

Study Guide: “That You Might Believe”

Carter Sanger, April 2009

Read John 20:24-31, then discuss the following.

Introduction

- The truth about Jesus reorients everything in your life. Can you think of some experience or lesson that made you rethink a lot of what you had already learned?

I. Doubt that leads to Evidence

There are all kinds of doubt.

- Do you ever have doubts about your own faith? What are they like?
- What kinds of doubts do you hear others have when it comes to Christianity? Were you in a position to respond? How did you? What was the outcome?
- Finding the root of your doubt is difficult work. We often doubt because we believe something contrary that is true, or we are too emotionally invested in a contradictory understanding. Can you see the difference between emotionally charged doubt and intellectual doubt?
- We often think doubts are wrong and scold ourselves for having them. Can you think of some consequences for ignoring your own doubts?
- How does Jesus respond to Thomas' doubts?

II. Evidence that leads to Belief

- List the different kinds of evidence that Thomas had regarding Jesus being alive?
- What evidence did he ignore? Do you consider the eye-witness of his friends to be a powerful piece of evidence? Why was it not strong enough?
- The evidence that Jesus gave to Thomas was given for all of us. Why was this piece of evidence needed? What did it convince Thomas of? Read John 1:1-12 for some ideas.
- Read John 20:30. John explains the reason for his writing is to be hard evidence. In addition to his hard evidence, as you look back at your own life, can you see other pieces of evidence that points to Jesus as the Christ? What were they?

III. Belief that leads to Life

- Read John 20:31. When John says believe, what kind of belief does he mean? What are the different ways you believe something to be true?
- Can you believe something and still have doubt? Read Mark 9:24. How does this help?
- What is it that produces doubts in the midst of our belief? Read Matthew 11:3. Why was John the Baptist doubting Jesus?
- What kind of life does believing in Jesus produce? Do you know that life?

Wrap-up

- Think about your journey from here. What are the biggest doubts you need to resolve? Are you willing to look into it?