

THE BLESSING OF BELIEVING

AN EASTER MESSAGE

Mark Beaird 4/2012

Text: John 20: 24-29 NIV

24 Now Thomas (also known as 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."

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."

I. JESUS UNDERSTANDS THE HUMAN MIND STRUGGLES TO BELIEVE WHAT HAS NOT BEEN SEEN (V. 24-25).

- A. We all want to experience something we're going to believe in for our selves.
- B. It makes sense to the human mind to only trust the tangible.

II. JESUS ALSO CHALLENGES US TO CHOOSE FAITH OVER SIGHT (26-29).

- A. Jesus challenges us with His presence in countless ways.
- B. Jesus even offers us tangible proofs of His presence.
- C. The greatest blessing comes through believing when others doubt.

CONCLUSION

The truth of how simple it is to believe and be blessed can be seen in a touching story from *Leadership* magazine about a little boy named Phillip.

Little Philip, born with Down's syndrome, attended a third-grade Sunday School class with several eight-year-old boys and girls. Typical of that age, the children did not readily accept Philip with his differences, according to an article in *Leadership* magazine. But because of a creative teacher, they began to care about Philip and accept him as part of the group, though not fully.

The Sunday after Easter the teacher brought Leggs pantyhose containers, the kind that look like large eggs. Each receiving one, the children were told to go outside on that lovely spring day, find some symbol for new life, and put it in the egg-like container. Back in the classroom, they would share their new-life symbols, opening the containers one by one in surprise fashion. After running about the church property in wild confusion, the students returned to the classroom and placed the containers on the table.

Surrounded by the children, the teacher began to open them one by one. After each one, whether flower, butterfly, or leaf, the class would ooh and ahh. Then one was opened, revealing nothing inside. The children exclaimed, "That's stupid. That's not fair. Somebody didn't do their assignment." Philip spoke up, "That's mine." "Philip, you don't ever do things right!" the student retorted. "There's nothing there!" I did so do it," Philip insisted. "I did do it. It's empty. The tomb was empty!" Silence followed. From then on Philip became a full member of the class.

He died not long afterward from an infection most normal children would have shrugged off. At the funeral this class of eight-year-olds marched up to the altar not with flowers, but with their Sunday school teacher, each to lay on it an empty pantyhose egg.

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