

# AstepFURTHER

DIVING DEEPER INTO SUNDAY'S SERMON

*A resource of First Presbyterian Church of Fort Lauderdale for individuals, families, and small groups that offers deeper insights into the previous Sunday's scripture text and sermon.*

**From the Sermon on 4/27/25 "Embracing Doubt and Seeking Truth"**

**Scripture:** John 20:19-31

**Opening Prayer:** "God of illumination, we gather today in Your presence, seeking wisdom and understanding. Open our hearts and minds as we explore Your Word. Help us embrace our questions and doubts, knowing they can lead us closer to You. Guide us in our discussions and reflections, and may Your Holy Spirit illuminate the truth of Your love and grace. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen."

**Understanding the Context:** (Explore aspects of the passage like place, adjacent scripture, and other elements)

1. What was the situation of the disciples when Jesus appeared to them after His resurrection?
2. The Gospel of John is the only Gospel to include this story of Thomas, why do you think none of the other gospels included it?

**Key Themes:** (Embracing Doubt and Seeking Truth)

1. How does the story of Thomas illustrate the relationship between doubt and faith?
2. Why is it significant that Thomas was the first to directly call Jesus "God" in Scripture?

**Application and Action:**

1. How can we relate to Thomas's need for proof in our own faith journeys?
2. In what ways can we seek Jesus when we face doubts or questions about our faith?
3. What steps can you take this week to address any doubts or questions you have about your faith?
4. Thomas stayed with the disciples after he disagreed with them and the disciples did not ask him to leave after Thomas did not believe. How can we as a church model this same type of community that allows for grace and growth?

**Group Discussion:**

If you are studying with others, discuss your reflections and insights.

1. Share a time when you experienced doubt in your faith. How did you address it, and what was the outcome?
2. How can we, as a community, support each other in our faith journeys, especially when doubts arise?
3. If you could have Jesus answer any question, what would you ask and why?

**Closing Prayer:** “Lord Jesus, thank You for meeting us in our doubts and questions. We are grateful for the example of Thomas, who shows us that doubt can lead to deeper faith. Help us to seek You earnestly and to support one another in our journeys. May we always be open to Your truth and grow in our relationship with You. In Your holy name, we pray. Amen.”

**Journal Prompt:**

List all the questions and/or doubts you have about your faith.

Write a prayer asking for Jesus to be with you as you walk by faith to seek the truth.

Choose one question/doubt from your list and write down a few ideas of how you are going to explore it with Jesus.

