

# It's the way you tell them: John 20:24-29

## The Story of Thomas

Viliame Falekaono

Our behaviour sometimes communicates better and more effective messages than those we proclaim...



Thomas was not in the house when Jesus visited the apostles in a locked room. They were afraid and thought it was a ghost, but Jesus calmed them down, helped them to be at peace and left them again.

While they were in a state of shock Thomas arrived and was told the story about Jesus' visit. It was an incredible story and he refused to believe it.

The only reasonable thing to do was to ask questions: Who is going funny here? Is it me? Is it the other apostles? Or was it really Jesus?

The only thing that would prove to him that they weren't crazy was to touch Jesus' wounds.

Why was Thomas so doubtful?

Just imagine yourself as Thomas. You run home to get something to eat and on your arrival you are told that Jesus, killed days before, has entered a locked room and talked to your friends. You'd probably look each of them in the face, and you'd see the doubt in their eyes.

If the Apostles had really been sure it was Jesus, and told the story in a convincing way Thomas needn't have requested to touch Jesus' wounds. When Jesus appeared again, Thomas did not want to put his hand in the wounds...he believed.

We, as Christian communicators, we communicate our Jesus stories, but often they do not so much help people believe as to provoke them to ask further questions. If our message is the truth, people will know by the way we tell them. If we preach forgiveness and love, but the way we live is inconsistent with this message, people will question our message. But if we live out forgiveness and love, they will know and they will believe.

Viliame Falekaono is Director of the Communication Department of the Catholic Diocese of Tonga.