

Quasi modo geniti Sunday
St. John 20:19-31
April 12th, 2026
Sts. Peter and Paul Ev. Lutheran Church, UAC
Simpsonville, SC
Pastor Jerald P. Dulas

We Have Seen the Lord

In Nomine Iesu!

In the Name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

Sermon Text:

“But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when + Jesus came. The other disciples therefore said unto him, ‘We have seen the Lord.’ But he said unto them, ‘Except I shall see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe.’”

Prayer in Pulpit before Sermon:

Almighty and Ever-living God, Who hast given to them that believe exceeding great and precious promises, grant us to perfectly, and without doubt, to believe in Thy Son + Jesus Christ, that our faith in Thy sight may never be reprov'd. Hear us, O Lord, through the same our Savior, + Jesus Christ, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever One God, world without end. Amen.

Grace, mercy, and peace be to you from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior + Jesus Christ. Amen.

My dear friends, Hallelujah! Christ is Risen! He is risen indeed! Hallelujah! On the day of His resurrection, our Lord + Jesus, the Christ, appears to His Apostles in the Upper Room. But St. Thomas is not there. When he joined the other Apostles and they told him that the Lord + Jesus had fulfilled His Word to rise again the third day, he did not believe it. He wanted to see His hands and feet, and the pierce mark in His side. He needed physical proof. The word of the Apostles was not enough. For this reason, St. Thomas, also called Didymus, has been given the pseudonym: Doubting Thomas. This is an unfortunate title, and an unfair one. Here are some of the reasons.

Our Lord + Jesus just a few days prior, during what we now call “Holy Week,” our Lord had commanded His Apostles when speaking about the Last Days to not believe everyone that came claiming to have seen the Christ. He said, “If they say He is in the ‘inner chambers’ do not believe them. For many false christs will come.” All the synoptic Gospels have some version of these words of the Lord + Jesus. So, when the other Apostles tell St. Thomas that they have seen the Lord, He is just doing what the Lord + Jesus admonished him to do.

Let us also not forget, that St. John, the Apostle and Evangelist, who here records the doubting of St. Thomas, also recorded the faith of St. Thomas earlier in his Gospel. At the Feast of the Dedication, which would have been about the time of year when we have Christmas (this is the same Feast of Dedication which has come be known as Hannukah, it was originally a feast celebrating the re-dedication of the temple after the defilement by the Greeks) it was then that the Jews cornered the Lord + Jesus and asked Him to tell them right out if He was the Christ. Our Lord’s answer so angered the Jews that they began to pick up stones to stone Him. He obviously was not stoned at that time (or any time), but the stage had been set that those in Jerusalem wanted the Lord + Jesus dead. Fast forward

a few months later, and our Lord has been told that Lazarus is sick and dying. When Lazarus has died, the Lord tells His Apostles that He is going to see Lazarus, and is going to Jerusalem. The Apostles were afraid and reminded the Lord that the last time He was in Jerusalem that sought to kill Him. It was St. Thomas that spoke up at this point and said to the other Apostles, "Let us also go, that we may die with Him." In this He shows His strong faith in the Lord.

Also, St. John points out in our reading for today that when the Lord + Jesus appeared to them, He showed them His hands and side. That is to say, that even when the Lord was standing before them, they did not believe it was Him. St. Luke records that they did not believe it was the Lord even after He showed them His hands and side. It was not until He ate some fish and bread that they believed. So, St. Thomas is not the only Apostle who should be given the title of "Doubting."

Can St. Thomas, or the other Apostles, be chastised for doubting the Lord's resurrection? We hear about the resurrection of our Lord, and also of our own resurrection from the dead, often. This is something that has been drilled into us on a regular basis through consistent catechesis. The Apostles also had our Lord + Jesus telling them often that He would suffer, be crucified, dead and buried, and the third day raise again from the dead. It is one thing to be told that these things would happen. It is a completely different thing to witness these things happening with our own eyes. We have never seen someone being raised from the dead. There are certainly instances where someone has been dead for several minutes and is brought back to life, but never have we seen someone who has been dead for three days up and walking about and talking to us.

If this happened to us, it would take a few moments for our brains to register what we were seeing with our eyes. This is the case with the Apostles. This is the case with St. Thomas. Like a newborn babe he needed to have the pure spiritual milk given to him. He needed to see and touch the risen Lord + Jesus before He could believe. The same is true of the other Apostles, they did not believe until the Lord showed them His hands and side, and He ate some fish and bread. To see the resurrection of the Lord + Jesus was just that unbelievable of an event.

