

*Nurturing Faith...
Every Day in Every Way*

April 12, 2015

Second Sunday of Easter

Acts 4:32-35

Psalms 133 (1)

1 John 1:1-2:2

John 20:19-31



The Don't Miss Church! *Object: Top Ten List.*

I like Top Ten lists. You know, those lists like "The Top Ten Songs of the Week" or "The Top Ten Movies of the Year." When your parents were choosing a name for you, they may have looked at a list of "The Top Ten Names for Boys and Girls." I guess there is a Top Ten list for just about everything you can imagine. I have a Top Ten list this morning that you may not have heard before. It is the "Top Ten Reasons NOT to miss church."

Every Sunday you have to decide whether you are going to get up and go to church. Well, here is a list of the Top Ten Reasons NOT to miss church. Maybe it will help you to decide.

10. Chocolate covered donuts at Sunday School (Just kidding!)
9. Making long-lasting friendships
8. Singing praises to God
7. Hearing a good sermon by the pastor
6. Receiving encouragement from others and giving encouragement to others
5. Bible study
4. Praying for one another
3. Growing in our faith
2. Missing church makes it easier to miss the next week, and then the next
1. You are sure to miss something special that God has for YOU!

What could that something be? Well, our Bible lesson today might help us to find out.

It was the Sunday after Jesus was crucified and his disciples had gathered together in a locked room. They were together in that locked room because they were afraid. They were afraid of what Jesus' enemies might do to them. The Bible tells us that, even though the doors were locked, Jesus came in and stood there with his disciples. When the disciples saw Jesus, they were very happy.

One of the disciples, whose name was Thomas, was not there with the others in that room when Jesus appeared to them. I don't know why Thomas wasn't there. Perhaps he had gone fishing or maybe he just decided to stay at home that day. When the other disciples saw Thomas, they told him that they had seen Jesus, but he didn't believe them. "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe it," Thomas told them.

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe. Alleluia (John 20:29)

A week later the disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. The very same thing happened again. Even though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among his disciples. He turned to Thomas and said, "See my hands; put your fingers here. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe."

Thomas didn't need to touch the wounds where the nails had been or put his hand into his side. He fell on his knees before Jesus and said, "My Lord and my God!"

Before Jesus returned to heaven to be with his Father, he told his disciples that when two or three are gathered together in his name, he would be there with them. Each week we come together in the name of Jesus to worship and to praise him. So, what really important thing do we miss out on if we don't come to church? We miss out on the same thing that Thomas missed out on-the chance to be with Jesus!

Dear Jesus, we have come into your house and gathered in your name today because we want to be with you. We have come to worship and praise your name. Amen.

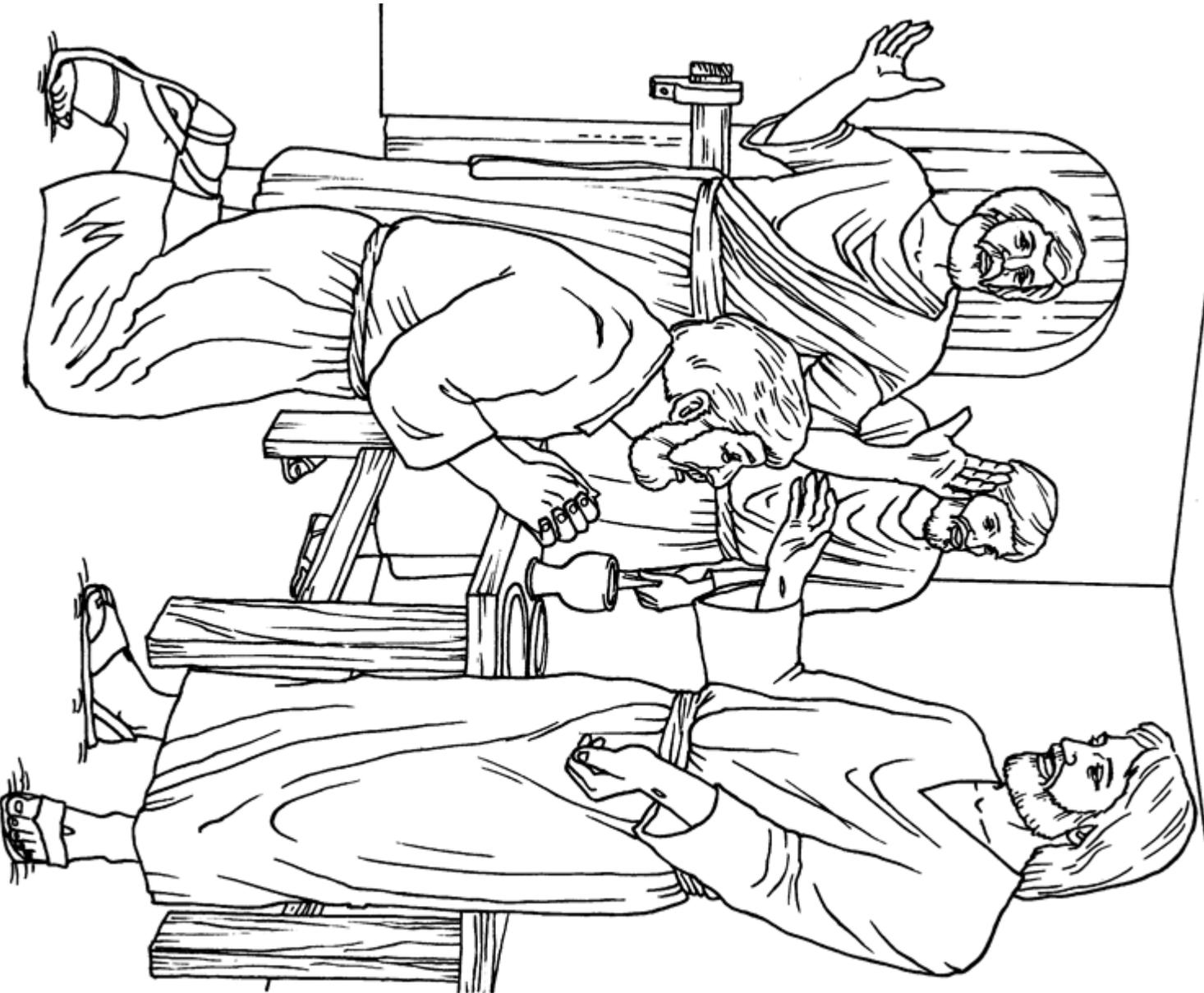
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Word Search Puzzle

P S C G O E Y D D T S I G N S
 A K M Q K B E E F O H I R H O
 L T O O F H D R K G K A Y X S
 O U E F C R Y V S E X S N P S
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 V D I S C I P L E S T F J E D

DOORS	SHOWED	THOMAS	TOGETHER
MIRACLES	SIGNS	JESUS	RECORDED
BELIEVED	LIFE	DOUBTING	LOCKED
SIDE	DISCIPLES	TOUCHED	HANDS

JESUS APPEARS



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