



## Discussion questions - John 1:14-42

1. John's claim in vs. 14 that "We have seen..." is a key point throughout the New Testament. (See Luke 1:1-4, 1 John 1:1-4, Acts 3:20, and 2 Peter 1:16-18, among others).

This is a stunning fact—that God Almighty has actually come in the person of Christ and revealed himself to us at historical time and geographical place so that people could say, "We have seen...." This is a tremendously important point and one that sets Christianity apart from other religions.

However, in response to Thomas' insistence on physically seeing the resurrected Jesus (John 20:24-29), Jesus says "Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

Assuming that Jesus does not mean something like, "Blessed are those who believe without knowing why," or "Blessed are those who believe without any good reason," why are people blessed for believing even though they have not physically seen Jesus?

How can a person truly know that Jesus is real and that he really resurrected if (like the overwhelming majority of Christians) he or she cannot physically see Jesus as the disciples did?

2. Do you find the point that focusing on the person of Christ instead of denominational claims to be helpful or more confusing?

Though most Christian denominations agree on the basic truths of Christianity (as given in The Apostle's Creed), there are some—Latter Day Saints (Mormons) and Jehovah's Witnesses, for example—who reject these basic teachings and teach completely unique doctrines. So, how, specifically, should we discern the differences?

3. In light of Jesus' invitation to his first disciples to come and follow him, we should seek to know the person of Christ and not only seek intellectual comprehension of facts and arguments about him.

But how does a person keep the balance of focusing on the person of Christ without falling into the trap of focusing only on his or her own feelings so that Christ becomes nothing more than a projection of a person's emotional state or a kind of imaginary friend of one's own creation? In other words, how can we encounter the real factual person rather than what we imagine him to be?

