



Leadership Through Discipleship

Learning to Lead
by Living to Follow

Terry R. Baughman
Lead Pastor

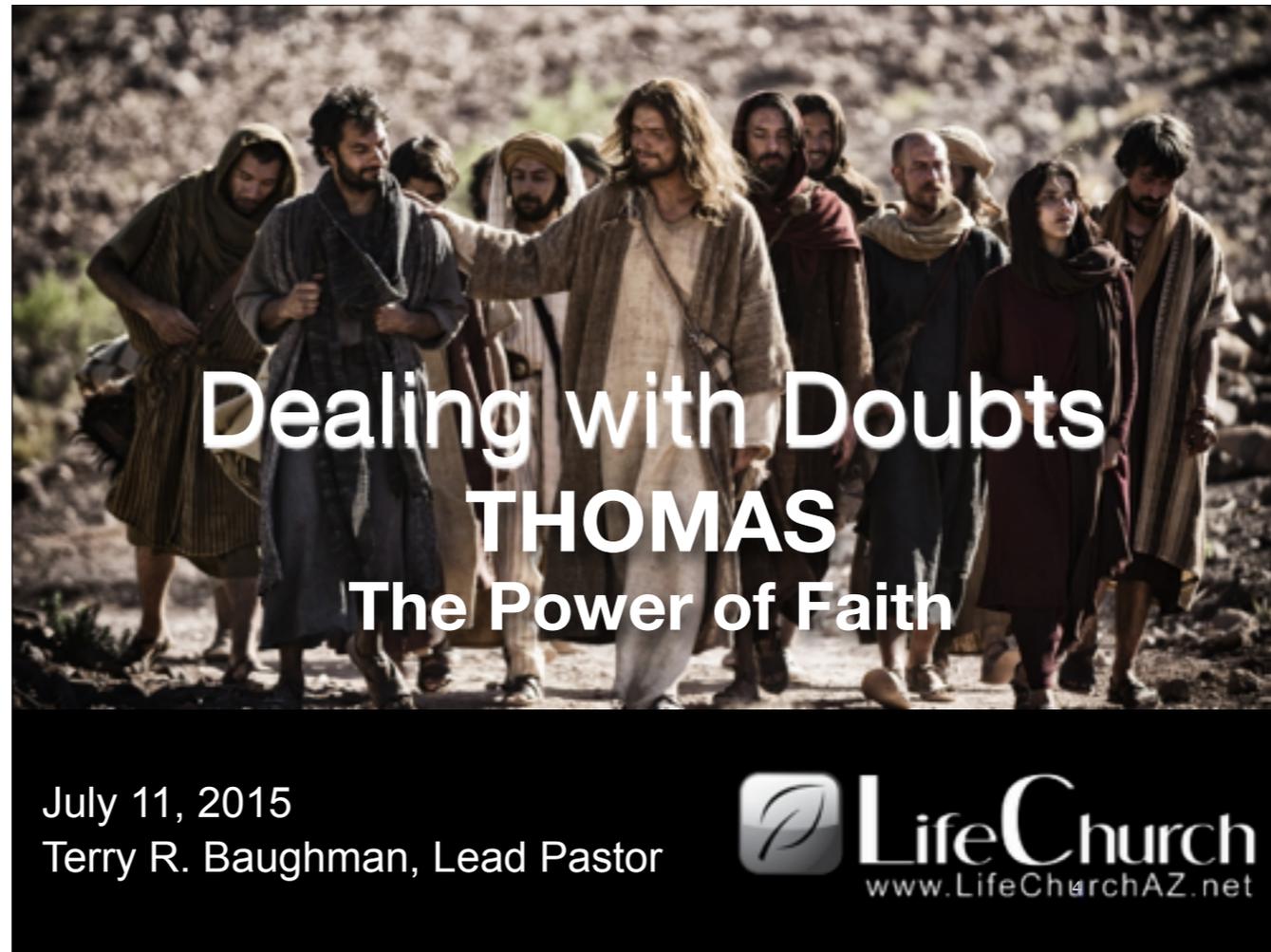




John 20:25 The other disciples therefore said to him, "We have seen the Lord." So he said to them, "Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe."

