

## **Week Two: Overwhelming Reason**

### **John 20:24-29**

#### **Spend FIFTEEN – Day One**

1. Growing up, did you have (or do you still have) a nickname? If so, what was it and how did it come to stick?
2. Are nicknames mostly flattering or intended to humble a person?
3. Read John 14:5 and John 20:24-25. Why has the name “Doubting Thomas” become synonymous with his name?
4. Have you ever known anyone like Thomas? Do you think he is actually that different from the rest of the disciples or just more willing to be public with his doubts?
5. It’s interesting that Thomas wasn’t with the other disciples at the beginning. What does John 20:19 lead you to believe was the mindset of the disciples after the crucifixion of Jesus? What is there about Thomas that might explain his absence from the rest?
6. Why is this mindset important when you realize that most of the apostles died martyrs’ deaths rather than deny their faith in Jesus as the crucified and risen Messiah?
7. Finish your FIFTEEN in prayer. Take a moment and give God thanks for the courage of those who suffered much, even death, to pass the gospel to a new generation of believers.

#### **Spend FIFTEEN – Day Two**

8. The prophecies about Jesus were often complicated, specific and impossible to fake. Read Luke 7:18-23. Compare this reference to Isaiah 35:4-10. How does prophecy and fulfillment support the case for Christ?
9. What do you know about Josephus? Google “Josephus on Jesus” and share what you discover. How do historic references to Jesus outside the Bible support the case for Christ?
10. The book of Mormon refers to cities, rivers and geographic information that do not and have never existed in America. How does the historic narrative of the Bible about cities, peoples, bodies of water and cities in the Old and New Testament support the case for Christ?
11. Google provides archeological support for the historic facts of the Bible. How does the archeological record support the truth and Scripture and the case for Christ?

12. It is often said that you have to be a fool or in complete denial to accept the Biblical story about God, His people and the Messiah Jesus. Do you believe it is best to check your brains at the door if want to be a faithful Christian? Why or why not?
13. Read 1 Corinthians 2:1-5. According to this passage, what is the only basis for true faith? How do you explain the fact that some people actually saw the miracles of Jesus, even His death and resurrection, and still refused to believe in God and accept Jesus as their Savior?
14. Conclude your FIFTEEN in prayer. Pray for a calm and non-defensive spirit when sharing your faith in the veracity of Scripture and Jesus as your Savior.

**Spend FIFTEEN – Day Three**

15. Read Romans 10:11-21. How does God feel toward those who denied the faith despite the witness of others?
16. Someone once said, “Anyone convinced against her will remains unconvinced.” What did he mean by that? Do you agree?
17. Is it freeing or frustrating for you to know that all you can do is share what you believe and allow the Holy Spirit to do the rest?
18. “When the student is ready, the teacher will appear.” What does this statement mean?
19. Read 1 Corinthians 3:4-9. Explain the metaphor that some plant and others harvest. What does that metaphor mean when it comes to bringing others to faith in God and our Savior, Jesus?
20. Since bringing people to faith is ultimately God’s work, does that imply that we have no obligation to be winsome, prepared to discuss the reasons we believe or address others’ doubts in a knowledgeable way? Explain. Read 1 Peter 3:15. What are the key words in that passage?
21. As you finish your FIFTEEN in prayer, pray for the opportunity to be a witness for Christ. Pray for a patient and kind heart as you encounter the doubts of others.

**Spend FIFTEEN – Day Four**

22. Read John 20:26-29. How would you explain Jesus’ attitude toward Thomas?
23. Explain Jesus’ greeting in verse 26.

24. Why did Jesus allow Peter to touch His wounds?
  
25. How much do you think personality affects the willingness of a person to accept or reject another person's point of view?
  
26. What suggestions would you propose to those who witness to doubters? How can a person disagree with someone else and not be disagreeable?
  
27. Have you ever prayed for God to show you a sign or provide some proof of His presence or concern for you? Explain. Do you think it is wrong to ask God to make Himself known?
  
28. End your FIFTEEN by praying for a gracious spirit toward believers and non-believers who disagree with you.

**Spend FIFTEEN – Day Five**

29. Have you read, The Case for Christ, Evidence That Demands a Verdict, or any other book that defends the Christian faith on the basis of facts and an objective examination of the record? If so, explain the impact it had on you.
  
30. How do you handle situations where people question the Christian faith? Do you become quiet, defensive, or try to spend more time listening to their reasons for doubt?
  
31. Are there other things in the world, besides faith, that seem nearly impossible to believe...the migration of monarch butterflies, salmon returning to their exact place of hatching to spawn, the planetary system, the unique nature of a fingerprint or the pattern of a snowflake? How can people accept some miracles and not others?
  
32. Who do you know that gives you (or gave you) the greatest reassurance of your Christian faith? Why did they come to mind?
  
33. Who is most heavy on your heart or mind who has not accepted the Lord Jesus as his or her Savior? Pause and pray for that person and for a new insight to deepen your relationship.
  
34. What do you think you could do to be better equipped to engage in meaningful conversations with non-believers?
  
35. Finish your FIFTEEN in prayer. Pray for Christian leaders to be more patient, humble and kind in their defense of the Christian faith.