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"Give a dog a bad name..."

We are familiar with the old proverb, which goes "Give a dog a bad name, and beat it". We think of Alfred, who burnt the cakes. Did he not do anything else? Or we remember 'Ethelred the unready' - was he never ready for anything, I wonder? It is so easy to latch on to one aspect a person's character that we know (or think we do!) by repute, and judge everything else they do accordingly.



One glaring example of this principle applied to a character in the Bible is Thomas, who is so often labelled as "doubting Thomas". But does he really deserve this label? Yes, it is true that when he was first told that the Lord Jesus has risen from the tomb, he doubted, even though he was told by no less than TEN fellow apostles who had seen Jesus, touched Jesus, and listened to Jesus in person previous day. Yes, he doubted, in spite of the powerful evidence from reputable and familiar sources. But, in fairness, ALL of the disciples, we are told by Luke, doubted when they first heard from the ladies about the empty tomb. Thomas was by no means the only one who doubted.

But when Thomas was confronted by the risen Lord the following week, he did not shut his sense in disbelief; rather, he came out with that most profound acknowledgement of the bodily presence of the Lord Jesus ... My Lord and My God. The depth of his perception was unprecedented. And he went on, tradition says, to be a very effective messenger for the Gospel.

Oh, that we would learn from Jesus!