John 20:24 Now Thomas, called the Twin, one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came.

25 The other disciples therefore said to him, "We have seen the Lord." So he said to them, "Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe."



Dealing with Doubts

Thomas – The Power of Faith

A doubter becomes a believer.

A leader learns honest confession of doubts leads to greater faith.

Matthew 10:2 (NIV) These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon (who is called Peter) and his brother Andrew; James son of Zebedee, and his brother John; 3 Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; 4 Simon the Zealot and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him

Dealing with Doubts



THOMAS The Power of Faith

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What we know of Thomas comes only from the Gospel of John. Thomas is only listed along with the other disciples in the synoptic gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke) so John is our sole source of information concerning his life.

- Have you ever confessed doubts?
- Have you ever struggled with your faith?

Thomas, The Power of Faith

I. Thomas seems better suited for a negative example of faith.

- “Doubting Thomas”
- A chosen disciple
- Gives us hope!



I. Thomas seems better suited for a negative example of faith – “Doubting Thomas”

It might seem odd to associate “doubting Thomas” with the subject of the power of faith. We tend to examine his lack of belief and use him as a negative example when it comes to the subject of faith.

However, Thomas is a chosen disciple, one of the Twelve Apostles. If he struggled with faith and was still a chosen disciple then there is hope for us when we are less than perfect in our belief.

- Struggles with faith are okay. It appears to be “normal” even with our heroes of scripture.
- If a disciple can confess a lack of faith maybe there is hope for us!

Thomas, The Power of Faith

II. Maybe Thomas spoke what others were afraid to say

- **John 11:16** – *“Let us also go, that we may die with Him.”*



II. Maybe Thomas spoke what other were afraid to say.

A. John 11:16 – “Let us also go, that we may die with Him.”

Thomas seems naturally to have a negative temperament. When Jesus received news of the terminal condition of Lazarus, it was Thomas who lamented, “Let’s go die with him.” Perhaps Thomas spoke what some of the other disciples were feeling. Maybe in this way he was like Peter. He spoke out loud what others were thinking but were afraid to say.

John 11:7 Then after this He said to the disciples, “Let us go to Judea again.”

8 The disciples said to Him, “Rabbi, lately the Jews sought to stone You, and are You going there again?”

9 Jesus answered, “Are there not twelve hours in the day? If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world.

10 “But if one walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him.”

11 These things He said, and after that He said to them, “Our friend Lazarus sleeps, but I go that I may wake him up.”

12 Then His disciples said, “Lord, if he sleeps he will get well.”

13 However, Jesus spoke of his death, but they thought that He was speaking about taking rest in sleep.

14 Then Jesus said to them plainly, “Lazarus is dead.

15 “And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, that you may believe. Nevertheless let us go to him.”

16 Then Thomas, who is called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, “Let us also go, that we may die with Him.”

17 So when Jesus came, He found that he had already been in the tomb four days.

Thomas, The Power of Faith

II. Maybe Thomas spoke what others were afraid to say

- **John 14:5** *“Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?”*



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II. Maybe Thomas spoke what other were afraid to say.

A. John 11:16 – “Let us also go, that we may die with Him.”

B. John 14:5 “Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?”

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On another occasion Jesus was talking about His departure. He suggested that the disciples knew where he was going. Thomas plainly stated, “Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?” Jesus said to him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me” (John 14:5–6). If Thomas had not asked the question perhaps we would not have had much of the following discourse of where Jesus was going and His identity of being one with the Father. Sometimes a confession of our doubts or lack of understanding results in greater understanding!

John 14:3 "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.

4 "And where I go you know, and the way you know."

