



The Incredulity of Saint Thomas, 1603 by Caravaggio

Greetings!

Please read [John 20: 19-31](#)

Well, Thomas is back again. You may remember him as the doubter. However, like any label it doesn't even begin to demonstrate the breadth and depth of his life as a Disciple. After spending Lent in the Gospel of Luke with its light touches of the last week of Jesus' life, we contrast this with the more "detailed versions" of Thomas in the Farewell Discourse (John Chapters 14-17) found in this week's Lectionary reading. I use parenthesis with "detailed versions" because [John has different details](#) than either Mark, Luke or Matthew completing the four authorized gospels.

We have tended to combine all the stories together and turn them into one narrative, rather than letting the individual details of each Gospel writer stand alone. It is a great temptation to homogenize, drop, or add details to the narratives to suit our needs. Watch out!

In this Easter season we depart Luke's Gospel and jump into the Gospel of John for all the of the post-resurrection stories. As mentioned earlier, Thomas asks all the good questions. And doesn't he ask them here?

- How good are you at believing without seeing?
- Don't you want authentic over a close facsimile?
- Why stay at all and suffer more if it is just a hoax or a nice story?

Yes, Thomas has taken it on the chin, but don't stop there. Jesus did show up. This is an important turning point in the story. Jesus shows up. Thomas' questions are answered and he can move on with his grief and move on with his life. God is at work in the midst of all that happens. In fact, Thomas goes into deeper discipleship, travels to India and engages in a cross-racial and cross-cultural appointment [founding the Christian Church](#) there in a preaching mission.

In the midst of this Easter Season, is there a mission that God is calling you to engage in?

While the story of Thomas is compelling just within the bounds of the sacred text, he comes to life in Caravaggio's famous painting *The Incredulity of Thomas*. Painted in the early 1600s, this work embodies the style perfected in this period known as *Chiaroscuro* which adds movement through contrasts of light. This style helps tell a story by the artist highlighting a specific point. Because of the movement of the painting and the questions it raises, let's close with a directed conversation of the painting:

- What image are you immediately drawn to when you look at this painting?
- Is Jesus pushing away Thomas' hand or drawing it in?
- Who do you think are the onlooking disciples?
- What claim is the painter making about the Faith?
- Do you find yourself comforted or confronted by this painting?
- Is there someone you know that needs to know that it is okay to ask questions?

Prayer

Blessed are you,
O God of our Lord Jesus Christ,
in whom we receive the legacy of a living hope,
born again not only from his death
but also from his resurrection.
May we who have received forgiveness of sins
through the Holy Spirit live to set others free,
until, at length, we enter the inheritance
that is imperishable and unfading,
where Christ lives and reigns with you and the same Spirit. Amen. [1]

Enjoy this lovely French Medieval tune:

[O Sons and Daughters](#) (vs. 1, 6-9 are traditionally used on the second Sunday of Easter, UMH 317)

[O Sons and Daughters](#), pipe organ

Peace,



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