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## John's Friend Thomas (A composite sketch)

### Story #1

*A man named Lazarus was sick. He lived in Bethany with his sisters, Mary and Martha. This is the Mary who later poured the expensive perfume on the Lord's feet and wiped them with her hair. Her brother, Lazarus, was sick. So the two sisters sent a message to Jesus telling him, "Lord, your dear friend is very sick."*

*But when Jesus heard about it he said, "Lazarus's sickness will not end in death. No, it happened for the glory of God so that the Son of God will receive glory from this." So although Jesus loved Martha, Mary, and Lazarus, he stayed where he was for the next two days. Finally, he said to his disciples, "Let's go back to Judea."*

*But his disciples objected. "Rabbi," they said, "only a few days ago the people in Judea were trying to stone you. Are you going there again?"*

*Jesus replied, "There are twelve hours of daylight every day. During the day people can walk safely. They can see because they have the light of this world. But at night there is danger of stumbling because they have no light." Then he said, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but now I will go and wake him up."*

*The disciples said, "Lord, if he is sleeping, he will soon get better!" They thought Jesus meant Lazarus was simply sleeping, but Jesus meant Lazarus had died.*

*So he told them plainly, "Lazarus is dead. And for your sakes, I'm glad I wasn't there, for now you will really believe. Come, let's go see him."*

*Thomas, nicknamed the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, "Let's go, too—and die with Jesus." (John 11: 1-16 NLT)*

### Story #2

*"Don't let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, and trust also in me. There is more than enough room in my Father's home. If this were not so, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you? When everything is ready, I will come and get you, so that you will always be with me where I am. And you know the way to where I am going."*

*"No, we don't know, Lord," Thomas said. "We have no idea where you are going, so how can we know the way?"*

*Jesus told him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me. If you had really known me, you would*

*know who my Father is. From now on, you do know him and have seen him!" (John 14:1-7 NLT)*

### Story #3

*One of the twelve disciples, Thomas (nicknamed the Twin), was not with the others when Jesus came. They told him, "We have seen the Lord!"*

*But he replied, "I won't believe it unless I see the nail wounds in his hands, put my fingers into them, and place my hand into the wound in his side."*

*Eight days later the disciples were together again, and this time Thomas was with them. The doors were locked; but suddenly, as before, Jesus was standing among them. "Peace be with you," he said. Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and look at my hands. Put your hand into the wound in my side. Don't be faithless any longer. Believe!"*

*"My Lord and my God!" Thomas exclaimed.*

*Then Jesus told him, "You believe because you have seen me. Blessed are those who believe without seeing me." (John 20:24-29 NLT)*

### Story #4

*Later, Jesus appeared again to the disciples beside the Sea of Galilee. This is how it happened. Several of the disciples were there—Simon Peter, Thomas (nicknamed the Twin), Nathanael from Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two other disciples. Simon Peter said, "I'm going fishing."*

*"We'll come, too," they all said. So they went out in the boat, but they caught nothing all night. (John 21: 1-3 NLT)*

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### A Prayer for Noticing God in Friendships

- Loving God quiet me down to listen to my life and your presence in it.
  - When I reflect back, who are the people that have enriched my life emotionally and spiritually?
  - Who are my memory markers, like John had with Thomas?
  - Who stand out as companions in the doubt and questions that are also part of my faith story?
  - Have I noticed times when I was truly a friend to another?
  - Have I noticed times when I was impatient, critical or inattentive to the needs of a friend?
  - What have I noticed my friend Jesus saying to me about all this?
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