



You don't have to be your dad... You can become God's man!

Can God Really Use A Man Like Me?

Thomas

"This wasn't supposed to happen!"

"Where was God when I needed Him most?"

"I was believing God that my marriage would be restored. Today my wife filed for divorce!"

"I didn't count on this recession. I prayed for God to help us financially. I can't believe the bank foreclosed on the house."

"I did the best I could as a Dad, how could this happen to my child?"

"We prayed for a miracle healing, but my loved one died. How could God let this happen?"

These are words spoken by real men when their real lives didn't turn out the way they expected. These questions are filled with shock, heartache, and disappointment. They are honest feelings expressed to the God they long to serve. Deep inside they love God and want to be used by Him, yet the pain and trauma of their current situation makes them anything but a pillar of faith and strength. Deep inside they wonder "Can God ever use me when I feel the way I feel?"

While other people may tell you that God can't use you with an attitude like this, they are wrong. How do I know this? If God can use Thomas, He can definitely use you.

I feel sorry for Thomas, or as you probably know him, "Doubting Thomas". What a horrible label other believers have placed on a man who loved and served God wholeheartedly. Thomas was given this name because of the story found in John 20. Jesus had risen from the dead and appeared to the disciples. However, a broken-hearted Thomas was not present when Jesus appeared. He didn't see Jesus. The last image he had in his mind was of his best friend hanging dead on a cross with a Roman spear piercing his side.

Thomas had a deep love in his heart for Jesus. It could be said that He was more devoted to Jesus than any of the twelve disciples. He always wanted to be with Jesus. He couldn't imagine life without Jesus. More than any of the other disciples, Thomas was bothered by Jesus' statements that He would be going away for a time before His disciples could rejoin Him (John 14:1-7). Thomas preferred to die side-by-side with Jesus than live without Him. He proved this when he announced he would return with Jesus to Lazarus' home. He said, "Then **Thomas** (called Didymus) said to the rest of the disciples, "Let us also go, that we may die with him. (John 11:16)." Now Thomas' worst fears had come true. He was left alone in the world without Jesus, his best friend and the person he loved more than anyone else in the universe.

Thomas' sense of grief and loss shattered his faith and hope. He couldn't believe what the other disciples told him was true. How could it be? Honestly, if you were in Thomas' shoes, could you have believed it? He didn't have the strength to believe. He needed Jesus to help him believe. He said to the disciples, "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." (John 20:25). An honest statement made by a hurting man.

Jesus knew Thomas. He knew the depth of love and devotion Thomas had for Him. He also knew the extreme sense of loss Thomas felt. Some have said that Thomas grieved the deepest because He lost the most. Jesus knew that. He didn't look at Thomas and think, "What's it going to take for him to just believe! He should be stronger!" Instead Jesus reached out to Thomas. He let him feel his scars from the nails. He showed him the gash in his side. Jesus compassionately understood Thomas' grief and carried Him through it. He restored Thomas faith, and He used him to carry the Gospel to the furthest corners of the world.

God understands how pain and suffering can knock us down and damage or weaken our faith. However, He also knows that it will only be for a season. He knows deep inside we do love Him and long to serve Him. Like a doctor who treats a sick patient, Jesus allows us time to recover and gather strength, knowing it is necessary so we can once again be strong enough to follow Him. As long as we stay committed to God in the hard times and reach out to Him to help us through, He won't condemn us. Instead He will carry us through the rough time and then use it to help us minister to others. He can use you.

So as you go through this hard time in your life, don't condemn yourself, or worse yet let other people condemn you for struggling with believing and not having strong faith. Instead focus on God. Allow Him to do the healing that He needs to do in your life. Lean on Him and let Him help you through this season. I guarantee that if you do you will become stronger and develop a deeper relationship with God than you ever thought possible. Your roots will go deeper in God and you will become capable of reaching others. God can use you in the future, but first He must heal you and take you through the rough times. However, remember Thomas' story and know it is only for a season and there is hope on the other side.

**copyright 2010 www.notyourdadministries.com, a
division of James J. Holden Ministries L.L.C**
