



# When We Cannot See

John 20:24-29 | Abel Mendez | April 21, 2024

## FOCUS POINTS : WHAT THIS TEXT REVEALS

1. Seeing & Not Seeing | 2. Doubt & Unbelief | 3. The Blessing of Believing

**!!Reference the Timeline**

## SERMON TITLE : WHEN I CANNOT SEE

- When we cannot see his hand - His purpose - His good...
- Like Jonah - We found ourselves in the Belly Grief, Loss, Discouragement
- GOD USES THESE SEASONS TO MOVE US FORWARD...

## WHAT ARE WE TO DO WHEN WE CANNOT SEE?

1. **BEHOLD | HIS WORD | HIS WOUNDS | HIS WORTHINESS**

**"Faith Means Believing in Advance what will only make sense in reverse." Philip Yancey  
(Disappointment with God)**

## CONCLUSION

### The Truman Show

- *Truman (Jim Carey) doubts his whole reality (TV show). In the final scene his storm and grief moves him forward into a new reality - his reality is about to expand from his limited place to something greater.*
- *The Resurrection reality is what God is moving us toward, he is the first fruits - 1 Corinthians 15:20*
- **God is inviting us to be Vulnerable (Honest about doubts - confession)**
- **God is inviting us to Renewed Vision and Hope (Believe His Word)**
- **God is inviting us to Behold His Beauty in Faith, that HE IS SOVEREIGN!!!**



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**When DARKNESS STRIKES...WHEN WE CANNOT SEE...**

24 Now **Thomas** (also known as Didymus - *i.e Twin*), **one of the Twelve** was not with the disciples when Jesus came.

**Thomas "Crisis of Faith - Who was Thomas? He was...**

- **Disciple** - Prayed for, Called, Chosen, Trained, First-Hand Witness...
- Luke 6:12-13 "One of those days **Jesus went out to the mountainside to pray**, and spent the night **praying to God**. When the morning came **he called his disciples** to him **and chose the twelve of them**, whom he also designated as disciples.
- **Dedicated** - Left All to Follow & Was Willing to die!
- John 11:16 Then Thomas (also known as Didymus) said to the rest of the disciples, **"Let us also go that we may die with him."**
- **Determined** - Bold to Ask Questions... He wants to know...
- John 14:5-6 **Thomas said to him, "Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?"** Jesus answered, **"I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."** -
- **Doubting** - "Unless I see... I will not believe."

25 So the other disciples told him, **"We have seen the Lord!"** But he said to them, **Unless I see** the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, **I will not believe."**

- **Thomas : Dashed Hope, Unmet Expectations, He is Struck by Grief.**

**Have You Wrestled with Doubts? Listen to the Words of David!!**

- **Psalm 10:1** Why, Lord, do you stand far off? Why do you hide yourself in times of trouble?
- **Psalm 13:1** How long, Lord? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me?
- **Psalm 22:1** My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

***"It is doubtful whether God can bless a man greatly until He has hurt him deeply." A. W. Tozer (Root of the Righteous)***

*What do we do, when we are STRUCK BY GRIEF, STRUCK BY DOUBT?*

**BEHOLD | HIS WORD | HIS WOUNDS | HIS WORTHINESS!WHAT DO WE DO WHEN WE CANNOT SEE???**

**BEHOLD**

**His Word**



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John 20:25 So the other disciples told him, **"We have seen the Lord!"**

### 1. THOMAS IS CONFRONTED WITH THE APOSTLES WORD.

- The Apostles Words are Trustworthy Words.
- **Acts 1:3** - After his suffering, he presented himself to them and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive.
- The Early Church was DEVOTED Apostles word.
- **Acts 2:42** They **devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching** and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

### 2. THOMAS IS CONFRONTED WITH JESUS' WORD.

John 20:26 A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, **"Peace be with you!"** (Gods Will for Thomas and His People is Peace!!)

