

# Connect360: The Only Scars in Heaven

February 27, 2023

- *Lesson 11 in the Connect360 unit "The Beauty of Restoration: The Final Days of Jesus" focuses on John 20:24-29.*

One week passed from the time Jesus first appeared to the disciples minus Thomas. This second time, Thomas was in the house with the disciples. He chose to spend time with the other disciples even at risk to his own safety. Perhaps he felt there was safety in numbers, or he realized isolation was not working.

The disciples still felt a little afraid, so they locked the doors for safety. Jesus miraculously appeared in the house with the disciples, as he did the first time, without unlocking the doors. Jesus said the same thing he said the first time, "Peace be with you."

Jesus heard Thomas' challenges, and he accepted the challenge. He appeared face to face with Thomas. Jesus allowed Thomas to see with his own eyes Jesus was alive. Jesus took it a step further and let Thomas touch the wound on his side and see the scars on his hands and feet. Jesus met every one of Thomas' demands.

Jesus not only appeared to Thomas to remove Thomas' doubts about the resurrection, but this act also included Thomas with the other disciples who became apostles. One of the requirements to be an apostle was to be an eyewitness to the resurrected Jesus. Thanks to Jesus, Thomas could now be included with the other disciples/apostles.

John wrote about Thomas in John 14:5, indicating Thomas was a spiritually

mindful man who sought the truth and was not afraid to ask questions. Jesus rebuked Thomas, not for his doubts or questions, rather for his unbelief. Doubting Thomas is a nickname we give people today who have doubts. No one calls someone Unbelieving Thomas.

Doubting typically is an intellectual response, occurring when we do not have enough evidence or information to decide. Unbelief is a choice not to believe despite the evidence. Thomas chose not to believe the credible witness of his fellow disciples regarding Jesus' resurrection. Thomas felt the burden of proof lay on Jesus himself, so he placed conditions on Jesus.

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