

**WHERE WAS THOMAS?  
John 20:19-29**

**Introduction:**

1. Jesus chose twelve of His disciples to be apostles (Luke 6:12-16).
2. He personally trained the Twelve for three years.
3. Thomas is mentioned by name only three times outside the listings of the apostles.
  - a. When Jesus resolved to go to Bethany after the death of Lazarus (John 11:16).
  - b. Prior to Jesus' statement that He is "the Way" (John 14:5,6).
  - c. On the day of Jesus' resurrection when He appeared to the apostles and also on the following Lord's Day (John 20:19-29).

**Discussion:**

- I. JESUS APPEARED TO THE APOSTLES ON THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK.
  - A. The apostles were assembled behind locked doors "for fear of the Jews."
    1. Jesus showed them His hands and His feet as evidence.
    2. "They were glad when they saw the Lord."
  - B. Jesus commissioned them by giving them the Holy Spirit and the power to retain and remit sins (Matt. 16:19; Acts 1:4-8; 2:1-4).
  - C. Thomas was not with the other apostles when Jesus came to them.
- II. WHERE WAS THOMAS ON THE LORD'S DAY?
  - A. His place was with His fellow apostles.
    1. They needed him and he needed them (Rom. 12:5).
    2. He accepted an obligation when He accepted apostleship.
  - B. Was Thomas away on a mission of mercy?
    1. Perhaps he had been sent to help or comfort others?
    2. Perhaps he had gone to seek needed supplies for the others?
  - C. Was Thomas "providentially hindered" from being present?

1. Perhaps he was ill or caring for a relative who was ill?
2. Perhaps an emergency at home required his attention?

**D. Was Thomas absent for a reason that was not justified?**

1. Had he lost faith or been overcome by serious doubts?
2. Was he afraid to be seen with his fellow apostles?
3. Had he allowed some trivial, worldly matter to keep him away?
4. Was he absent because of other reasons?
  - a. The pleasures of this world (cf. 2 Tim. 4:9)?
  - b. He put work ahead of being with God's people (Matt. 6:33)?

**III. WHAT DID THOMAS MISS BY HIS ABSENCE?**

**A. He missed seeing the Lord.**

1. He failed to have his faith strengthened (John 20:24).
2. He missed an opportunity to be in the Lord's presence.
3. He missed an opportunity to be nurtured by fellowship with his brethren.

**B. What do we miss when we are not assembled with God's people on the Lord's Day?**

1. We miss being with the Lord ( Matt. 18:20; 26:29).
2. We miss fellowship with the saints (Acts 2:42; Heb. 10:24, 25).
3. We miss apostolic teaching to strengthen us (Acts 2:42).
4. We miss joining with fellow Christians in praising God (Acts 2:47; Col. 3:16).

**IV. WHAT DID THOMAS GAIN BY BEING PRESENT THE NEXT LORD'S DAY?**

**A. One week (8 days) later, the Lord appeared again to His apostles.**

1. Thomas was present this time.
2. He must have felt guilty for not being present the first time.

**B. Thomas was given a second chance to see Jesus and he took it.**

1. The Wise Men came from afar to see Jesus (Matt. 2:1,2).
2. Zacchaeus climbed a tree to see Jesus (Luke 19:1-10).
3. Some Greeks came to see Jesus (John 12:20, 21).

**C. Thomas' faith was strengthened by meeting with Jesus.**

1. Jesus invited him to examine the evidence.
  2. Thomas confessed, "My Lord and my God!"
- D. Thomas was where he was supposed to be as a follower of Jesus.
1. The place for the Lord's people is with the Lord in the Lord's assembly on the Lord's Day (Rev. 1:10)!
  2. Pres. James A. Garfield was asked to convene his cabinet on a Sunday morning to deal with a national emergency. He answered, "I have a prior appointment, one that I have kept for many years!" He did not convene the cabinet, but went to worship. The emergency soon passed.

**Conclusion:**

1. When we miss the assembly of the saints on the Lord's Day we are robbing ourselves:
  - a. Of the opportunity to be with Christ.
  - b. Of the opportunity to enjoy fellowship with those of like faith.
  - c. Of the opportunity to praise God in worship.
  - d. Of the strength we must have to remain faithful.
2. When we assemble with our brethren on the Lord's Day we gain many blessings:
  1. We are obedient to the Lord and thus faithful.
  2. We are seeking first the kingdom of God (Matt. 6:33).
  3. We are strengthening our souls.
  4. We are setting an example to family, friends, and neighbors.
  5. G. K. Wallace was totally deaf the last few years of his life, but he never missed a service of the church. When asked why he came since he could hear nothing, he replied, "I want folks to know which side I'm on!"
3. Which side are you on (Matt. 6:24)?
4. You can be on the Lord's side by obeying the Gospel (Acts 8:25-39).