**Peace (eirēnē) - tranquility, safety, peace between individuals, salvation**

- A **Promised** Peace, A **Relational** Peace (w/God & Others), An **Eternal Peace** that Surpasses understanding! (Is 9:6, Jn 14:27, Ro 5:1-2, Ph 4:7)

27 **"Stop doubting and believe"** - (The Heart of the Problem in the Garden)

- **Doubting (Apistos) - Be not unfaithful, faithless, not believing without trust, untrusting.**
- **Believe (Pistos) - Have Faith, Believe, Be Faithful, Be a Believer, Be Certain (Jesus is Risen)**

***"Doubt, though concerned with facts, is not primarily about them, but rather about our emotional sensational connection, security and confidence."*** - Dr. Curt Thompson (*Soul of Shame*)

- **DOUBT IS A RELATIONAL PROBLEM - Can I still trust???**
- **Doubt is the Seed to Shame, and Shame brings separation from God and others.**
- Genesis 3:1 - the serpent, crafty said... "Did God really say???"
- Genesis 3:7... "they knew they were naked. And sewed fig leaves."

**Jesus is addressing the sin at its core... "Don't doubt, believe Thomas!"**

**WHAT DO WE DO WHEN DOUBT ARISES? BEHOLD HIS WORD!**

- **Romans 10:17** - Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God! (NKJV)

**When WE CANNOT SEE : Behold**



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### His Wounds

27 Then he said to Thomas, “**Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side.** Stop doubting and believe.”

### **Behold My Wounds... WHY? THERE IS HEALING! (Read Isaiah 53:5)**

**Isaiah 53:5** - But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and **by his wounds we are healed.**

- **Healed (Rapa)** to mend (by stitching), to cure (cause to) heal, to repair, **thoroughly, make whole.**

#### **- JESUS RELATES TO US IN OUR SUFFERING.**

*The best man to ever live getting the worst suffering ever invented!*

#### **- GOD MEETING THOMAS IN DARK MOMENT**

- **Tapestry Photos - Life is is A Tapestry (2 Sides to Reality).**
- **The Weaving (Corrie Ten Boom)**

*My life is but a weaving, Between my God and me.  
I cannot choose the colors He weaveth steadily.*

*Oft' times He weaveth sorrow; And I in foolish pride,  
Forget He sees the upper, And I the underside.*

*Not 'til the loom is silent, And the shuttles cease to fly,  
Will God unroll the canvas, And reveal the reason why.*

*The dark threads are as needful, In the weaver's skillful hand,  
As the threads of gold and silver, In the pattern He has planned.*

*He knows, He loves, He cares; Nothing this truth can dim.  
He gives the very best to those, Who leave the choice to Him.*

**Behold His Wounds : “Faith Means Believing in Advance what will only make sense in reverse.” Philip Yancey (Disappointment with God)**

- **“Only the suffering God can help” - Dietrich Bonhoeffer**

**When WE CANNOT SEE : Behold His Worthiness**



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**28** Thomas said to him, “**My Lord** and **my God!**”

- **Lord (kyrios)** - to whom one belongs, has power; master, lord, owner, sovereign prince, possessor.
- **God (theos)** - God, of Godhead, Deity, Divine Nature, Person, Power

*“Thomas like a good historian, wants to see and touch. Jesus presents himself to his sight and invites him to touch, but Thomas doesn’t. He transcends the type of knowing he had intended to use and passes into a higher and richer one... **Thomas takes a deep breath and brings history and faith together in a rush.**” - N.T. Wright (Surprised by Hope)*

### THOMAS DECLARES HIS WORTHINESS - WHAT IS WORSHIP?

- **John 4:24** God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth.”

Paul used 3 words to describe worship.

- **Proskuneo** - “pay homage’ “to fall down” or “bow down before.” (1 Corinthians 14:25)
- **Sebázomai** - “to render honor” (Romans 1:25)
- **Sébomai** - “to revere or adore” (Acts 16:4)

### MORE THAN A SONG

- Romans 12:1 - Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.

**29** Then Jesus told him, “**Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.**”

### DID YOU KNOW ISRAEL - SAW, EXPERIENCED - WITNESSED AND STILL REBELLED???

- Signs and Wonders | A Perfect Kingdom | Jesus - And Still... “Crucify Him!”

### SEEING IS NOT BELIEVING - GOD DESIRES FAITH.

- “...without faith it is impossible to please God...” Hebrews 11:6

**“It requires faith to believe we are never abandoned, no matter how distant God seems” - Philip Yancey (Disappointment with God)**