



EASTERTIDE 2021

“Believing Without Fully Seeing”

John 20:24-29

“Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believed.”

Is “blind faith” a virtue?

Blind faith = a commitment to trust something without sufficient grounding?

The difference between “blind faith” and “opaque faith”

Thomas was called “The Twin” v. 24

Will we be his identical twin or his fraternal twin?

Thomas’ stubborn disbelief: v. 25

He had sufficient evidence to believe: 10 credible trustworthy eyewitnesses

Only two or three witnesses were needed in Jewish law: 2 Cor 13:1; Deut 19:15

Thomas was not with them when Jesus came

Resentment being the only one left out?

Do not disbelieve but believe: v. 27

Jesus frames this as a willful choice

Thomas had been given enough to believe

The world has been given enough to believe

Christianity does not promote “blind faith”

God’s takes history seriously (we find ourselves in the middle of a progression)

Creation and the question of first things

The historical story of Israel

People of the book: from the Torah, the Psalms, the Prophets to the NT

John’s book is a self-conscious expression of this: see v. 30-31

The incarnation of Jesus: the supreme example

The resurrection: a stubborn historical public fact

Assertions about publicly accessible events are available to scrutiny

The resurrection claim changed the Roman Empire

And yet none of the evidence in the trail can completely erase doubt

Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe: v. 29

What is the blessing of not seeing?

The whole project of God is creating a Beloved, a bride for the Son

Love can only grow as a commitment over the chasm of risk

The presence of risk for love is like oxygen for a fire

The marriage covenant is not love if it begins with an escape clause at the start

If there is no chasm to leap, it is calculation, not love, that proceeds

This is also why choosing to become a parent is an act of love

For in this act there are no guarantees, and as such, love flames to life

Why? At the core: love is an act of self-sacrificial giving for the good of another

This explains the restraint of God Who remains invisible in the heavens

For us to love God we must commit ourselves against the opaque chasm

This is why faith is central to Christianity: faith makes love possible!

The interrelation between the “big three”: faith, hope, and love

Faith is the muscle that enables the leap

Hope anticipates what awaits on the other side of the leap

Love is what is born when faith commits and hope fans

And that is why the greatest of these is love: 1 Corinthians 13:13

The eighth day: v. 26

A hint at the new creation?

The time when all of us will be able to touch Jesus!

In the eighth day (new creation), faith and hope like booster rockets will fall

Love will remain forever

Our invitation is welcome our questions and doubts as seedbeds of love

Lord, I do believe; help my unbelief

There is enough ground to justify faith;

There is enough opaqueness to make our love for God genuine

Let us choose to say with Thomas: “My Lord and My God”