5 Thomas said to Him, "Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?"

6 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

7 " If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him."

8 Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us."

Read John 14:3–8 –The questions that got answers! Thomas and Philip ask questions to help their faith ... and ours!

Thomas, The Power of Faith

II. Maybe Thomas spoke what others were afraid to say

- **John 20:25** - *“Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe.”*



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II. Maybe Thomas spoke what other were afraid to say.

A. John 11:16 - “Let us also go, that we may die with Him.”

B. John 14:5 “Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?”

C. John 20:25 - “Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe.”

- Thomas was not with the disciples when Jesus first appeared to them.

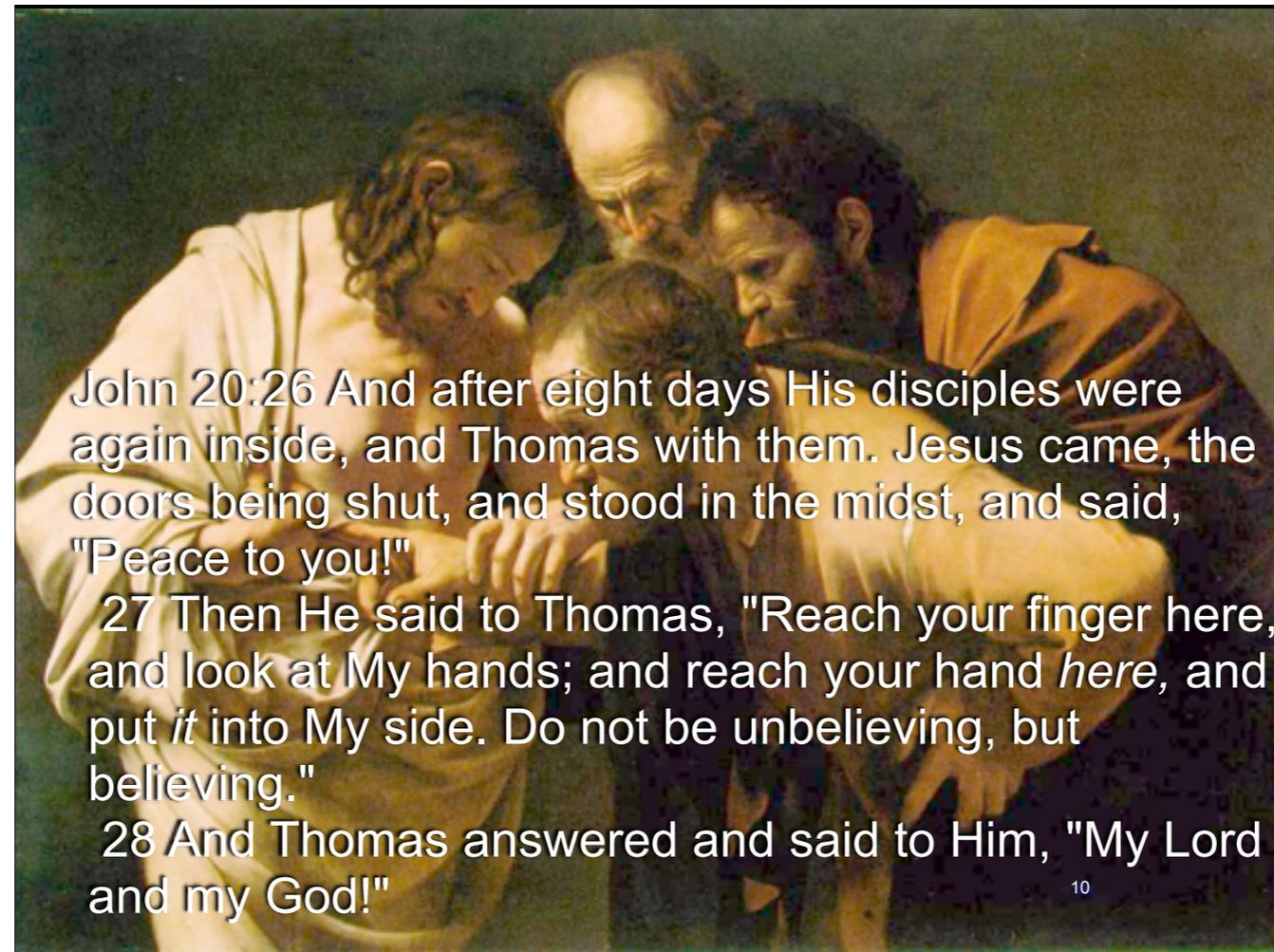
- Honest expression of his faith crisis.

