

# Going Deeper

4/7/2024

## Commentary on Acts 4:32-35

Just as Jesus was the new Passover Lamb, the early community embodied a new Exodus from the captivity of sin. In a mirror image of the three thousand that died because of the golden calf during the first Exodus, three thousand were saved when Peter preached at Pentecost. Similar to the Jews in the desert, the new community found itself in a hostile environment with people gathered from all walks of life dependent upon one another for survival. By selling their possessions and equally supporting one another, they were living out the "Year of Jubilee" from the Law. This communal life was based on the assumption that Jesus would return soon. Like the Israelites who wandered in the desert, the early community would soon learn that they were in for a much longer journey. While liquidating their assets proved challenging for the early church, it would become vital to its survival in Jerusalem when they were forced to flee with the Roman invasion and destruction of the temple during the Jewish revolt from 66-70 A.D.

Would you have the faith to sell everything and put it into a common purse?  
How many stories have we heard where people have been fooled by groups?  
Have you ever misplaced your faith in someone or something?  
How has that experience affected your faith in God?  
Do you know someone who has had their faith damaged by the church or church members?  
In what ways do our actions help or hinder the faith of others?

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Youtube Commentary: <https://youtu.be/d3iJWGxPVxA>

## Commentary on John 20:19-31

The Gospel of John, written some sixty years after the resurrection, was aimed at an audience who were beginning to realize that the second coming may not happen as soon as they originally believed. It is this doubt that is reflected not only in Thomas but in all the disciples. Even after the women had proclaimed Jesus' resurrection and, according to Luke, two of their own had encountered Jesus on the road, the disciples were "locked" in a room because of fear. When Jesus comes the first time, he doesn't just say "Peace be with you" once but twice. Jesus, "a week later", finds the disciples still behind the same shut doors and for a third time has to tell them "Peace". Thomas who missed the first time is just as doubtful as the other disciples had been and simply requested the same proof. For John, Thomas represents the new generation of believers who were demanding the second coming in order to affirm their faith. To these believers, Jesus says, "Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe." This becomes the creed of faith for the young church who was beginning to realize that it may be a while before Jesus returned.

How much faith did the other disciples have if Jesus founded them in a locked room twice?  
Are we more like them or Thomas who fell to his knees?  
When do you have the most faith – in times of crisis or in everyday life?  
Is faith more like a marriage than like dating? (Something that has to be worked on everyday)  
How do our relationships with other people help or hinder our growth in faith?  
How has your faith grown during your life and who have you shared that story with?

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