

I am a man of logic. If some-one says to me: "It cannot be done", I do not just accept it at that. I ask 'Why not?'; then collect all the information available, sift it, try all the alternatives - and quite often prove that it *can* be done! It is not that I am clever; just that I am tenacious - or, as my more outspoken friends would say: "Just plain cussed" - because I think there is a logical solution to most things. I say *most* not all, for there comes a time when logic just does not work - even for me.

St Thomas was a bit like that. You heard his story in today's Gospel reading (John 20.19-29). You will remember that his friends, the other apostles, told Thomas that Jesus, the Risen Jesus, had appeared to them behind locked doors. Thomas is sceptical and replies: "Unless I see in his hands the print of the nails, and place my finger in the mark of the nails, and place my hand in his side, I will not believe". That was logical. Thomas is known as the Doubter, but his was an honest doubt; and he was entitled to some proof. After all, one does not expect to believe such a wild story without some proof. Well, he got it! Jesus appeared to him personally and invited Thomas to touch him - to test his eyes with his hands. He did so and Thomas the Doubter became Thomas the fervent Believer. But, as Jesus said to him: "You believed because you have seen me. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe".

This is when logic comes right up against a brick wall. For it just is not logical to believe that some-one was publicly killed, stone dead, and then is alive again evermore. This is why there have always been those who understandably, and reasonably, have denied, or at least doubted, the resurrection. For them, although Jesus is incomparable, he is still viewed from the man-ward side of reality - rather than from the God-ward side. They cannot bring themselves to believe in what seems impossible. But the things of theology; of God; cannot be judged by the reasoning of humans. If in a world demanding spiritual apprehension we demand laboratory proof, and will not believe unless we can touch or handle them, the central truth about Christ will for ever escape us. But if, recognising his mastery over men and women and circumstances, we surrender our logic to

the majesty of his risen power, then by faith, we will know “the victory that overcomes the things of the world”, as the First Letter of St John (5.4) puts it.

Even in the non-religious world, logic must sometimes fly out of the window: as in the classic case of human love. For what parent, husband, or wife, has not at one time at least thought, and probably said, to the their spouse or child: “If you really loved me you would not do that ...”. But the fact remains - they did do it; and they do love you. It is illogical but it is true! It is only faith in the other person that convinces us of their love - in spite of our doubts. Or it is only faith and hope! It is just such a faith and hope in the Risen Lord Jesus Christ which has enabled so many Christian giants to turn the world upside down. They have put their simple trust in him as the one who has the keys of life and death. By faith, not logic, they have committed their whole lives to him. They have said with Thomas: “My Lord and my God!”. It was this that turned Saul the persecutor of the church, into Paul the propagator of the church. It was this that turned Francis of Assisi from the gay worldling, into the troubadour of God. It was this that changed the earnest, ecstatic, Anglican clergyman John Wesley, vainly seeking his salvation through good works and missionary labours in Georgia, into a warm-hearted evangelist, looking on the whole world as his parish - and to such good and lasting effect in Methodism.

There are too, thousands of others who, by faith, have over-come the world; believing that through Christ all things are possible. Not that such faith makes us super-stars who by magic will be able to tread the world like a colossus. Never -the-less with it, we shall have supernatural, perhaps illogical, powers that will enable us never to be spiritually defeated. In a few moments we will be sharing in a morsel of bread and a sip of wine. If we receive it with logic in our hearts, we will think it a poor substitute for a good hearty meal; though some think it illogical to think of it as anything other than just a mere symbolic taste of food. But received with faith, it will sustain and support us with God’s spiritual strength to overcome the problems of the world - with that peace of

God which passes all understanding - and passes all logic.