

## Learning Together Easter 2 - Covid19 - Doubting Thomas

Last week we heard the story of how Jesus was killed on the cross, then he was buried in a tomb with a big stone rolled in front of it. Three days later, when his friends came to visit where he was buried (which can be a helpful thing to do when someone you love has died) they found the stone was rolled away and the tomb was empty! Jesus was alive again!

In this week's "episode" (so to speak) we hear how Jesus came and visited with his disciples, but one of them, named Thomas, wasn't there. Later when the other's told him about Jesus visiting, he didn't believe them. And I can't say that I blame him. This is a hard story to believe. We know that generally, when people die, they stay dead. They don't ever come back, at least not as a walking, talking, regular breathing person. That's one of the reasons we work so hard to keep everybody safe and alive!

Thomas wants proof before he believes this amazing thing has happened. He says he won't believe until he sees Jesus himself, and touches the scars from his dying on the cross. Well, a week later, he got his chance. Once again Jesus came to his disciples and this time Thomas was there. Do you think Jesus was mad or disappointed that Thomas hadn't believed? Not at all! It is a reasonable thing to want to see and touch something for yourself. Jesus didn't need Thomas to believe in order for him to be alive!

What Thomas missed out on was the other evidence besides seeing and feeling Jesus. He missed the evidence of the joy and hope that now filled the lives of his friends! They weren't sad anymore. And Thomas chose to spend a whole extra week being sad instead of rejoicing with them. But you know, some of us just have a lot of questions and doubts, and that is okay. God is okay with that. We are allowed to think, and wonder, and make our own decisions.

I have a game for you to play this week. It's called the doubting Thomas game. To play it, you will need a sign that says "I believe it" and one that says "I doubt it" and a list of true or false questions. You students can even use questions from your homeschool work for this. One person reads out the questions and everyone else tries to decide whether it is true or false. If they think it is true, they say "I believe it" and if they think it is false, they say "I doubt it."

Now, there are a few ways to play this. One way is for everyone to have their own signs and hold up their answer – this would be a good way to play if you were on Zoom or Google. The way I recommend you play it for homeschooling is to tape one sign up on the wall, and the other on the wall on the opposite side of the room and have everybody run to the sign that has their answer on it. Or you can just call out your answer, which is what we're going to do right now. Ready? We'll do three questions.

1. There are 27 books in the New Testament of the Bible – True
2. The United Church of Canada didn't allow women to become ministers until 1984. - False, the first female minister in the United Church of Canada was the Rev. Lydia Gruchy, ordained in 1936.
3. My favourite hymn is "(Whatever the next hymn is)" – False. I love so many hymns, there is no way I can pick a favourite but I do really like that one!

So, say this echo prayer with me and then we will sing that hymn.

Dear God...thank you for loving us...even when we have questions...and doubts....Help us to seek truth...not only with our eyes...but with our hearts...and minds....And help us...to live with joy...Amen

**I**

**BELIEVE**

**IT**

**I**

**DOUBT**

**IT**