

Dealing with Doubts

Closer to God (61) - Challenges

Concerning Doubt

- Doubt – uncertainty about whether something is true or not.
Spiritual doubt concerns our faith
- We live in a doubt filled world:
Lack of trust in society, objects & people

Concerning Doubt

- Spiritually there are doubts about:
 - the existence of God
 - Jesus as our Savior
 - the Bible as God's word
- Expressed in media, social media, the internet, education system, lawmakers & even liberal theology.
- Our faith is continually being challenged!

Concerning Doubt

- Doubt is a tool of Satan! Even the first sin involved the planting of doubt (**Genesis 3:1-5**)
- It erodes trust, and if one is prone to doubt, they may be hesitant to trust anyone!

Concerning Doubt

- Levels of doubt
- *Unbelief* – doubt to the point of rejection –
Luke 8:12 (wayside)
The scribes and Pharisees
Matthew 13:58 – Jesus at Nazareth

Concerning Doubt

- Levels of doubt
- *Skepticism* – ambivalence toward answers
Unless irrefutable facts are presented, it will not be accepted – often with unattainable standards
 - Often unwilling to investigate**cf. John 18:38**, “What is truth?”

Concerning Doubt

- Levels of doubt
- *Momentary doubts* – a believer who takes his eyes off the Lord for a moment
Matthew 14:28-33 – Peter sinking
Luke 1:18 – Zacharias (John's father)
Luke 7:19-21 – John the Baptist

Concerning Doubt

- Levels of doubt
- *Honest questions* – a believer who has genuine questions and desires a truthful answer

John 20:24-29 – Thomas

Judges 6:11-13ff – Gideon,
also **36-40** as he asks for signs (validation)

Concerning Doubt

Dangers of doubt

- *It can weaken your self-will*
- *It can affect your self-worth (esteem)*
- *It can cause you to put off acting or taking chances*
- *It can lead to indecision – **James 1:6-8,**
Ephesians 4:14*
- *It can lead one AWAY from God – **Heb. 3:12***

The Bible & Doubt

- We have seen examples of doubt from God's word
- **James 1:5-8** – pray with no doubting
- **1 Timothy 2:8** – lift up holy hands without doubting
- **Romans 14:22-23** – act in faith

Dealing with Doubt

- **It begins with attitude!**
- We all face doubts from time to time – BUT how will you respond?
- Is doubt sinful? That depends on the type of doubts you are having and how you CHOOSE to deal with it!
- Where there is doubt, there is weak faith – whether momentary or long lasting

Dealing with Doubt

- **Deal with your doubts**
- Do NOT close your minds to an answer
- “Learn to doubt your doubts”
- Consider Thomas – **John 20:24-25**
- what made him different from the others?
(**cf. Matthew 28:17, Luke 24:37ff**)

Dealing with Doubt

- **Deal with your doubts**
- Search for answers
 - The key to overcoming doubt is knowledge

Romans 10:17

2 Timothy 2:15, Acts 17:11, etc.

- weigh the evidence honestly

cf. John 10:37-38

Dealing with Doubt

- **Deal with your doubts**
- Talk with someone you trust! Someone you can confide in and that will not judge you harshly or wrongly!
Someone with patience to help you through your struggles

Dealing with Doubt

- **Don't let doubts cause you to abandon what you DO know**
- You do not need ALL the answers to reach a conclusion
 - Did Abraham understand why God told him to sacrifice his son? But he had enough reason to believe and trust God
 - Did Job ever find out that God was not the one afflicting him?

Dealing with Doubt

- **Don't let doubts cause you to abandon what you DO know**
- Our faith is not blind! **Cf. Romans 1:20**
- God has given us enough evidence to believe Him and His word!

Dealing with Doubt

- **Don't let doubts cause you to abandon what you DO know**
- Just because you do not have all the answers does not mean there is not one!
Cf. John 9:24-25. Keep searching!

Dealing with Doubt

- **Don't let doubts cause you to abandon what you DO know**
- Example: Evolutionists present an argument you cannot answer
 - Does NOT mean there is no answer!
 - Should NOT affect the indisputable evidence for a designer (facts naturalism CANNOT answer).

Dealing with Doubt

- **Be humble and open-minded**
- Honestly weigh the evidence!
Matthew 13:13-16 – why Jesus spoke in parables!

Dealing with Doubt

- **Don't let doubts keep you from acting**
 - Some people are satisfied to remain in ignorance. They do not want to decide.
 - > That way they do not have to submit (they reason)
- 2 Timothy 3:6-8** – always learning...

Dealing with Doubt

- **Pray about it!**
- **James 1:5-9**
- **Mark 9:24**, “Lord, I believe, help my unbelief”

Dealing with Doubt

- If there is sin in your life repent
- **Acts 3:19, 8:22, etc.**

Sins can produce doubt - they are there because we know we are not living right!

Dealing with Doubt

- **Never stop growing**
- **2 Peter 3:18, 1:5-11**
The stronger your faith and the more you know, the less you doubt

Dealing with Doubt

- **What about when someone comes to you expressing doubts?**
- **1 Thessalonians 5:14, Hebrews 12:12**
Do your best to help and encourage
Do not be flippant or dismissive
Be patient with them
Be discreet – keep it as private as possible!

Concerning Doubt

When faced with doubts, either you will

- let them ravage you
- let them make you stronger

Genesis 4:6-7

Concerning Doubt

Is your faith where
it ought to be?

Concerning Doubt

Let us pray!