16 So Thomas, called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, "Let us also go, that we may die with him." ... 38 Then Jesus, deeply moved again, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone lay against it. 39 Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, "Lord, by this time there will be an odor, for he has been dead four days." 40 Jesus said to her, "Did I not tell you that if you believed you would see the glory of God?" 41 So they took away the stone. And Jesus lifted up his eyes and said, "Father, I thank you that you have heard me. 42 I knew that you always hear me, but I said this on account of the people standing around, that they may believe that you sent me." 43 When he had said these things, he cried out with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out." 44 The man who had died came out, his hands and feet bound with linen strips, and his face wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Unbind him, and let him go."

Read 1 Samuel 7:10-12 in your Bible

Q2

John 20:24-27 NLT - 24 One of the twelve disciples, Thomas (nicknamed the Twin), was not with the others when Jesus came. 25 They told him, "We have seen the Lord!" But he replied, "I won't believe it unless I see the nail wounds in his hands, put my fingers into them, and place my hand into the wound in his side." 26 Eight days later the disciples were together again, and this time Thomas was with them. The doors were locked; but suddenly, as before, Jesus was standing among them. "Peace be with you," he said. 27 Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and look at my hands. Put your hand into the wound in my side. Don't be faithless any longer. Believe!" 28 "My Lord and my God!" Thomas exclaimed. 29 Then Jesus told him, "You believe because you have seen me. Blessed are those who believe without seeing me." 30 The disciples saw Jesus do many other miraculous signs in addition to the ones recorded in this book. 31 But these are written so that you may continue to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing in him you will have life by the power of his name.

Q3

John 20:28-31 ESV - 28 Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" 29 Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed." 30 Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; 31 but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

"Thomas - Encounters with the Risen Lord" *Out of the Blue- week #1*

INTRODUCTION

If your Gospel reading stopped at the Resurrection, you're missing out on several interesting stories. After His resurrection on Easter day, until he returned to heaven, Jesus spent 40 days on the earth. During that time he appeared on at least 12 occasions to over 500 people. And even though He had plainly told the disciples that He would be raised to life on the third day, they did not seem to anticipate seeing Jesus after the crucifixion. But they *did* encounter Him, as it turns out, in many unexpected places. Let's look at what transpired during one of those unexpected encounters between Jesus and Thomas.

Ice Breaker (Optional—8 min)

What was your most unexpected encounter with someone where you least expected to see them?

STUDY QUESTIONS (45 MIN)

Circumstances that Create Doubt

Q1. Read John 11:14-16, 38-44; 1 Samuel 7:10-12

Even though he has come to be known as "doubting Thomas", Thomas in fact had demonstrated great faith. In John 11:16, before he witnessed Lazarus raised from the dead, Thomas was willing to follow Jesus unto death. After Jesus crucifixion however, doubt caused Thomas to forget God's power and His faithfulness.

Can you identify circumstances in your own life that have been so difficult they caused you to doubt or forget God's faithfulness?

One way to remember God's faithfulness was demonstrated by Samuel after Israel's battle with the Philistines near Mizpah. He set a up stone (an "Ebenezer") to commemorate God's faithfulness. Perhaps you have a memento, a journal entry or an underlined passage in your bible that helps you to remember and celebrate God's faithfulness to you.

This would be a good time to recall, and share with your group, how you have found God faithful in your life. As you do, let each instance strengthen your faith that with God, you can overcome whatever circumstances cause you to doubt.

