

~Other Speakers S-Z: K.P. Yohannan:

Thomas. Everyone thinks of him as “doubting Thomas.” This privileged man walked with Jesus during His ministry on earth and knew Him face-to-face.

Unfortunately, when the other disciples had the opportunity to see their Lord after He was raised from the dead, Thomas did not. Their excited reports seemed too good for him to believe. “Whoa,” responded the absentee. “Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe it” (John 20:25). Before long, the day came when he stood face-to-face with his Lord, and in the presence of his colleagues, he came to grips with his lack of faith.

I’m sure Thomas was grieved by his own skepticism, this reluctance to believe that Jesus could do something so amazing. But was that the end of his usefulness to the Lord?

No. Again, the Potter made a more beautiful vessel than what was there before. He chose Thomas to go to one of the hardest regions in the world at that time, to far-off India. Through his great faith and ultimate martyrdom, this extraordinary disciple established the Church in my nation.

In fact, in A.D. 52 Thomas traveled to Niranam (the village where I was born), shared the Gospel and established a church. And 1,900 years later, God granted me the privilege of being born into a family of believers in that very village. So my spiritual life traces its roots to the labor of Thomas so many generations back. I personally am convinced God was able to bring about His perfect will in the life of this one who earlier was a doubter.

Mark. This is the young man who deserted his teammates on his first missionary assignment. In the Apostle Paul’s opinion, Mark was unfit for service and didn’t deserve a second chance (see Acts 15:36–38).

How devastated John Mark must have felt about this! But the end of his story had not yet been written. Later on, his presence was desired by the same Apostle Paul, because “he is helpful to me in my ministry” (2 Timothy 4:11).

Mark also became a blessing to the whole Church by writing the story of Jesus in our second Gospel. What an encouragement he was not just in his own lifetime, but to the many ages that have followed.

Time and time again, God has taken marred pots and turned them into vessels of His praise. Not only does He make them more beautiful, but through them, He also brings about His perfect will. Truly, His ways are above our ways.