

the SILENT BURDEN

Pastor Othniel James

Main Scripture: John 20:19-28

Supporting Scriptures: Mark 3:14; John 11; Matthew 16:13-20; John 15:15-16; John 3; John 6:28; John 7:10-17

Notes:

The Scripture does not tell us a great deal about who Thomas was. We find in the account of scriptures about 3-4 occasions where Thomas was mentioned in scripture/gospels. The bible tells us clearly of Thomas being one of Jesus' disciples. Not only a follower but Mark tells us in mark 3:14. The scripture didn't tell us when Jesus called Thomas. We hear about, Peter and Matthew and Nathaniel and John and others but there is no record of when Thomas is included as being one of the disciples but he was chosen by the Lord. He was devoted to Christ.

The scripture tells us in John 10:39 and was engaging the crowds and his message was one of authority that challenged the religious authorities and they sought to kill him (Jesus). In John 11 Jesus received the news that a loved one was sick and they requested to heal Lazarus and Jesus said let's go. We find in this group Thomas, and my attempt is to look into the personality of Thomas: who he was and his relationship with Christ.

In our passage of scripture, Thomas did not see Jesus on the first occasion but he made a request that unless he sees him and is able to push his fingers into his hands he declared I won't believe in this resurrection.

In John 11 we see Thomas who was a devoted follower of Jesus. We are not certain of his conviction as it relates to his understanding of who Jesus declared himself to be but in going back to Judea Jesus encourages them not to fear or be anxious. Thomas is hearing what Jesus said gives us a picture of the personality and where Thomas was concerning his confidence in Christ. v 16 - What Thomas saw was death. Here we have an idea of the impression of the word of God on Thomas' life.

Many of us are devoted to our own understanding or theory of who Jesus is. We don't mind struggling with the church or going through difficulties or even dying with the church. It's important to note that Peter said that I am prepared to die with you and Jesus rebuked him and said your confession is not real because you will deny me 3 times. Jesus who knew all things recognized the heart of Thomas and that when Thomas left to go back to Judea ready to die he never rebuked Thomas' claim

In Matthew 16 we understand that Thomas being silent with the other 10 (peter was the only one that spoke up) that Jesus was the Christ.

But having heard these words what is the impression on the heart of Thomas. It is easy to hear the word of God and have not settled our doubts about Jesus. If there is anything that we ought to settle in our minds, it has to do concerning Jesus and who he is.

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John 20

What was the conviction of Thomas? - Perhaps it was that Jesus was here to relieve them from the Roman suppression. Some had a false picture of Jesus. You see Thomas may have been looking for an earthly Messiah who would make things better on earth. For many of us as well we are looking for an answer to an easier life. Not necessarily to accept the revelation of Jesus and will ourselves to it. We have a false picture of who Jesus is.

When Jesus appeared to them after his death and showed them his hands and side and the disciples were glad but Thomas was not there. The group of disciples mustered up the courage to meet together but Thomas was absent. The bible tells us that the disciples came to Thomas and said we have seen the Lord. This was the witness of 10 men to 1 man. Ten men were speaking to Thomas that we have seen the Lord and he replied in anguish and guilt. We find a very confused man, a man who has lost his devotion.

When Jesus was going back to Judea in an environment of hostility that Thomas said let's go with him so we can die with him. But post the cross we see a man who is broken in anguish. His belief in Jesus did not match up with the Cross.

We have individuals who are absent, the church is gathered together and we have received an astounding revelation, and being absent we miss out. We find broken miserable individuals that have hearts filled with anguish.

Concerning the man Christ Jesus, everyman's doubt must be settled and your conception of Jesus must align with Scripture.

Thomas had no excuse he was guilty of being absent and having reached that low level in his life.

John 15:15-16

Jesus never leaves us with a measure of doubt. I wonder about the patience of the Lord Thomas and concerning us. I wonder if in that moment when he was in the presence of the disciples if he remembered what Jesus said to him in John 15:15-16. Thomas, you did not choose me but I chose you. Let us not be too critical of Thomas because I see that it is Jesus who chose him and knew who Thomas was when he chose him to be part of the disciples and ordained him as an apostle. Thomas may have remembered that Jesus said whatsoever you ask of the Father in my name he will give it to you. it's a blank cheque.

Many are critical of Thomas and call him Thomas the doubter or unbeliever. But we should remember that it's Thomas God's choice, apostle, and friend.

what we need is the courage of Thomas. Many of us have questions about Jesus but we don't ask them and they remain in our mind and so our devotion can not get to the point of what should be.

Thomas is an honest man a man who did not pretend.

Every man needs a moment where every doubt is settled. Faith is having the ability to ask the difficult questions and then having asked them to come to eh belief of what is correct.

It's not an experience in a seminary but this encounter can only be experienced in moments of despair and hopelessness.

John 3 - Nicodemus came to Jesus with a conviction that Jesus is a teacher sent from God... he left having not received the revelation but it was given to a broken woman that Jesus showed her He was the messiah.

John 6:28 - Jesus' call is for men to believe in Him, not about him. Not to believe in the doctrine of the theory of his person. Men are never saved by believing in a theory but believe in HIM. Jesus is calling for men to believe in him not to believe about him.

IN - signify motion Into

Believe is no higher in the intellectual realm, What Thomas was asking for was a truth that will cause him to will his Will to it.

No man can choose a conviction. but we can choose what we do with a conviction. Conviction is needed for faith. But faith is more than conviction. It is the act. Acting on one's conviction. Thomas is asking for something that will allow him to believe.

belief is the activity that worked out of conviction.

Unbelief is man's refusal to act upon the conviction that pricks his soul.

Christ's challenge to all men is to stop the discussion and murmuring of theories to who I am because you can only know by doing what I tell you. will your will to His teaching and you will know.

Thomas saw him and said unto him "my Lord and my God" That statement is the climax of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

I want every one of us to learn to ask the hard questions. The areas in which we are struggling: Can I trust him? how is he, God?

Will your life to the truth of Jesus. if you ask he will give it to you. it is a broken man that faced the truth and made a declaration: my Lord and my God.

WHAT IS THE UNSETTLED ACCOUNT IN YOUR MIND?

What is it that has not allowed you to fully commit to him?

what about Jesus that we don't trust?

Writ out the challenge that caused me to not fully surrender.

I believe If you ask him he will give it to you. The Lord wants to give you an encounter that will remove you from trusting this world and fully be surrendered to Him.