

April 12, 2026      Stories That Matter: “Unless I See”      1 Peter 1:3-9; John 20:19–31

*“Jesus said to him, “Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.” (John 20:29)*

*“Although you have not seen him, you love him...you believe in him, and rejoice with an indescribable and glorious joy.” (1 Peter 3:8)*

Many of us have whispered Thomas’s words at some point: **“Unless I see... I will not believe.”** We want evidence. We want clarity. We want God to show up in a way we can touch, measure, or prove. But the resurrection doesn’t begin with certainty. It begins with **fear, locked doors, confusion, and questions.** And into that room, Jesus walks.

**Jesus enters locked rooms (John 20:19–23):** The disciples are hiding—doors locked, hearts locked, hope locked. But locked doors cannot keep out a resurrected Savior. Jesus doesn’t knock. He doesn’t wait for them to build their courage. He comes **to them**, right where they are. And His first words are not rebuke but **“Peace be with you.”** This is the gospel: Jesus meets us in our fear, not after we conquer it.

**Thomas voices what we’re afraid to admit (John 20:24–25).** Thomas often receives a bad reputation, but he is simply being honest. While he is frequently labeled as “Doubting Thomas,” he is actually the most relatable disciple in the room. He expresses what many of us feel: “Unless I see... I won’t believe.” His sentiment is not one of stubbornness; rather, he is in pain. He missed the moment that everyone else experienced and wonders if Jesus shows up for everyone except him. Thomas desires what the others have already received: a personal encounter, a genuine experience, and a faith that is more than just secondhand. **His words: “Unless I see...” are not an act of rebellion; they reflect longing.** Thomas does not doubt the resurrection itself; he is doubting whether it includes him. Many believers today share similar feelings.

In John 20:26–29, we read about Jesus meeting Thomas during a time of doubt. Eight days had passed—eight long days of silence—when Jesus appeared once more. He went directly to Thomas, not to shame, scold, or lecture him, but to extend an invitation. "Put your finger here... Reach out your hand... Touch the wounds... See for yourself. I came for you. Stop doubting and believe."

**Jesus provided Thomas with exactly what he needed, and in response, Thomas made the strongest confession found in the Gospels: "My Lord and my God."** But then Jesus offered something even greater: a blessing for those who will believe without seeing. He looked toward the future—toward all of us—and proclaimed, "Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe." This blessing is meant for us.

**Faith without seeing is not blind faith (1 Peter 1:8–9).** Peter picks up that same theme: “You love Him even though you haven’t seen Him.” That’s the miracle of the Christian life. We don’t see Jesus with our eyes, but we see His work everywhere:

- in changed hearts
- in answered prayers
- in peace that breaks into locked rooms
- in hope that rises from ashes

Faith isn't pretending you never doubt. Faith is trusting Jesus enough to bring your doubts to Him. Faith is not built on physical sight. Faith is built on:

- the testimony of Scripture
- the witness of the Spirit
- the transformation of lives
- the peace that enters locked rooms
- the Savior who still calls us by name

**Faith is not the absence of doubt.** Faith is trusting Jesus **in the presence** of doubt. And when you do, Jesus meets you, just like He met Thomas, and you would be blessed as Jesus promised:

**“Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”** It's a great blessing.

Because when you believe without seeing:

- your faith is anchored in His word, not your senses
- your hope is rooted in His promise, not your circumstances
- your joy is sustained by His presence, not your performance

You may not be able to see Him with your eyes, but you can witness His love in different ways:

- when someone forgives you, • when someone prays for you,
- when you feel a sense of peace within,
- and when you observe kindness and joy in others.

In experiencing these things, you might find yourself like Thomas, moving from the mindset of “Unless I see” to the declaration of “My Lord and my God.” Thomas's story does not end in doubt; it culminates in worship. The one who struggled the most ultimately makes the strongest confession.

**This is the invitation today: Bring your doubts, bring your questions, and bring your “unless I see.” Jesus is not threatened by your honesty; He meets you in that place. He guides you to the same declaration: “My Lord and my God.”**