

**“You Shall Be My Witness”
“Witnesses to What We Have Not Seen”**

Happy Easter! Today we discovered more about Thomas and his infamous doubting. In our sermon series, “You Shall Be My Witness,” we continue to grow in understanding those early witnesses of Christ’s resurrection. As we learn what it means to bear witness to our Risen Lord, you are challenged to share that witness with others, for when Christ is revealed in our world today, we can’t help but say, “My Lord and my God!” Might the advocate lead you though your week, walking as a child of light. – Pastor Rebecca

Things I’d like to remember from today’s sermon: “Witnesses to What We Have Not Seen”

Prayer for the Week

Breathe the breath of new life into us, O Lord, that we may fully feel the power of your love and the awesome glory of the resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ. Help us to respond to your grace throughout the week, noticing that you are with us. Equip us to share your love with others, that we might be a light to others in your name. Amen.

This week’s sermon may be viewed at <http://sundaystreams.com/go/firstwichita>

Study Guide

April 16, 2018 John 20:19-20

This scripture is opened up to expose the great fear the disciples had for the Jews, they didn't want to be next! On the evening of the first day, Jesus somehow gets into the locked room and greets the disciples with a peace blessing, then Jesus shows his wounds on his hand and sides. The disciples knew it was Jesus and rejoiced instantly! Reflect on times in your life when Christ has revealed himself to you. *Have you ever felt locked up and afraid, but Christ still meets you where you are? How did you respond? Were you aware of Christ in the midst of your life?*

April 17, 2018 John 20:21-23

"When he said this he breathed on them and said to them, 'receive the Holy Spirit.'" God's triune nature is showcased in this scripture. Jesus, the son who lived on earth shows his wounds. God, the Father is who sent Christ back, and calls the disciples into ministry, and Christ invokes the Holy Spirit that the disciples might have an advocate to guide their lives and forgive their sins. *How have you received the Holy Spirit in your life? How has the triune nature of our God helped you to have a more robust understanding of God who desires to be in a relationship with you?*

April 18, 2018 John 20:24-29

Thomas missed out on seeing Jesus while the disciples were locked in the room for fear. It is no wonder he is so persistent, that if they saw Jesus' wounds, so should he. As the story unfolds, Jesus Christ knows exactly what Thomas desires to see and Jesus comes and shows his wounds so that Thomas might not doubt but believe. When Jesus does come and show him, Thomas doesn't even put his finger and hands inside the wounds. He believes without touching! His response of "My Lord, and my God!"- The most powerful confession of Jesus' identity in this gospel! *What does it feel like to miss out on a divine encounter? When is a time where you knew Christ was with you? How do you share that experience?*

April 19, 2018 1 John 1:6-10

Light and darkness- this dichotomy has been used throughout the centuries to describe goodness and sin. The author of 1 John says that we cannot be with Christ if we are walking in darkness, that only fellowship with one another through the atoning sacrifice of Christ is possible when we are walking in the light of Christ. At the same time, we are all sin-filled and before we can walk with Christ, we must come and confess. *Pause, breathe, and confess areas in your life where you have fallen short and not followed Christ into light. Hear the good news, in the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven!*

April 20, 2018 1 John 2:1-2

In our human fallen nature, we are prone to sin. John, the evangelist shares the good news that we have an advocate who is our atoning sacrifice for our sins and the sins of the whole world. Our advocate brings us back to God, by coming to the places where we continue to miss the mark. Atonement, or "At-One- Ment" is when God reconciles God's self to humanity. Because of Christ's grace, we can be reconciled with God almighty. *Write down moments or events in your life when you have felt reconciled with God. How does it feel to be in relationship with a God who wants to be "at-one" with us?*