

No Longer Flesh

Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.—
John 20:29

The apostle Thomas thought his brethren had been too easily convinced that they had seen Jesus. He felt more proof was needed and said he would believe only if he felt the nail prints in Jesus' hands and the spear wound in his side.

It was important that the disciples believe that Jesus had been resurrected so they would have a basis for their faith. Most of the disciples realized that Jesus was with them by the tone of his voice or his manner of “breaking bread” or praying.

One evening they were gathered together when Jesus suddenly appeared and said, “Peace be unto you.” This time he looked like the Jesus they had known. He told them to touch him and he ate with them. This put them at ease. He was able to explain many Scriptures and reviewed the prophecies he had fulfilled. He showed them the reason and necessity for his miracles and his death (Luke 24:33-48).

He told Thomas to be convinced that it was he, Jesus, but also said that those who believed without those proofs were more blessed. Jesus appeared to his followers three times on his resurrection day and five times more during the next thirty-nine days. They realized Jesus had indeed risen and was now a spirit being, highly exalted (Philippians 2:9).

Judas had been a traitor and thus lost his right to be one of the twelve apostles. The word apostle means “one who is sent forth”

or “a messenger.” All the true followers of Jesus can be called apostles for they are sent forth to preach the good news of the kingdom to all nations. But there were to be twelve who were especially chosen. Saul of Tarsus took the place of Judas.

After Pentecost, Jesus went to be with his heavenly Father. Saul was on his way to Damascus when he saw a vision of the glorified Jesus. The glory and brightness were so overwhelming it left Saul blinded. His name was later changed to Paul.

In another vision, the Lord spoke to Ananias (a disciple in Damascus) and told him to go to Saul and tell him he was to be a “chosen vessel,” that is, chosen by God to be an apostle. As Ananias was speaking to Saul the “scales” fell from his eyes and he could see (Acts 9:18). Saul had been doing everything he could to destroy Christianity, but now was ready to lay down his life to serve Jesus Christ.



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