

world that included the forgiveness, the sharing of God's mercy and grace. Three things are implied by this commission: 1) Jesus needs the church, 2) The church needs Jesus and 3) Jesus' sending forth of the disciples parallels God's sending of Jesus to humanity to offer wholeness and salvation. There are a few stories about statues of Jesus that were damaged during WW II; the statues were fairly complete except without the hands. Under one such statue was placed a sign, "He had no hands but yours." As the living body of Christ, Jesus needs us and we most definitely need Jesus as we are sent forth, like Jesus into the world to offer wholeness, healing and mercy. Write your reflections here as you pray for the strength to be Christ presence to the world.

Thursday, August 31

Read John 20:19-31. As mentioned in the message, Thomas did not ask for more than what the other disciples were given in terms of the proof of his resurrection. Jesus stood among those disciples and showed them his hands and side. Thomas was honest in his doubt and wanting to verify that in fact Jesus had risen. What proof do you need for your faith in God through Jesus the Christ? For many the veracity of Christ resurrection was that the Apostles all gave their lives to Jesus' mission and ministry in the world; with a couple of possible exceptions, all were martyred for their faith. All of them certainly suffered persecution and violent resistance. As you think about your faith, write some thoughts about how your faith is based on truth and facts, naming that which you need as proof that supports your beliefs

Friday, September 1

Read John 20:19-31. For today think about how trust and obedience are necessary as an appropriate response to God's call upon our lives as followers of Jesus the Christ. Our trust and obedience is not naive or blind as Jesus is the solid rock foundation for our faith and call to mission and ministry!

Message Notes – August 27, 2023

The Twelve – Honest Thomas*

- I. This series of messages is about The Twelve Apostles who followed Jesus for three years, it is also about how their _____ can inspire our _____.
 - A. It is a critical question; will we be judged by our _____ moments or the _____?
 - B. Thomas will always, it seems, be known as "_____ Thomas."
 - C. We learn more about Thomas in _____ Gospel than anywhere else in the Gospels or Book of Acts.
- II. The first glimpse we get of Thomas in John's Gospel is toward the _____ of Jesus Ministry.
 - A. Jesus had become _____ among the people but the religious leaders intensely _____ him.
 - B. To cool things off a bit, Jesus had led his disciples _____ from that animosity.
 1. Jesus then suddenly announced, "Let us go to _____ again."
 2. Thomas said, "Let us also go, that we may _____ with him."
 3. Doesn't this display of Thomas' _____ more than offset his supposed doubt?
 - C. It is the second time we hear specifically about Thomas that we see his _____ search for the truth of his faith and the truth about his Lord.
 - D. Thomas that he shouldn't be called "Doubting Thomas" but rather "_____ Thomas."
- III. That "Honest Thomas" nickname that I believe is fully _____ in the scripture passage that we read today.
 - A. The first time Jesus appears to the disciples he gave them a _____ that the church should never forget. It means three things.

*John 20:19-31

1. First, Jesus needs the _____.
 2. Second, the church needs _____.
 3. Third, this sending out of the church by Jesus is _____ to God sending Jesus into our world.
- B. This concept of Jesus dependence on his followers begs the question, “Is _____ simply _____ obedience?”
1. Trust is built over _____.
 2. Thomas wasn’t asking for much more than what the _____ had experienced.
- C. Thomas exhibited two great _____.
1. First was his _____ honesty.
 2. The other great virtue Thomas exhibited was his great _____ and _____ to Jesus once he believed.
- D. Thomas will forever stand as a man of _____ who dealt openly and honestly with his doubts and became a great and winsome _____ to his deep and abiding faith.

Daily Devotional Guide

The following is a daily devotional and study guide meant to enhance your understanding of the message and grow as a Christian.

It is offered for your personal reflection or to share with others.

Monday, August 28

The message began with a story about one of the pastors from Pastor Jack’s home church. That pastor chose to endure verbal abuse from a fellow golfer rather than engage the man in a physical altercation even though he was sure he could win that fight. The wisdom of that pastor is that he knew he would forever be the pastor who fought that man on the golf course. That wisdom is focused on the question, “Are we judged by our best moments or worst?” While it may not be fair, we are often judged by our worse moments and events in our lives. The pastor mentioned said that his entire ministry would not be defined by all

the good he had done in the community but by that possible altercation. What do you think? Are we judged by our best or worst moments of our lives? Is it true that we’re judged by our worst moments? Why? Consider these questions and write your reflections here.

Tuesday, August 29

Read John 11:1-16 and John 14:1-7. Both of these scripture add to the common knowledge that many have of the Apostle Thomas. They both demonstrate the courage Thomas possessed while following Jesus. We know that the threat of death to Jesus was very real because in fact, Jesus was crucified. The disciples, following Jesus’ crucifixion, hid from the Religious leaders of the day and the Roman soldiers who implemented the cruel death of Jesus. When Thomas proclaimed that the disciples should return to Judea (Jerusalem) with Jesus to die with him, which was a very real possibility. It demonstrated a great deal of courage to name that possibility.

The second scripture begins to earn Thomas the attribute of honesty as he questioned his own understanding about what Jesus was teaching the disciples about heaven. Pastor Jack even named the discomfort many of us experience in asking a question in public. Courage certainly is a part of Thomas’s character. What about you? Do you possess courage? Are you brave? How do you exhibit courage in your faith journey? Contemplate these questions and write your ideas here. Pray that God will give to you courage like Thomas!

Wednesday, August 30

Read John 20:19-31. Let’s consider the first visit Jesus made to the disciples in that Upper Room when Thomas was not present. Jesus gave the disciples a commission to be sent out into the