

KidsDismiss, Welcome (*Reinforce Indoor Mask Mandate), RHCAApp

RESET

This morning I am excited to begin a four-week series we're calling "RESET."

You and I both know... The WORLD is longing for reset! I do not know a single person who is not READY to get back to a life FULL and FREE... no more masks (thank you for wearing them today). No more distancing. Most importantly: no more hospitalizations & NO MORE DEATH.]

When I think about the concept of reset, I typically think of my laptop.

According to Techopedia (do we have any card carrying members?): Laptops need to be RESET to "fix malfunctioning applications, solve problems of slowness in the device (AHHH!! If your laptop could talk, it would tell some of you to enroll in anger management!!), fix incorrect settings or resolve minor application or software-related problems. It can often help (don't forget this people!) where the device appears frozen or is running inefficiently."

Now, something tells me that many of you are like me... You almost never RESET your laptop through a RESTART.

Did you know you can see the last time you reset your laptop? If you have a Mac, click on my little Apple icon, go to "About This Mac." Click "System Report." Scroll down to "Software." Click & BOOM!

"Time since boot - 16 days 2 hrs and 50 min."

Now here's the thing... It will probably another 16 days until I restart. Why? It's not because I don't want it to run at peak performance, but because I won't feel the pain until I notice software slowing down and get annoyed by the length of time it takes me to do what I need to do! (Especially when I see that cursed cursor turn into a revolving rainbow!)

My problem is that I'm content with 60% when I could have 100%.

My problem is that I think I'm running at 80-100% until a symptom or two tells me I've dropped down to 40-50%. You feel me?!

How is your system running?

Not the operating system of your computer, but the operating system of your soul?

Do you feel spiritually vibrant, sluggish, or somewhere in between?

In your daily pursuit of God, are you passionate, apathetic, or somewhere in between?

Is your Christlike influence on others major, minor or somewhere in between?

Here's the question I'm asking: **How great is your need for a spiritual reset?**

Today, I want to give you...

“3 Requirements for a Spiritual Reset” John 20:19-31

Today we meet a man in deep need a spiritual reset... His name was Thomas!! We discover part of his story in John 20.

John 20:19-31 (text displayed)

As we look at Thomas' life, we see the “3 Requirements for a Spiritual Reset.” The first is...

1. Recognition. (20:19-25)

Reset begins with recognition. Here's what I mean: in order to experience a spiritual reset, we first must *recognize* our current spiritual condition.

Thomas not only demonstrates a significant level of self-awareness, he even told everyone else about it!

- Verses 24 tells us Thomas was not there when Jesus visited his other 10 disciples the night of his resurrection. Naturally, the disciples told him what happened.
- Verse 25 says, “So the other disciples told him, ‘We have seen the Lord.’” This sentence could be translated “The other disciples *tried to tell him*” or “The disciples kept telling him.”
- The level of excitement and joy as they told Thomas what happened must have been off the charts. BUT... their level of excitement was matched by Thomas' level of doubt and skepticism. Look at what he says in verse 25: “Unless I see in his hands the mark of the nails, and place my finger in the the mark of the nails, and place my hand into his side, I WILL NEVER BELIEVE.”

It's understandable why history has dubbed him: “Doubting Thomas.”

Doubting

- In the Greek text, Thomas' words are captured with a “double negative,” revealing how deeply he felt about this report of Jesus being raised from the dead. He throws down the strongest demand: “Show me it is true, or I **WILL NEVER BELIEVE.**”
- Thomas represents what would have been the common response for any 1st century Jew. Dead people don't come back to life! I just saw him crucified two days ago! Leave me alone!
- *But before we go on perpetuating the label placed on Thomas for a couple of millennia, we should remember before he was “doubting Thomas” he was DEVOTED Thomas.*
 - I believe if we could interview Jesus about “Doubting Thomas,” he would probably say, “Oh, I know why you call him doubting, but no one was more DEVOTED!”
 - This is the same Thomas who walked with Jesus for three years, heard his teaching, saw Jesus walk on water and heal the sick, and the same Thomas who performed miracles himself through the authority of Jesus!
 - This is the same THOMAS we read about in John 11:16 **“So Thomas, called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, “Let us also go, that we may die with him.” (John 11:16)**
- One moment or one mistake does not define you! I hear Thomas saying: “DON'T LABEL ME!” HA!!
- And I hear Jesus saying to all of us: “You are not defined by your greatest success or your greatest failure. You are who I say you are. You are LOVED! You are MINE! You have UNLIMITED POTENTIAL, because you carry MY VERY IMAGE WITHIN YOU!”

