Meditation May 1-8, 2022
John 20: 19-31.

The Thomas Factor

"*Then Jesus told him.. . . .blessed are those who have not seen, and yet believed. . .*" (John 20:29, NIV).

One of the things we all need to be particularly wary about is fakery. There's so much in life, it seems, that is fake: fake jewelry, or purses, or identity. Some things are cleverly made to look like the real thing but actually cheap imitation. Then there's disinformation, where the truth, or the real thing is made to look less than what it actually is, to deceive or keep people from knowing the truth. It is done often for nefarious ends. This has become the bane of our time.

Thomas' honest desire for an authentic experience of the resurrection is in striking contrast with that of the other disciples. For some reason, he was absent, and missed all the first-hand excitement of the news that the Lord has risen and showed himself to those that were available. But he's one of those who are not content in being passive participants of the life-changing event of our Lord's resurrection. Good for him! He would soon be richly blest and rewarded.

The risen Lord took Thomas' concerns seriously. He was not offended, nor reproachful. Jesus touchingly offers himself to Thomas. He speaks to Thomas kindly and compassionately. Thomas's desire for an authentic faith could be fulfilled only by the Lord Himself. Our Lord knew that. So the Lord did to Thomas something He did not do for the other disciples. That is by letting Thomas touch where the nails had been when at the cross. And more. He admonished him kindly not to be faithless, but believing. How fortunate could Thomas be to be so singled out and treated with such understanding. As it turned out, he did not need so much coaxing. The Lord's presence and powerful touch blest him with more than the authenticity he so much craved. That blessing came in a life-transforming awareness of the risen Lord whom the others already professed. And he came out with the most powerful confession in all the gospel when he said, "My Lord, and my God."

It is well for us to make sure that the things we own or use in daily life are the real thing. Not an imitation – even if it is good one, deceivingly looking like the real one. Why? Because we are supposed to pay for the quality of the goods we receive, and not spend inordinate amounts for the false one. That's also why we all need to be concerned about the on-going authenticity of our faith, and quality of life.

Authentic faith means that we have personally experienced, and continuing to, experience the love and compassion to us that Jesus showed on Thomas, when he was drowning in a sea of doubt. Or experienced, and continue to know, Jesus' willingness to approach us in the midst of so much fakery, so that we might, Like Thomas, find our true and authentic selves, as sinners saved by grace. And, because of Thomas, we are not penalized by the accident of history. Jesus assured, and assures us, that we are as blest with authentic faith today, as Thomas was. When we believe as Thomas did, and live in its surpassing power and enormous blessings. AMEN.

Joy and Peace!

Pastor Ben
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