

Small Group Notes 3: April 2020

“Successful Failure”

John 20: 24-31

Opening Worship:

Read: Psalm 105: 1-5

“Remember the wonders he has done”

Can you re call some of the ‘wonders’ God has done in your life and the lives of those around you?

How might re calling what God has done for us in the past, help us face the present?

In our opening prayers, let us ‘Give thanks to the Lord’

Welcome:

The disciples of Jesus each had differing experiences of that first Easter.

We know some of the details for some of the disciples. There was the experience of Judas. There was also the experience of Mark. And who can forget some of the experiences of Peter.

And then there is Thomas.

What are we to make of how Thomas reacted to the post-Easter events when Jesus appeared to the disciples – while he was out of the room?

Being called a ‘doubting Thomas’ is not a badger of honour. Yet perhaps we shouldn’t be too quick to judge or overlook Thomas. It is possible that in his doubts we find a genuine desire to believe that Jesus really was alive. If only he could have some convincing proof for himself.

Reading 1: John 20: 19-31

- What happened? And what was the reaction of the disciples?

- Where was Thomas? Have you ever 'missed' an encounter with Jesus that others close to you have experienced?
- What does Thomas demand? Why do you think Thomas makes these demands?
- How much evidence does our faith actually require?
- Describe the meeting between Jesus and Thomas.
- Imagine that you had been Thomas. How might you have reacted?

Reading 2: John 11: 1-37

This is a longer reading. You might want to have 3 readers take a section each. After each section has been read pause and imagine how different characters might have reacted. You could pretend to interview each character for a local radio report. Choose someone to play the reporter and someone to create some character responses.

John 11: 1-16

Pause.

Reporter: So, Thomas. Tell us what's happened? How do you feel about events? What is Jesus going to do next?

Thomas: (Create some responses!)

John 11: 17-37

Pause.

Reporter: Mary! Mary! Can we have a word please? What's going on? Why didn't Jesus sort this out sooner? How do you feel?

Mary: (Create some responses!)

John 11: 38-44

Pause.

Reporter: Lazarus. Lazarus?! It can't be you!

Lazarus: (Create some responses!)

Closing Thought:

John 20: 31: But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name

- Why does John include the story of Thomas in his account of Jesus' resurrection? Would it not have been better to have omitted this section? What might this tell us about learning to deal with our doubts?

Prayer Pointers:

- We pray for our church family.
- We pray for those who work in the NHS and pharmacies.
- In our prayers, we remember our children and young people. We ask that God will strengthen families and grant them peace.
- We remember those who are self-isolating at home. May God help them to stay well and content.
- We pray for national leaders and those with expertise in medicine and science. May God lead our nations to a solution to this covid-19 crisis.