Thomas was fiercely devoted before he fiercely doubted, which might clue us into what is certainly implied from the story of Thomas and Jesus.

Doubt for Thomas was not simply a theological issue, it was profoundly emotional.

Why is Thomas doubting? Thomas was doubting, in part, because Thomas was disappointed.

Disappointed

- The crucifixion of his leader, left him gutted, and because he is gutted, he is guarded.
- Thomas was blindsided by the death of Jesus. Friday night, and all day Saturday, and all day Sunday, paralyzed by shock and disbelief.
- His soul was crushed. He was grieving, which probably explains why he was alone. Listen to these NT scholars...
 - "Some people, in times of great and desolating sorrow, find comfort in one another's company. Others prefer to creep into a corner and be alone with their grief. Thomas belonged to this latter category." - F. F. Bruce
 - [It is possible Thomas] "was so shocked by the tragedy of the crucifixion that he did not find it easy to think of its consequences being annulled." - Leon Morris
- Thomas is a picture of the definition of disappointment: "discouraged by the failure of one's hopes or expectations."
 - Thomas thought Jesus was going to be an earthly Messiah.
 - He thought he was coming into Jerusalem to bring victory.
 - He thought he had more time with the one he had given his entire life to follow.

APP:

- We all experience doubt and disappointment. We all taste the reality of UNMET EXPECTATIONS. As 9/11 reminded us yesterday, we all experience moments of trouble and tragedy that leave us asking God, "WHY?!" "HOW LONG?!"
- Have you placed expectations on God he has failed to meet?
- Have you isolated yourself? carried doubts? been weighed down with disappointment? There's someone who understands you. His name is Thomas (rw?).

But there's someone else. His name is Jesus.

T: When Thomas recognized his spiritual condition, it paved the way for Jesus' revelation.

2. Revelation. (20:26-27)

Verses 26-27 tell us how Jesus' responds. The first 3 words might surprise you: "Eight days later."

Thomas sat in his doubt, sat in his disappointment. Jesus could have showed up immediately, but Jesus knows that waiting can work to produce clarity and trust. Maybe Jesus wanted Thomas to wrestle, to process, to remember, to question his doubts, to lament his disappointment. Maybe Jesus was doing things in those eight days, that would not have been accomplished otherwise.

"Eight days later, his disciples were inside again, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were locked," what does Jesus do?

Don't miss these three details in verse 26. 1) "Jesus came." 2) Jesus "stood among them." 3) Jesus "said, 'Peace be with you.'" Jesus did the exact same thing he did last Sunday night on this Sunday night, except Thomas is in the room. Look back at the end of verse 19: "Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you."

Jesus came. (19 & 26)

- Here's a question for you: who's pursuing who? Our pursuit of God always and forever begins with his pursuit of us!
- Jesus moves toward Thomas.
- And I love the image here... the disciples are hiding with doors locked, most likely because they are still fearful for their lives (as we saw in verse 19), and yet, Jesus comes in when everyone is supposed to be kept out!
- No doubt this stresses the miraculous nature of Jesus' appearance to his disciples in his resurrected body, BUT I see a picture of our lives.
- How many times have you kept God at arms length? How many times have you locked the doors to your mind and heart, only to find that Jesus is coming through!!
- NO LOCK CAN STOP HIS LOVE!
-

Jesus stood among them. (19 & 26)

- Jesus pursues us to be present. He stands among them. He reveals himself again.
- I am who I said I am. "I AM the resurrection and the life!" (John 11:25)
- But then...

Jesus said, "Peace be with you." (19 & 26)

- Consider this... in the moments of Jesus' darkest hour, when he was wrongfully tried for crimes he did not commit, his closest followers abandoned him (cf. John 16:32; Zechariah 13:7).
- And yet... rather than rebuking them, he speaks, "Peace!" over them.
 - Peace was more than a casual greeting. The word peace translates the Hebrew word *shalom*, which is life as we long for it to be. One scholar says *shalom* "gathers up all the blessings of the kingdom of God; *shalom* is life at its best under the gracious hand of God.
 - And notice... He meets them, not just theologically, but emotionally. He knew the word they needed to hear, especially Thomas, was "Peace."

Then Jesus speaks directly to Thomas in verse 27: "Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side. Do not disbelieve, but believe."

