



Sermon Study Guide for April 27, 2025

Our Savior Lutheran Church and School

Theme: Those Who Have Not Seen (Friendship Sunday)

Thomas wasn't with the disciples when Jesus appeared to them the first time. He was the second time, and his life was changed forever. We have not seen Jesus, but in the body of Christ, we see Jesus at work all the time!

Getting Started: (sharing with each other)

1. Did you have a chance to invite someone to church for friendship Sunday? If not, can you think of someone to invite over the next few weeks?
2. Inviting people to church can be challenging. Why do you think that is? Share some experiences with inviting people to church!
3. What does faith look like to you? What does it mean to have faith? What are some simple ways that you have faith? What are the BIG ways?

In the Word: Read John 20:19-31

4. Jesus' disciples were in fear that Sunday night. If the Jewish leaders or anyone had an inkling about who stole Jesus' body, they would definitely be looking for the disciples. Why do you think that is? Was there fear warranted?
5. The first thing that Jesus says to the disciples when he appears, "Peace be with you!" What a calming phrase and presence that must have been for the disciples. What do you think their initial reaction was before Jesus said those words? Why?
6. Thomas wanted nothing to do with the testimony of the apostles. He wanted nothing to do with the thought that Jesus had appeared to His disciples. What does Thomas say he needs to do in order to believe them? Doesn't that seem a bit crass, or crude to need to have for belief that Jesus appeared to them?

7. Jesus knows. He knows what Thomas said! The next week as the disciples were again hiding in fear, Jesus appears again! He again first says "Peace be with you!" But then he singles out Thomas. Jesus doesn't condemn Thomas, but invited him to do the things he said he would need to believe. Thomas gives an amazing testimony of who Jesus is. How does Thomas's testimony and exclamation of belief give you hope today?
8. The last two verses of this chapter are always beautiful. What confidence do these verses give you about what we read in the Scriptures, and how God proclaims and gives us eternal life?

Putting it all Together (what do we believe or do as disciples?)

9. Jesus' disciples saw Jesus, and they believed in Him! We haven't seen Jesus, yet we believe, and Jesus says we are even blessed! How does that hope and confidence help you to share the love of Christ?
10. Faith isn't easy. I once read a book by Norman Geisler and Frank Turek, entitled, *I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist*. That book has always stuck with me. It gives a lot of different examples of evidence for the Christian faith, most importantly the true story of Jesus. But we can't logic people into believing. What ways have you found you can best share the love and light of Christ?
11. "You are not God's gift to the church." I once had a Seminary professor say that to a class. He was making the point that we are not the one's who are going to soften hearts, change lives, and make people believe. That's the work of the Holy Spirit. But at the same time, he said, "You are God's gift to the church." You are more capable than you may realize in sharing the Good News of Jesus. How can you find small ways to share Christ this week?

Prayer: Thank God that the Holy Spirit has worked saving faith in your heart. Thank God that you don't have to do the heavy-lifting in changing hearts and minds. Ask God to give you the words to speak and the life to live. Ask God to send His Holy Spirit to be at work in your life. Ask God that he would open doors and opportunities to share your faith!

Next Week: Jesus Shows Up

After Jesus had died and rose again some of His disciples went back to fishing. When Jesus appeared to them and showed up His words changed their lives.