

BELIEVE

John 20:26-27 "Peace be with you." Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side. Do not disbelieve, but believe."

The night after Jesus' resurrection, He appeared to His Disciples who were still hiding behind a locked door. Through His physical appearance and personal ministry to them, they believed He was alive. They were filled with joy.

Thomas, one of Jesus' twelve Disciples was a straggler. Eight days had passed and Thomas still had not seen Jesus. Throughout history Thomas has been tagged with the nickname, "Doubting Thomas." He is known for his strong statement, "Unless I see in His hands the mark of the nails, and place my finger into the mark of the nails, and place my hand into His side, I will never believe." (John 20:25) The word of his fellow Disciples was not enough. He needed real, physical, personal proof of Jesus' resurrection.

Jesus obliged Thomas. Eight days after His resurrection, Jesus made a second visit to the Disciples. Thomas was present on that visit. Jesus singled Thomas out and said to him, "Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side. Do not disbelieve, but believe." Jesus turned Thomas' doubt into belief. Thomas exclaimed, "My Lord and my God!"

Life Way Research conducted a poll to determine what per centage of Americans believe in the bodily resurrection of Jesus. Sixty-six per cent said they believe that Jesus did come back to life on Easter morning. In other words, many still doubt even as Thomas did.

There may be times you are filled with doubts about, not necessarily Jesus' bodily resurrection, but perhaps that He loves you, cares about you and especially that ALL of your sins are forgiven because of His life, death and resurrection. Doubt is one of those pesky sins that afflict most all Christians. Thankfully, through the words of Holy Scripture Jesus comes to you, just as He did Thomas, to let you touch the nail prints in His hands and feet. He places your fingers on the scar left from the spear that pierced His side. He places into your mouth His body and blood, in, with and under the bread and wine of Holy Communion, for assurance

your sins are forgiven, your death will be a portal into heaven and you will live with Him in paradise forever.

Prayer: LORD Jesus Christ, as You so lovingly minister to the doubts of Thomas so minister to me and mine also. Send Your Holy Spirit to strengthen me in my faith by which I too shout out that You are my LORD and my God.” Amen.

O sons and daughters of the King,
Whom heav'nly hosts in glory sing,
Today the grave has lost its sting!
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

That night the apostles met in fear;
Among them came their master dear
And said, “My peace be with you here.”
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

When Thomas first the tidings heard
That they had seen the risen LORD,
He doubted the disciples' word.
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

“My pierced side, O Thomas, see,
And look upon My hands, My feet;
Not faithless but believing be.”
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

No longer Thomas then denied;
He saw the feet, the hands, the side;
“You are my LORD and God!” he cried.
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

How blest are they who have not seen
And yet whose faith has constant been, For they eternal life shall win.
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!
(LSB 470, vv. 1,4-8)