

# Dealing With Doubt

Faith, Questions, and God's Patience  
(Apologetics, Week 7)

# A Crucial Clarification

An important question:  
Is it wrong to have doubts?

- Doubt  $\neq$  unbelief
- Not all doubt is the same
- C. S. Lewis “My argument against God was that the universe seemed cruel and unjust. But how had I got this idea of just and unjust? A man does not call a line crooked unless he has some idea of a straight line.”
- Doubt can be a pathway; not a dead end!

# Biblical Examples

- Thomas: Doubt That Seeks Evidence (John 20:24-29)
  - Doubted testimony, not Jesus
  - Jesus meets him personally and responds with evidence, not shame
  - Leads to the strongest confession
- John The Baptist: Unmet Expectations (Matthew 11:2-6)
  - Faithful obedience, but confusing circumstances
  - Jesus responds with Scripture, not rebuke
- Abraham and Sarah: Doubt About God's Promise (Genesis 15, 17, 18)
  - "How can I know?"; laughter
  - God reassures, not rebukes

# Biblical Examples

- Gideon: Doubt in Calling (Judges 6, 7)
  - Fear and insecurity
  - God confirms before commissioning
- Moses: Doubt in Ability (Exodus 3, 4)
  - “Who am I?”, “What if they don’t believe?”
  - God provides signs, not slogans
- Other Examples:
  - Psalms
  - Disciples in the storm
  - Zechariah

# Biblical Examples

- Elijah: Doubt After Victory (1 Kings 18, 19)
  - Exhaustion masquerades as spiritual doubt
  - “Despair is always color-blind; it can only see the dark tints.”
  - God responds with rest, food, and presence
  - The “gentle whisper”
- Are you listening for God?

Doubt didn't remove these people from God's story - it moved them deeper into it.

# What This Teaches Us

- God's Character Towards Doubters
  - Patient
  - Relational
  - Trust-centered
  - Shepherding, not silencing
- To Clarify:
  - “God provides signs” does not mean unlimited, on-demand proof!

Evidence supports faith; it doesn't replace it

# Sources of Doubt

- Where Does Doubt Come From?
  - Intellectual
  - Emotional
  - Moral
  - Relational
- Different Doubts, Different Needs
  - Intellectual → answers
  - Emotional → care
  - Moral → honesty
  - Relational → healing
- Ask yourself: “If this doubt were resolved today, would my faith actually be settled - or would something else rise to the surface?”

# Responding to Doubt Biblically

- Seek Truth - John 8:31-32
- Pray Honestly - Mark 9:24
- Stay in Community - Hebrews 10:24-25
- Remember God's Faithfulness - Psalm 77:11-12
- Three Anchors of Faith:
  - Truth - keeps faith from becoming irrational
  - Trust - keeps faith from becoming cold or cynical
  - Commitment - keeps faith from collapsing during uncertainty
- Proverbs 3:5 "Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding."

# Encouraging Others

- Jude 22 - “Be merciful to those who doubt.”
- What not to say:
  - “Just have more faith.”
  - “Real Christians don’t doubt.”
- CARE model:
  - Connect: Listen first.
  - Affirm: Their struggle matters.
  - Respond: Offer truth gently.
  - Encourage: Point back to God’s character and Word.

# Application and Encouragement

- The point isn't to eliminate doubt, but to learn to walk faithfully through it
- God isn't threatened by questions
- Reflection Exercise:
  - One doubt, one trusted person

Assignment: Read Psalm 73

Next Week...

Answering Common Questions

# Discussion

1. What kinds of doubt are hardest to admit, and why?
2. How can the church become a safer place for honest questions?
3. How has God grown your faith through seasons of doubt?