As you just heard, the book of John tells of a man who didn't believe that Jesus had been resurrected. Most of us probably heard this story and were thinking something like why didn't you believe the disciples? It's JESUS for crying out loud! That Thomas must have been a pretty messed up guy. And sure, maybe he was. But, what if today, someone stopped you on the street and told you that Jesus was back and hanging out at their house? Most of you would probably pull out your pepper spray. And sure you laugh, but isn’t it the truth? Every child has been told at one point in their life “don’t talk to strangers.” But would the same rule uphold if that stranger was Jesus? I mean, how often have you heard a parent tell their child “don’t talk to strangers, but if they're Jesus, do whatever they say”. People don’t say that because they don’t believe. Sure, most of them believe in Jesus, maybe they believe that he will come back someday, but no one seems to realize how close that day might be. Thomas didn’t think that day would come at all—in his mind, dead is dead, whether you are Jesus or the guy who sells oil and sandals across the street. For him, faith wasn’t enough for him. Jesus told him and the disciples that he would rise on the third day. When he was resurrected the disciples tried to tell Thomas the good news. But he didn’t believe them. Sure Jesus was a cool guy who did some pretty miraculous things, and it stunk that he died, but did he really have the power to come back to life? Chances are, the disciples were some of the only people who believed that he did. Thomas reacted the way any common man (or woman) would have—he asked for proof. He said not until I put my fingers into his hands, and into his sides, only then will I believe you.

This man faced one of the many common problems of today's society: keeping the faith in times of doubt. As a teenager, this is no foreign concept to me. Many of my friends have been having
self esteem issues lately, as is common practice amongst many high schoolers. There are only so many things you can say to them to make them believe that things will all be okay in the end. The fact that nothing I said was getting through to them brought me down for weeks, until recently. I was sitting at home one night and realized, it will all be okay in the end, because God’s watching out for us. Sure his solutions may not be what we were expecting or what we want necessarily, but they are what He wants, which means they must be good. My friends and I have been experiencing the doubt in the bottom of our faith valley, but if we keep our minds on pushing forward and becoming better Christians, we slowly start to find those stairs that will take us out of the valley and into pure, blind faith.

The world is full of trials that are trying to derail us from God, things like school, money, politics; even the odd-ball cousin you have to be nice to at Easter is a trial. But God knows that these are struggles for us, and he understands when we fail, but that just gives us one more thing to strive for. Even though its hard—and I mean hard—keeping the faith in times of doubt is one of the most important struggles we will ever face in this life. Challenge by challenge, trial by trial, we are inching our way towards complete and utter faith. Only when we reach that will we become true Christians.
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