

**Recap of 4/5/26 message by Chris Sommerfield  
(Do You Believe?) John 20:1-31**

John 20 recounts the pivotal moment of Jesus' resurrection, illustrating the reactions of Mary Magdalene, the disciples, and Thomas. We are encouraged to confront our doubts and fears regarding faith, especially in times of uncertainty. True faith is not merely acceptance of facts about Jesus; it is an active, personal response to His revelation and presence in our lives. It transforms our doubts into affirmations of belief.

The empty tomb, as witnessed by Mary Magdalene and the disciples, raises a question of belief or doubt. Their initial confusion and lack of understanding highlight how evidence alone doesn't compel belief, it requires faith. Like the disciples, we often need to search deeper for understanding. Five different words meaning to look or see are used 15 times in this passage. Eight times the word for belief or to believe is used. God wants us to look and see, to examine the empty tomb and respond in faith. There is no more important question: do you believe?

Mary is weeping, unable to find Jesus, not knowing where He is and we often feel the same way left with questions wondering where God is, unable to find our way in darkness. He calls her by name, and she finally recognizes Him and begins to cling to Him. His call by name represents His personal involvement in our lives and how our personal encounter with Christ transforms doubts into powerful testimony. Each person individually puts their faith in Jesus. It is this personal relationship that brings salvation by grace through faith. Your parents' faith doesn't save you. Tradition doesn't save you. The church doesn't save you. Jesus is the only one that can save you and He does it the moment you place your faith and trust in Him.

Doubt is met with grace as Jesus invites Thomas to examine the evidence of His resurrection. Jesus understands our uncertainties but calls us to a deeper faith. We need to bring our doubts to Jesus, trusting that He will meet us in our search for truth and belief. The purpose of John's Gospel is that we may believe Jesus is the Messiah and have life in His name. Belief reflects a living and sustaining relationship with Jesus rather than mere acknowledgment of His existence. Do you believe?