



One Page Sermon

By Pastor Robb McCoy

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Worship Every Sunday at 9:30 AM

2nd Sunday of Easter: Jesus appears to the disciples, then to Thomas

There is a buzzword going around Christian circles these days. If you spend any time reading Christian leaders, you'll hear this word. Some use it to describe a positive development, a liberating . Others claim it is a terrible trend in the Church that is leading to the breakdown of Christendom. The word: Deconstruction.

The idea is that deconstruction is the act of a person taking apart their theology. Most of the time, deconstruction refers to the intellectual act of questioning fundamental evangelical understandings of the Bible, God and faith. Deconstruction begins when someone starts to question the things they were taught by authorities, pastors, Sunday school teachers, and authors.

Deconstruction happens when people start to ask questions. Do I believe that the Bible is the literal, inerrant words of God? Is it possible that people of other faiths aren't condemned to an eternity of torment? Does God actually will all things to happen in the world? Is God in control of all things? Do homosexual people have to live a life of chastity in order to remain faithful to God? Are women really supposed to remain silent in church and ever be allowed to teach or lead men? Questions such as these are feared by many.

The Deconstruction movement has empowered many Christians to take a deeper look at their faith. Deconstruction has also frightened many leaders, making them call deconstruction a path to the breakdown of civilization (I have literally read this in a tweet). To be fair, it has led to some deciding that a life of faith is not for them. They see only pain and hurt caused by a rigid religiosity and have lost any connection to the divine. Most however, are finding a new understanding of God that is resilient to questions, wonder, and yes—doubt. Deconstruction at its best is about taking down one form of faith that is built on the sinking sand of uncreative fundamentalism and then rebuilding something that is vibrant, fruitful, and life-giving.

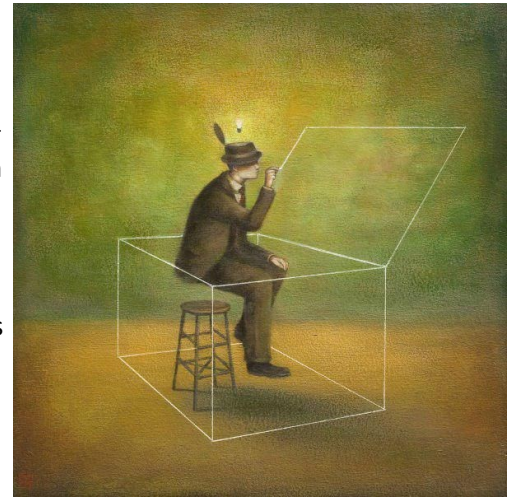
Thomas was the first deconstructionist. He did not accept the authority of the disciples, but instead demanded evidence. Thomas did not doubt Jesus. He doubted them. Really, can you blame him? Jesus appeared to the disciples in a locked room. On the first day of the week, he appeared to them, showed him his scars

and they celebrated. Then he breathed the holy Spirit onto them and gave them a commission. He sent them out to go and forgive. Thomas missed it all, but then the story skips ahead eight days and where are these disciples? Still locked in the room. He sent them out and where were they? Still locked in a room.

How much of our Church is still sitting in a locked room, fearful of what is outside? The Church remains fearful of what it might lose instead of encouraged by the Spirit to seek forgiveness. For too long the Church has locked out people with questions, locked out people who have different experiences, different cultures, different language, different backgrounds, or different orientation.

We live in a world that doubts. We are surrounded by those deconstructing old understandings of what it means to be Christian. Will we be there to help build something new? We are surrounded by those who doubt the Resurrection. We are surrounded by a world that doubts the love of God, doubts the Church's sincerity, doubts the power of radical generosity and transformation. Have we given them any reason not to doubt?

People are hungry for meaning, love, forgiveness, and community. Christ told us to love one another but the Church has decided that some kind of love is the incorrect kind of love. We claim to follow the Way, but we have decided that only our Way is compatible with Christian teaching. Let's open up the doors. Let's open up the Church and let the world know that we're not afraid anymore. Let no one doubt that Resurrection matters. We can welcome the deconstruction and dismantling of broken theology and embrace the construction of a new community that has truly open hearts, open minds, and open doors.



Thinking Outside the Box Makes Me Lightheaded | Duy Huynh