

DOUBTING THOMAS

John 20:19-31

Tommy Russo tried and tried to go to church with his wife. Sophia Russo was the one who had been brought up in the church. Her parents had been very devout Christian people. With Tommy's parents it was completely different. They didn't attend church and they didn't make their kids attend either. At this point in their marriage, therefore, Tommy and Sophia Russo faced a real dilemma. Tommy had promised he'd give church a try. And he did. But the whole thing left him sort of cold. He just couldn't buy it all. There was just too much there that was unbelievable!

Tommy tried talking to Sophia about it one Sunday after they had been to church. "Can't we find some kind of compromise on this religion thing?" Tommy asked. But Sophia would have none of it. Her Christian faith meant the world to her. She was not about to compromise. She was not about to give up her faith practices. "You promised," she said to Tommy. "You said you would give it a try."

"But I have tried," Tommy replied. "How long do I have to go on with this anyway? I've been to church with you just about every Sunday for this whole first year of our marriage. Isn't that trying? What more do you want from me? Enough is enough. There's just too much about church and all that I just can't believe."

"What can you believe about it all?" Sophia asked.

"Jesus," Tommy blurted out after a few moments of silence. "I like Jesus. He makes a lot of sense to me at times. There's some very good advice about life in his teachings. But to buy into Jesus I've got to buy into too much other stuff that is not helpful at all. In fact, it just confuses the issue. Take this Virgin Mary business, for example. I mean, come on! Get serious. Stuff like that just doesn't happen. And what's the use of it anyway? Does it make Jesus any better than he already is? I don't think so. And then there's the miracles and the final miracle: 'he was raised from the dead.' I feel the same way about that as I do about his birth. So what? Jesus was a great man, a great teacher. I don't need all this miracle business. I honestly doubt that it really happened that way. Maybe the disciples just made it up for all we know."

At the end of their discussion, however, Tommy agreed to keep his promise and go with her on Sundays for a few more months. One Sunday the gospel reading caught him up short. It was about Thomas. That was his name. Thomas had doubts. So did he. He liked what Thomas had to say about Jesus being raised from the dead. "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe." Tommy Russo couldn't have put it better himself. "If only I could see his body," he thought to himself. "If only I could touch his body. That's the way we Thomas people are."

Tommy's mind got fixed on the Bible's doubting Thomas. That's all he could think about for the rest of the service. That's what he thought about when he and Sophia went up for communion. "If only I could see his body. If I only could touch his body." And then Tommy's reverie was

interrupted by the pastor's words. The words jolted his consciousness. It was just a simple word.
"This is my body given for you."

Do you have doubts about the resurrection? Give your doubts and struggles to Jesus and he will meet you where you are and give you peace.

God bless,
Pastor Barbara