
RESOURCING WITH SCRIPTURE

What a strange, troubling time.

- Is it “not fun anymore?”
- Is your patience growing threadbare?
- The times are ripe for unravelling a bit.

It’s amazing how the traditional reading for this Sunday the Sunday after Easter, the Doubting Thomas story, so fits the times:

- It starts, *“the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear.”*
- Sound familiar? Hey, that’s us! We’re all locked away in our own houses.
- The verse continues, *“Jesus came and stood among them and said, ‘Peace be with you.’”*
- Before we go on, just feel that moment happen for you... Jesus coming to you, the locked doors are no barrier to him. You are one of his precious ones, so he’s looking for you. He says your name. He says, *“Peace be with you...”*

In a siege, resourcing yourself is key. Healthy food, sleep, safe social connection... all that good stuff. But underlying this, resourcing yourself spiritually is even more important.

- It’s your foundation. Your bedrock. Your “get’n up place” when get’n up is hard.

It’s been 3 weeks already since I preached on resourcing yourself with prayer. We talked about the TRIP prayer method. You can easily find a copy of that sermon on our website.

Today let’s talk about resourcing yourself with personal Bible reading. Bible Reading and Prayer, along with worship, are the three key-ways Christians have always spiritually resourced themselves... And through times even worse than this.

I have three types of Personal Bible Reading for you. Think of them as three different exercises for a complete total Bible workout: Core, Heart, and Mind.

- **Core** is reading the Bible.
- **Heart** is memorizing a verse.
- **Mind** is studying a passage.

Core

- If you do nothing else, get into flow of reading at least a little of your Bible every day.
- It’s amazing how even just 5 minutes of Bible reading, done daily, can resource you.
- Use a timer. It focuses your discipline. 10 minutes is even better, of course.
- Don’t start in a hard book. Don’t start on page one like a normal book. How about this? Start in the Gospel of Luke and read about Jesus. After that, read the Book of Acts.
- Just read continuously to get the flow, to learn the story, to be spiritually built up.

Heart

- Nothing resources the spiritual heart like memorizing a meaningful Bible verse.
- You might think memorizing is hard. Whatever. You can do it. The reward is sweet.

Mind

- This is taking a passage as a whole and studying it.
- Once you learn how to take apart and open up a passage to learn its truth, the journey of the joy of discovery begins.

As example for how to do this, let's do a quick study take today's Doubting Thomas passage, John 20:19-29.

First, we look at the big picture and divide it into parts. We quickly see it's a story in three scenes: Easter Sunday, the following Sunday, and a conversation that happens sometime in-between.

Scene 1 is the evening of the day Jesus rose from the dead.

- 10 disciples are gathered. The betrayer Judas is not there, of course. Thomas is absent doing some unhealthy social distancing. Then Jesus suddenly shows up and puts them over the limit on even-necessary-groups not exceeding 10 people.
- When you carefully study that scene, you'll discover so many important spiritual lessons there.

In scene 2 the disciples tell Thomas that Jesus is alive. Thomas won't believe it unless he sees Jesus himself. But isn't this true of all of us? Until we personally encounter Jesus, how can we believe?

Scene 3 is a repeat of scene 1, except now Thomas is where he should be, with his church. That's where Jesus finds him. Faith is born. Thomas cries out, "My Lord and My God."

Easter didn't get cancelled this year. If Jesus could walk through shuttered doors to find the famously doubting Thomas, he can surely find you, too. Tough times can't keep Jesus away.

Your doors might be shut, but your Bible can be open! Jesus will find you even now like Jesus has always found people, when you are in the word, God's Word.

Read!

Believe!

Arise in new strength to meet the day!

Amen.