

Lesson 2: Understanding & Addressing Our Doubts

Teacher: Phillip Shumake

1.) Doubts That Help Us

God doesn't want us to trust everyone about everything. That would be a disaster. He made us with the ability to recognize lies and false teachings. How was doubt useful in these passages?

- 1 John 4:1
- Acts 17:10-12
- 1 Thessalonians 5:19-22

2.) Doubts That Hurt Us

Peter had doubts. Thomas had doubts. Everyone faces doubts at some point. It's important that we recognize when doubts become a problem and that we take steps to find and consider the evidence available for reaching a solid conclusion.

- What does God want us to understand about doubt in...
 - Matthew 14:26-33
 - Luke 24:36-49
 - James 1:5-8
 - Jude 1:22
- When Satan wants to weaken our defenses, he often uses doubts to attack us. What messages and ideas does Satan use to upset our faith?
 - Colossians 2:4,8
 - 2 Peter 2:18-19

3.) The Threshold for Trust & Decision Making

How much information and evidence do we need in order to make a good decision? You will probably agree that it varies. A small decision, such as what to eat for lunch, can be made with a small amount of information. Likewise a big decision, such as what car to buy or who to marry, requires more time and information. However, no matter what decisions we make in life, we must admit that we can never have ALL of the POSSIBLE information. We can't know EVERYTHING about medicine, geology, astronomy – the whole universe. We can't know EVERYTHING about the person we are dating before

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Embry Hills – January 2022

we get married. But we CAN KNOW ENOUGH. We can know enough to trust them. We can know enough to understand their priorities. We can know enough to love and care about them deeply. Likewise, we can't know EVERYTHING about God (Deut. 29:29, Eccl. 3:11) but we can know ENOUGH to make a good decision about Him.

- Peter got to see Jesus on the mount of transfiguration, and got to see Jesus after his death and resurrection. This was wonderful evidence – but notice that Peter's confession of Jesus as the Son of God comes BEFORE this. (Matthew 16:13-16) So, what had Peter seen that gave him "enough" evidence to believe?
- What did Jesus say about those who did not get to see His resurrected body? (John 20:26-31)
- What did Peter say about those who did not get to see Him? (1 Peter 1:8-9)
- What two ideas about God does Hebrews 11:6 identify as critical to our faith?
- Ask your parents to share an example of a Bible concept they once had doubts about and what they learned that answered their concerns and confirmed their faith.

4.) Becoming Diligent in Addressing our Doubts

- Name 3 people you can talk to about your doubts?
- Name 3 books you can read to help overcome doubts about Jesus?

5.) When Doubts Aren't The Real Problem

Sometimes we have sincere doubts that can be resolved by learning more about God and His incredible wisdom and plans. (Isaiah 55:8-9) At other times, our doubts aren't the full problem.

- Sometimes the problem is that doubts are used as self-justification to _____.
 - 2 Peter 3:3-4
- Sometimes doubts are an excuse to avoid _____.
 - Acts 24:24-27 or Acts 26:24-29

The Bottomline:

- Everyone has doubts, and they aren't always a bad thing.
- When we doubt God and His Word, we need to carefully study the evidence available to make a reasonable conclusion.
- Many resources are available to help us address our doubts.
- Don't use doubts as an excuse to disobey the True & Living God. (1 Thess. 1:9)