

April 3, 2016 FEAR AND DOUBT, OR PEACE AND BELIEF, based on John 20:19-31

Unbelief is as much a part of the Resurrection's reaction as belief.

- Gospels address an issue by characterizing the actions of one person – Peter, Thomas
- Evangelist writing 30-50 years after Jesus' resurrection
- Problem of dealing with new believers who had not 'seen'
- Thomas episode is about dilemma of early church's demands for proof

There are realities to our living that 'deny' proof.

- How does one illustrate 'love'? There are actions, but love that demands proof is flawed
- Most love relationships are shown by 'trust'. To require proof is to deny trust.

Easter does not deny death, but trusts that there is 'life after death'.

- Lazarus died, each of us will die, but we trust that death is not the last word
- Jesus feared his death, asked his Father to remove cup from him
- God is more present in the moments that life is not extended
- Easter is not a cure, but an invitation to trust
- When life closes in and powers cannot be overcome, God still stands

No record that Thomas actually did what he demanded to do. Standing before the Risen Lord he believed.

- Did not need what he thought he needed. Being in presence was enough!
- There will be no pulse or blood pressure recorded on the 'risen one'
- When we sweat in anguished prayer, God will be present for us as God was present for Jesus
- Easter is the call to trust. God can be trusted to give back what God gave in the first place – our very lives!