

# ***DEALING WITH DOUBT***

## Introduction

Sooner or later, every Christian will have spiritual struggles and doubts. Someone you love dies unexpectedly and you wonder if God is asleep on the job. You are disappointed in a relationship- and you wonder if God cares.

## JESUS APPEARS TO THOMAS

Now Thomas, one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. 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 it."

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!" "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." Thomas said to him, "My Lord and my God!" Then Jesus told him, "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed." John 20

3. "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 it." What was Thomas saying?  "You guys are crazy."  "I need proof."  "I want to believe, but no."  "Don't break my heart again."

4. Who does Thomas remind you of in this story?  a science teacher  
 an agnostic  an honest person who wanted to believe  a friend of mine  
 myself  other:

5. What is the closest that you have come to going through what Thomas went through?  
 when my parents or I went through a divorce  when someone close to me died  
 when I dropped out of Christian fellowship  when I tried really hard but failed  
 when I was disappointed and took it out on God  other:

6. How do you think Jesus feels when we have doubts about our faith?  angry-"I can't believe you have doubts!"  
 disappointed-"How could you question me?"  ready-"Bring it on, I can handle your questions!"  
 glad-"I'm happy you are curious about me."  other:

7. What do you rely upon for spiritual "proof"?  gut feelings  
 what the Bible says  what my church teaches  logic and common sense  
 emotional peace  Christian family and friends  simple faith  other:

8. When you have struggles and doubts in your faith, what have you found most helpful?  
 going to the Bible  talking it over with my pastor  
 sharing my struggles with my family and friends  
 letting my family and friends share their struggles  going to church /Relig  
 going ahead "on faith"  spending time alone with God  
 being encouraged by the faith of others  other:

9. If you could ask Jesus one "hard question" about your spiritual life, what would it be?  
 How do I deal with doubt?  How do I deal with guilt?  
 What's wrong when I don't always fee/like a Christian?  Where is God when I'm hurting?  
 Why can't I seem to get closer to you?  other:

10. How would you describe your spiritual life right now?  full of doubt  full of faith  
 half and half  increasing in doubt  increasing in faith

11. How can the group support you in prayer this week?