

Believe: Jesus and the Disciples

The faith of the first Christians was grounded in their unshakable belief in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. But even the disciples experienced fear and doubt as they began to hear stories of people who claimed to have seen the resurrected Jesus. As we study the first interactions between Jesus and his disciples, and particularly the disciple we've come to know as "Doubting Thomas," we find assurance that Jesus is ready and willing to meet us wherever we are in our faith journey. These biblical accounts provide encouragement for times when believing in Jesus isn't easy and they remind us that believing is a lifestyle, not a one-time event. Join us as we study John's account of Jesus' first post-resurrection appearances to his disciples, and together we'll witness how believing cultivates faith and provides us hope to nurture our faith today.

AWARENESS Before listening reflect on what you already know or understand about topics we'll cover in the episode.

- What does it mean to "doubt"?
- Do you think faith is helped or hindered by doubt? What about by fear?



LISTEN TO THE EPISODE: [Believe: Jesus and the Disciples](#)

READ [John 20:19-31](#)

REFLECTION After listening, consider the following questions:

- In segment 1, hosts Scott and Darrell comment on some of the theories theologians have offered to explain why the disciples were afraid when Jesus appeared. Consider your life and how you're living. Would you be afraid if Jesus showed up like that today? Why or why not? How do you think you would react?
- Consider these two statements Darrell makes in segment 1: "Jesus is alive and that he gave them authority in this moment, is really what teaches us that ordinary people can do powerful and extraordinary things with this power." and "God is not restricted by locked doors or locked hearts." What are your thoughts on these statements? Which one gives you encouragement for your faith during this season of life?
- In segment 2, Darrell says, "Jesus gives Thomas exactly what he needs in order for his faith to grow. I believe that the fact that Jesus was willing to show him exactly what he needed, that was enough for Thomas." What do you think you need for your faith to grow right now? Do you have the courage to ask for it? Why or why not?
- There is a cyclical relationship between our belief and our faith. Believing in Jesus cultivated the disciples' faith in Jesus. The gift of faith from the Holy Spirit helped them and it helps us to believe, when believing isn't easy. Why is this relationship crucial to help us keep on believing as John instructs ([John 20:31](#))?

RELATED PASSAGES for further study

[Isaiah 53:4-5](#), [1 John 5:13-20](#), [Hebrews 11:1-12:3](#)

CONCLUSION

Spend some time reflecting on how your faith has affected your circumstances and how your faith has been affected by the circumstances of your life and current events. What keeps you from believing or makes it challenging to keep on believing? Have you experienced any obstacles or seasons in life when believing in Jesus was particularly difficult? Close your time in prayer, giving thanks for the gift of faith and the Holy Spirit, and boldly ask God for what you need to help your faith grow.

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