- He does not shame Thomas, he meets Thomas in his doubt and disappointment and extends a joyful invitation.
- I can see a smile on the face of Jesus, using his own words. (Remember Thomas said: "I will never believe unless I put my finger in your hands, put your hand in my side,") In doing so Jesus proves he has divine knowledge, BUT perhaps more importantly for this moment, he's telling Thomas, "I see you, I know you, I care about you, I will meet you where you are, even in your doubt, because I LOVE YOU, Thomas."

What a revelation of Jesus Christ! The resurrected Christ is a God of compassion, grace, and incomprehensible love!

APP: Here's the point: Jesus knows all of our junk, and he loves us anyway! THIS STORY IS TOO WILD!!

T: The first requirement for Spiritual Reset? Recognition. The second? Revelation. But there's one more, because Jesus gives Thomas a very clear instruction: "Do not disbelieve, but believe."

3. Repentance. (20:28-31)

Verse 28. Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!"

It appears Thomas does not follow through on his demand. There was no need to touch Jesus. Jesus seeing him, hearing his voice, being invited by him, once again, to believe, was all Thomas' needed. Thomas stood absolutely convinced.

We find no greater declaration about Jesus in the Bible. In the gospel of John, people have already called Jesus "the Son of God [and] King of Israel" (1:49), "the Savior of the world" (4:42), and "the Christ" (11:27), but THIS... THIS is the ultimate statement regarding his identity.

- Merrill Tenney says, "For a Jew to call another human associate 'my Lord and my God' would be almost incredible. The Jewish law was strictly monotheistic; so the deification of any man would be regarded as blasphemy (10:33)." (Tenney)
- [Thomas' statement echoes the very first words of John: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." (1:1)]
- And his words are intensely personal. Please listen, faith, if it be true, is intensely personal.
 - Jesus you are not simply Lord in a general sense, in control of everything even our greatest enemy, death - YOU ARE MY LORD.
 - Jesus you are not simply a good man, who did some amazing things. You are not only a prophet sent from God, though every word you spoke is true. You are GOD, and YOU ARE MY GOD!
 - Thank you for stepping into all of my doubt. Thank you for stepping into all of my disappointment. I believe in you. I worship you!
- Make no mistake: this is a statement of worship, and notice that Jesus receives it, affirming the appropriateness of Thomas' words.

And it's here, that we see a picture of repentance in this resurrection moment for Thomas. Repentance is a change of mind, that leads to a change of heart. His perspective shifted (seeing Jesus for who he truly is), which led to a change of action (Belief! Worship! "My Lord and my God!").

When a person declares Jesus is "My Lord and my God!", they are saying, "Some things have to change in my life. I've got to rearrange my priorities, because Jesus is my ultimate priority. I've got to change some of my ways, because now I see, JESUS IS BETTER. I've got a new reason to get out of bed tomorrow, and punch the clock, and love the people around me, because just like Jesus met me where I was, I'm meeting people where they are, no judgment - just joyful invitation!"

Jesus declares a blessing over everyone who does in verse 29. Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed." The primary meaning of blessing is to be accepted by God, to be looked on with favor.

Thomas teaches us... we come to the place of reset through recognize the revelation of Jesus, which leads us to a different way of living.

The Point: Pursue a season of spiritual reset through the revelation of Jesus.

Conclusion:

Have you recognized your spiritual condition?
Have you seen a revelation of Jesus?
If so, what needs to change in your life?

I BELIEVE JESUS IS STEPPING INTO HEARTS RIGHT NOW.

You may have come in with doubt... You may have come in with overwhelming disappointment... you may have come with the doors around your heart guarded and locked, but Jesus is speaking to your soul right now, "I am enough. I love you. No one can or ever will love you like I do. I died for you. I defeated death for you. I want a real relationship with you now and forever!"

Do you need to say to him for the first time, "My Lord and my God!" Do you need to say it to him again?

There's never a better day to begin your journey with Jesus than TODAY
There's never a better day to reset your journey with Jesus than TODAY!

INVITE TO CHRIST!! NEXT STEP...

[[Speak from the heart (Thursday... spiritual revelation leading to spiritual conviction).]]

PRAY.

LEAD INTO "NOTHING ELSE" - a song I pray you will turn into a **PRAYER ANTHEM**. You'll just sing it again and again during this season of **RESET**.

I can imagine Thomas singing these words in his resurrection moment with Jesus.

"I'm caught up in Your presence
I just want to sit here at Your feet
I'm caught up in this holy moment
I never wanna leave

Oh, I'm not here for blessings
Jesus, You don't owe me anything
More than anything that You can do
I just want You."