

Sermon Summary

2nd Sunday in Easter

15th April 2012

- When people ask the parlour game question: which historical figure would you most like to meet_ they often expect a cleric to say Jesus. I don't. If they were to ask why not_ i would offer the following explanation.
- I would not be able to speak readily with the Jesus of history. My Greek has no pronunciation recognisable to the ancient world, despite the best efforts of modern educators, and my Aramaic would be non-existent. But there's a better reason....its found in John's gospel...
- John writes a gospel to Christians who had never had a chance to know Jesus during his earthly life.
- We could imagine that they felt highly inadequate in light of the privilege granted to the recent first generation
- They were also facing all the uncertainty that might come from being expelled from familiar places of worship (like the synagogue).
- John writes to boost their confidence.
- He shows how their faith is the equal of the first generation, and that they need not feel inferior
- The disciples in the gospels are not perfect: their recurring role is to misunderstand what Jesus is saying to them
- Thomas is an example both here and earlier in the gospel.
- The significance of the Thomas story we read this morning (John 20:19-31) is to impress upon John's audience that they are, according to this understanding of Jesus), the superiors of those who saw Jesus
- Those who believe without seeing have a better response to God's call than those who saw and misunderstood.
- If John's gospel is a reminder to that audience, it serves the same function for us.
- So, I don't need to meet Jesus face to face because I already know him without seeing, and this is by no means an inadequate or inferior way of knowing him....

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