The most famous passages of Thomas contain his confessed unbelief concerning Jesus’ resurrection from the dead. While the other disciples joyously shared their faith after seeing Jesus alive from the grave, Thomas simply could not believe it. He has missed the meeting when Jesus appeared to the disciples and Thomas was unable to accept another’s witness to this miracle. He was emphatic, “Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe” (John 20:25).

It was another eight days of restless quandary before Thomas had the opportunity to resolve his questions of faith. Again, the disciples were gathered in a closed room. This time Thomas was present when Jesus appeared. It seemed He came just for Thomas’ benefit. He offered His hands and the scar in His side for inspection that Thomas might believe. It sounds like Thomas did not require such a thorough inspection. Just seeing the Lord and hearing His voice brought full faith to this faltering disciple. He boldly exclaimed, “My Lord and my God!” (John 20:28). The doubter became a believer.

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25 The other disciples therefore said to him, "We have seen the Lord." So he said to them, "Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe."



John 20:26 And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, "Peace to you!"

27 Then He said to Thomas, "Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand *here*, and put *it* into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing."

28 And Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!"

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[PPT] 26 And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, "Peace to you!"

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- **John 20:29** Jesus said to him, "Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

30 And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book;

31 but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.

D. The doubt of Thomas provided more evidence of the resurrection and the deity of Christ. More opportunities of faith and more reasons for us to believe in Him!

Without condemnation Jesus accepted the worship of Thomas but stated, "Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed" (John 20:29). The power of faith allows those of us who have not seen Him still believe that He is alive and well!

- o You, as a believer, are more blessed today than any of the disciples! "Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.
- o Why did Jesus perform "many other signs in the presence of His disciples" (vs. 30)?
- o I believe the answer is in verse 31 "that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ ... and that believing you may have life in His name.

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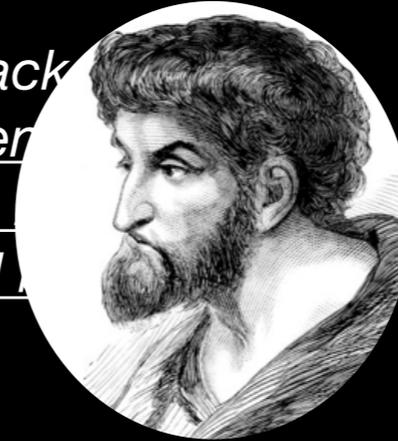
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Thomas, The Power of Faith

III. Other disciples struggled in faith.

- **Mark 16:11** – *“But when she told them that Jesus was alive and she had seen him, they didn’t believe her.”*
- **Mark 16:13** – *“They rushed back to tell the others, but no one believed them.”*
- **Mark 16:14** – *“they refused to believe him who had seen him after he had risen from the dead”*



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III. Other disciples (maybe all of them) struggled in faith.

- See the evidence of their doubts in Mark 16 (NLT)
- Report of resurrection by Mary Magdalene in verse 11, “they didn’t believe her”
- Testimony of two on the Emmaus road in verse 13 “but no one believed them”

9 After Jesus rose from the dead early on Sunday morning, the first person who saw him was Mary Magdalene, the woman from whom he had cast out seven demons. 10 She went to the disciples, who were grieving and weeping, and told them what had happened. 11 But when she told them that Jesus was alive and she had seen him, they didn’t believe her.