They had witnessed the Lord + Jesus raising three people from the dead: Jairus' daughter, the son of the widow of Nain, and Lazarus. But for someone to raise Himself from the dead, is not something to which they had been witness. This was an event that shook them to their very core. It is no wonder that they doubted. It is really no wonder that St. Thomas doubted. The Evangelists even record that at the Ascension of our Lord, after He had been appearing alive to them for forty days, there were still some Apostles who doubted. This is how outrageous and unbelievable it is for a person to grasp the resurrection of the dead.

We view death as a finality. We see our dead loved one in the casket. We see the grave dug into the earth. We see the casket lowered into the earth, and covered. All we have left is the plot of ground and the tombstone. All we see is the finality of it all. The same was true of the Apostles, they had no doubt seen countless times the same thing we see when someone dies. With the Lord + Jesus they had His lifeless body wrapped up in linen strips and laid in a tomb, in which no one else had ever been laid, and then a large stone rolled in front of it to close it. Further, because of the unbelief of the chief priests and elders, the stone of the tomb was sealed shut and there was a guard posted before the tomb. No one was getting into that tomb, and no one was getting out.

These are all things that make our Lord's resurrection that much more astounding. These things all served to further establish the truth of the Lord's resurrection. For no one was going to challenge the guards, nor break the seal placed on the stone of the tomb. Even the women who came to the tomb early on the day after the Sabbath, on the first day of the week, wondered who was going to roll away the stone for them. The resurrection of our Lord was just an unbelievable event. It was so unbelievable that those who witnessed it with their own eyes still could not believe it. St. Thomas is given the title

“Doubting Thomas” for his questioning of the truth of the matter, but he is not the only one. He should rather be commended for believing it was the Lord + Jesus just at the sight of Him. For even though the Lord invites Him to put his finger in the hole in His hand, and to put his hand in the hole in His side, St. Thomas believes just from the appearance of the Lord + Jesus.

It is this sign, the resurrection of our Lord + Jesus and His appearance to the Apostles, that St. John records as a testimony to the truth that the Lord + Jesus had risen from the dead. It is the doubting of St. Thomas, and the other Apostles, that confirms the fact of the resurrection of our Lord + Jesus. For if they had believed it right away, unlike any other person would have, who could have believed their testimony. But, because they reacted as any other normal person would have reacted, it is far more easy to believe our Lord’s resurrection from the dead. We would have had a similar reaction as the Apostles if we saw one of our loved ones risen from the dead, and walking around. We would not believe it. Our brains would not allow us to believe it, for that has not been our experience.

But, my dear friends, St. John has recorded that he and St. Thomas and the other Apostles have seen the Lord + Jesus risen from the dead. He has written this down so that we may believe that our Lord + Jesus has risen from the dead. The Apostles testify that the Lord + Jesus has fulfilled His Word and risen again, so that we may hear and believe it. And in believing we may be granted everlasting life. For our Lord’s resurrection means that we also will be raised again from the dead. He is the Victor over death. He has destroyed death. He is the death of Death. Now in Him is only life and salvation. For He defeated death by taking away the cause of death: our sins and transgressions. He has paid the penalty of our death, so that by the forgiveness of our sins, we may have life eternal. Death has lost its sting. It has no power over us. We only have everlasting life, for our Lord + Jesus has earned it for us.

Come then, my dear friends, and put your finger in His hands, and your hands in His side. See the risen Lord + Jesus before us! Be not faithless but believing, for by faith are we justified with the Lord God. By faith are we saved from sin and death. By faith we are granted everlasting life. By faith we are given a new and glorious body at the resurrection of the dead. We have not seen our Lord like St. Thomas and the other Apostles, but have still believed, because we have believed the testimony that leads to eternal life. Someday we will not only believe because we have heard the testimony of our Lord’s resurrection, but we will be able with the Apostles be able to say, “We have seen the Lord.” May our Lord + Jesus grant this unto us all! Hallelujah! Christ is Risen! He is risen indeed! Hallelujah! In the Name of our Lord + Jesus, the Christ. Amen.

Prayer in Pulpit after Sermon:

Almighty God, be pleased to accompany Thy Word with Thy Holy Spirit and grant that Thy Word would increase faith in us; bring into the Way of Truth all such as have erred; turn the hearts of the unrepentant; and for sake of Thy Name grant succor to all heavy hearts and those who are heavy-laden, that they may through the mercy of the Lord + Jesus Christ be relieved and preserved so that they succumb not to the temptation of despair but rather that they gain the victory over the world, the flesh, and the devil; through the same + Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, Who liveth and reigneth with the Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever One God, world without end. Amen.

The Votum:

The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds through Christ + Jesus. Amen.

Soli Deo Gloria!