

THOMAS: TWIN SKEPTIC, OR THE LORD GOD'S WITNESS?

Problem: Thomas, clearly from Missouri, does not accept the testimony of his fellow apostles...

Jesus the Christ has just learned that His good friend, Lazarus, is very sick, and then that he is dead. Thomas, oddly, declares to the rest of his fellow disciples—"Let us also go, that we may die with him."

- Q Who had put off going to see Lazarus? Why?
- Q Why did His followers think He was speaking of His own death?
- Q Why was the Christ pleased that He was not there prior to Lazarus' death?
- Q Then, why did Thomas say "Let us go...?"

JOHN 11:11-16

After he had said this, he went on to tell them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep; but I am going there to wake him up."

¹²His disciples replied, "Lord, if he sleeps, he will get better." ¹³Jesus had been speaking of his death, but his disciples thought he meant natural sleep.

¹⁴So then he told them plainly, "Lazarus is dead, ¹⁵and for your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him."

¹⁶Then Thomas (called Didymus) said to the rest of the disciples, "Let us also go, that we may die with him."

And again, the disciple from Missouri wants to be *shown* the way to the Lord God.

- Q What is the Christ preparing for His followers? What was His occupation on earth before becoming a preaching rabbi prophet?
- Q Jesus asserts we "know the way to where He is going." Who asks Him to provide more information on "knowing the way?"

WHAT WAS THE EARLY CHURCH INITIALLY CALLED FOR SEVERAL DECADES?

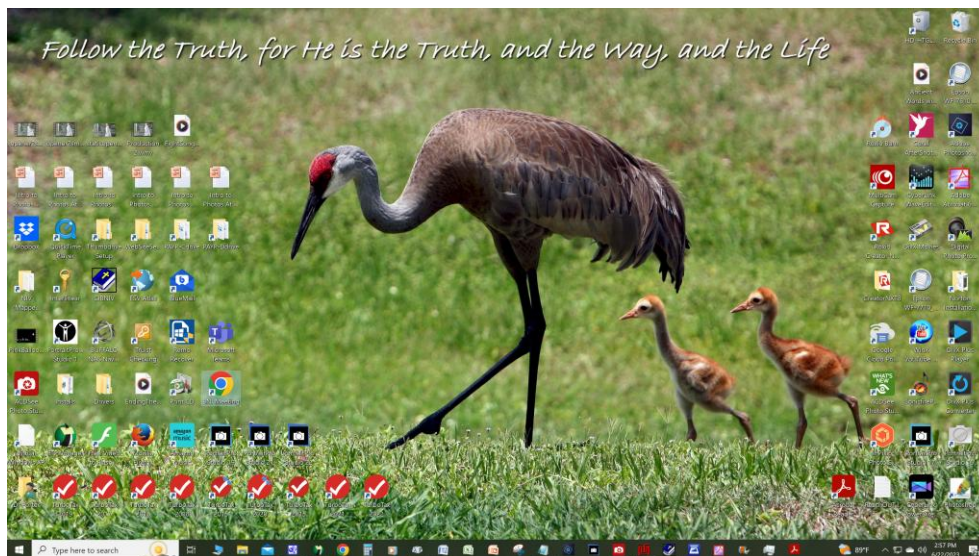
- Q And what was Yeshua's answer to Thomas?

JOHN 14:1-7

"Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. ²In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. ³And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. ⁴You know the way to the place where I am going."

⁵Thomas said to him, "Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?"

⁶Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. ⁷If you really knew me, you would know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him."



Solution: Thomas, clearly from Missouri, touches the Christ. Have you touched Him?...

Jesus the Christ had been killed because He was not only politically incorrect, but also because He told the truth; to wit, He was the son of God, Messiah. After His death after three days, He appeared face to face to a variety of His students. Apparently, all of the twelve except Judas Iscariot and Thomas had seen the Christ walking, talking and sharing evidence of the good news—Resurrection is real.

But, Thomas, from Missouri, refused to believe these witnesses. Everyone who's watched Law & Order knows that witness testimony is notoriously unreliable.

- Q What standard of evidence did Thomas require to conclude that Yeshua was indeed resurrected?
- Q What did Thomas conclude when presented with the evidence he requested?
- Q Why are we, who have not poked Jesus' side, more blessed than Thomas?
- Q What was the purpose of recording this incident and similar ones?
- Q What evidence do you require to accept Jesus of Nazareth as the Christ, indeed the Son of God? Pistos?

JOHN 20:24-31

Now Thomas (called Didymus), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. ²⁵ 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."

²⁶ 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!" ²⁷ 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."

²⁸ Thomas said to him, "My Lord and my God!"

²⁹ Then Jesus told him, "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

³⁰ Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. 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.