12 Afterward he appeared in a different form to two of his followers who were walking from Jerusalem into the country. 13 They rushed back to tell the others, but no one believed them.

- The account continues with Jesus’ visit in verse

[ADV] 14 Still later he appeared to the eleven disciples as they were eating together. He rebuked them for their stubborn unbelief because they refused to believe those who had seen him after he had been raised from the dead.[d]

15 And then he told them, “Go into all the world and preach the Good News to everyone. 16 Anyone who believes and is baptized will be saved. But anyone who refuses to believe will be condemned. 17 These miraculous signs will accompany those who believe: They will cast out demons in my name, and they will speak in new languages. 18 They will be able to handle snakes with safety, and if they drink anything poisonous, it won’t hurt them. They will be able to place their hands on the sick, and they will be healed.”

- There were some real struggles among all the disciples.

Matthew 28:16–17 (NKJ) 16 Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, to the mountain which Jesus had appointed for them. 17 When they saw Him, they worshiped Him; but some doubted.

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THE MESSAGE

Matthew 28:16-19 - Meanwhile, the eleven disciples were on their way to Galilee, headed for the mountain Jesus had set for their reunion. The moment they saw him they worshiped him.

Some, though, held back, not sure about worship, about risking themselves totally.

Jesus, undeterred, went right ahead and gave his charge: "God authorized and commanded me to commission you: Go out and train everyone you meet, far and near, in this way of life, ...

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18-20 Jesus, undeterred, went right ahead and gave his charge: "God authorized and commanded me to commission you: Go out and train everyone you meet, far and near, in this way of life, marking them by baptism in the threefold name: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Then instruct them in the practice of all I have commanded you. I'll be with you as you do this, day after day after day, right up to the end of the age."

Faith Lessons from Thomas, the Believer



1. Faith is fallible
No one is above failure.
2. Faith is flexible
It bends ... just don't let it break!
3. Faith is fixable
The crisis of faith is not the end of your faith.
4. Faith is final
Our failures are not.

15

Lessons about faith from Thomas, the believer!

1. Faith is fallible
—None of us are above failure.
2. Faith is flexible
—It bends ... just don't let it break!
The Word is “forever settled in heaven” --- but your faith is not!
Like the man with the afflicted child, “Lord I believe, help my unbelief”
How is it that some days we can be so FULL of faith ... and other days say, “God where are you?”
3. Faith is fixable
—The Crisis of Faith is not the end of your faith.
There is hope for you! Faith is not fragile, it can suffer some abuse without being disposed of. Faith can be restored. (Romans 10:17)
4. Faith is final
—Our failures are not final. We can have faith to the finish. Like Paul, “I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.” (2Tim 4:7)

Peter spoke about “the end of your faith”

