



PRAYER: Gracious God, we thank You that no locked door is too heavy for Your presence to penetrate and no heart is too fearful for Your peace to calm. Forgive us for the times we hide in isolation and grant us the honesty of Thomas so that we will give You the benefit of the doubt. Breathe Your Holy Spirit upon us today, transforming our anxieties into a bold sense of purpose as Your sent people. May we live this day carrying Your *Shalom* into our homes and workplaces, trusting that You are alive and walking beside us. In the name of the Risen Christ we pray, Amen.

ICEBREAKER: If you could suddenly “walk through walls” like Jesus did in this passage, what is one place you would immediately visit to bring a little extra peace?

INTRODUCTION: In all honest faith, there is some real doubt. So often we discourage people from expressing their doubts or shame people because they have doubts. But the truth is, even the strongest believers (*in scripture and in life*) had doubts, and those doubts are what we’re going to dive into on a deeper level in this series. Whether you call yourself a believer or not, this series is for you. It is for those of us who believe, but who also find ourselves saying, “*Lord, help my unbelief!*” It is also for those who don’t believe because of their doubts. Doubts unexpressed are doubts unaddressed.

SCRIPTURE: Read **St. John 20:19-25 (NRSV):** ¹⁹ When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors were locked where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.” ²⁰ After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. ²¹ Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.” ²² When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³ If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.” ²⁴ But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. ²⁵ So the other disciples told him, “We have seen the Lord.” But he said to them, “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.”

DISCUSSION:

1. **What stood out in the message?** What’s one thing you learned? What questions came to mind as you listened to the message?
2. **Breaking Through the “Locked Doors”** - In verse 19, the disciples were huddled behind locked doors because of fear. Even though they had heard reports of the resurrection, they were still paralyzed. What “locked doors” are you currently sitting behind? Whether it’s a fear of failure, a past hurt, or anxiety about the future, how can Jesus’ presence help you unlock those doors this week?



Welcome!

SERIES: I Doubt It

Today's Message: The Benefit of the Doubt

Dr. Lance D. Watson, Senior Pastor

3. **Receiving Peace in the Midst of Chaos:** Jesus' first words to the terrified group were, "Peace be with you." He didn't lecture them for hiding; He offered them stillness. On a scale of 1 to 10, how much of Christ's peace are you currently experiencing? What is one specific "peace-robber" in your life right now that you need to intentionally hand over to Him?
4. **Living as a "Sent" Person:** Jesus tells the disciples, "As the Father has sent me, I am sending you" (v. 21). This shifts their identity from fearful followers to active ambassadors. If you viewed your workplace, neighborhood, or gym as a "mission field" where you have been specifically sent by Jesus, how would your interactions with people change tomorrow?
5. **Navigating Seasons of Doubt:** Thomas wasn't there for the first encounter and struggled to believe without seeing proof (v. 24-25). We often call him "Doubting Thomas," but he was simply being honest about his struggle. When you go through "Thomas seasons"—where God feels distant or hard to believe in—what helps you stay connected to your faith community rather than isolating yourself?

CHALLENGE: This week, identify one "locked door" of fear in your life and intentionally step through it by sharing the peace of Christ with someone in your circle of influence.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Take this time to share group announcements. Church wide and campus specific announcements can be found at www.myspbc.org. You can also "find, follow and like" our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/myspbc. Turn on your notifications.

CELEBRATIONS: Take this time to share praise reports (e.g. answered prayers, birthdays, anniversaries, promotions).

PRAYER REQUESTS AND PRAYER: Take this time to share prayer requests. Close with prayer.

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We Care!

As a small group leader, we depend on you to show members that we care. Here's a list of resources to help you.

FOR PRAYER:

CALL: 804.463.2472
EMAIL: prayer@myspbc.org.

FOR COUNSELING:

CALL: 804.643.6177
EMAIL: Barnabas@myspbc.org

TO REQUEST A HOSPITAL VISIT:

CALL: 804.304.3890 (For Emergencies)
EMAIL: ecare@myspbc.org.

TO REQUEST FUNERAL SUPPORT:

CALL: 804.304.3890 (Pastor On Call)
EMAIL: ecare@myspbc.org.

TO FIND A SUPPORT GROUP:

CALL: 804.643.6177
EMAIL: Barnabas@myspbc.org.

TO REQUEST EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE:

CALL: 804.643.4000
EMAIL: emergencyassistance@myspbc.org.

TO CONTACT MY LIFE STAGE PASTOR:

CALL: 804.643.4000 and Press 1 for the Dial By Name Directory

EMAIL:

Imagination (0-10): Vernita Williams: Vernita.Williams@myspbc.org
SMB (11-19): Martina Jones-Smith: Martina.Jones-Smith@myspbc.org
Dreamchasers (20-29): Juan Shackelford: juan.shackelford@myspbc.org
Aspire (30-39): Lance Watson, Jr.: lance.watsonjr@myspbc.org
Fusion (40-49): Michelle Townsend: michelle.townsend@myspbc.org
Encore (50-59): Lisa Johnson: Lisa.Johnson@myspbc.org
Prime Time (60-69): Maceo Freeman: maceo.freeman@myspbc.org
Refiners (70+): Roscoe Jones: roscoe.jones@myspbc.org

*GPS is a study guide based on the weekend message. The purpose of this guide is to assist small groups in study.
Previous GPS Guides are available online at www.myspbc.org.*