

05.11.22 – A Weekly Word for Covenant Church

Title: “Just Ask the Question”

Scripture Reading: [John 20: 24 – 29](#); [Luke 2: 46 – 50](#)

Reflection: Rev. Evan Heerema

With the end of many schools’ educational season, a new season begins, the season of academic assessment. Data that has been accumulated throughout the year is looked at and carefully evaluated. Conclusions are drawn about what went well (wows) and where adjustments must be made to accomplish institutional goals (pows). Seeing the data leads to believing that students are moving forward to accomplish what the school exists to do. By doing this schools have answers to ‘doubts’ that might exist regarding their effectiveness in teaching and training students.

During the time that Jesus went to school in Galilee learning took place by memorization of the biblical text and by providing time to ask questions. Rather than a teacher or rabbi just giving information, questions were asked by both teachers and students. In that way, an inquisitive mind was nurtured. Doubts were not rejected as foolishness but were accepted as teaching opportunities. Note what Jesus was doing with the teachers in the Temple courts. He was “listening to them and asking them questions. And everyone who was there was amazed at his understanding and his answers” (Luke 2:46, 47). Questions and answers were not only shared but by them, learning and meeting doubts about matters of faith were encouraged.

Though Thomas was not participating in an institutional assessment meeting, after analyzing the available data he did verbalize his doubts to his fellow disciples about the truth of Jesus’ resurrection. Though not recorded in John’s gospel, it is possible that some questions were asked as well by Thomas. “So, you saw Jesus, did you? What did he look like, what was he wearing? Were his wounds visible? Did you touch him? How did he get into the locked room? And perhaps the other disciples asked Thomas questions in return to help him accept their testimony. As Pastor Doug said Sunday morning, “Verbalizing doubts is not to get sympathy, it’s trying to do something about one’s doubts. The reason for asking questions is not to show off one’s deep philosophical nature, it is to get answers.” Asking questions, growing out of our doubts, is not a bad thing; asking questions reveals an area that we have not yet gained confidence, or peace, about. What changes do I need to make to continue to grow in my faith and to make me better prepared to be a missionary for King Jesus?

For Thomas, seeing led to him believing. In those first moments in the presence of Jesus, with God’s peace saturating him, Thomas went from a doubter to a believer. And from what we know, he never looked back.

And John goes on to make sure all his readers know that we follow Thomas’ lead in believing, not with the physical sight Thomas was privileged to have. Because believing Thomas saw and told others, we too can know. We too can fall before Jesus as Lord and God and worship him as the risen Lord of all.

(For a little challenge, the next time someone asks you a question for information, form a question to give back to them that will help them discover the answer. It is not easy, but it is a very worthwhile learning tool.)

Prayer:

Father, thank you for raising Jesus from the dead – for comforting Mary in her distress, for offering peace to the panicked disciples, and for meeting Thomas in his wonderings and doubts. Father, we believe; please help our unbelief. We long to see Jesus. We long to spend more time meeting with Jesus so that we might become more and more like him. Father, now send us on mission into your world – to comfort those in distress, to bring peace to those who are anxious, and to search with those who have doubts. In the name of the Risen Christ, Amen.

Action Item for the Day/Week:

For a little challenge this week, each time someone asks you a question for information, form a question to give back to them that will help them discover the answer. It is not easy, but it is a very worthwhile learning tool.

Songs for today:

[Crown Him \(Majesty\)](#)

[Crown Him with Many Crowns](#)