See 1 Peter 1:3–9

The End of Your Faith

1 Peter 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

4 to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you,

5 who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

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The End of Your Faith

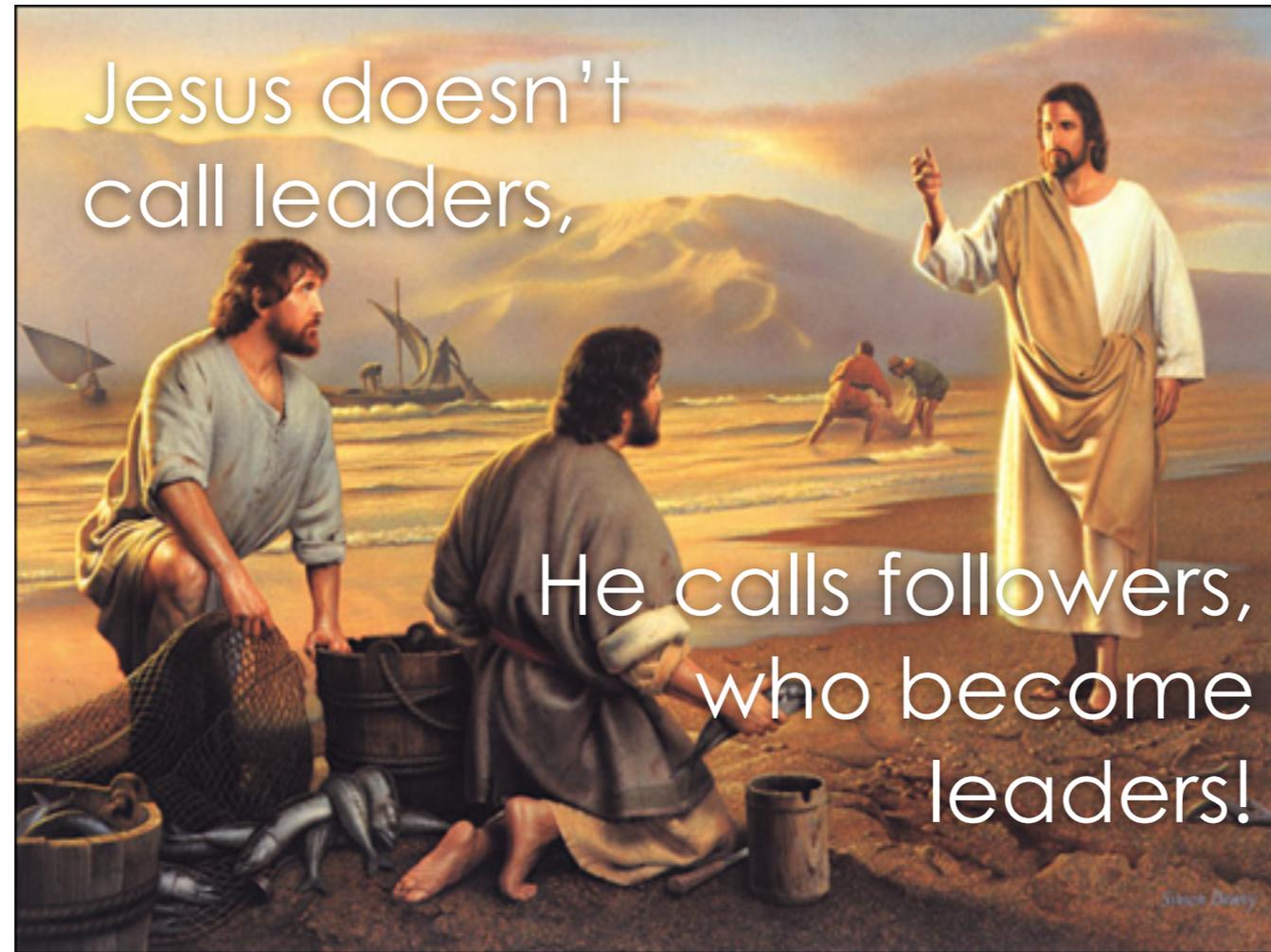
1 Peter 1:6 In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials,

7 that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ,

8 whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory,

9 receiving the end of your faith -- the salvation of your souls.

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We often forget what we were before the Lord found us in our sin, saved us, and called us to be disciples. Or we excuse our lack of maturity and failure to change saying, "That's just the way I am."

Jesus does not call us just to be robotic followers. He does not mass produce disciples with mindless allegiance. Rather He calls us into a dynamic relationship. He treats us all as special individuals. Each of us is a unique design. His plan for your life is "one of a kind." He is not interested in blind followers but intelligent, passionate, and devoted disciples, developing and deciding day by day to grow in our relationship with Him.

There is a difference in being just a follower and truly being a disciple!

Jesus doesn't call leaders,
He calls followers,
who become
leaders!



Leadership Through Discipleship

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 LifeChurch
www.LifeChurchAZ.net