

HOPE

WHY YOU SHOULD HAVE IT

Hope & Doubt

John 20:25-29

So the other disciples told Thomas, "We have seen the Lord!" But he said to them, "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."

A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said "Peace be with you!" Then he said to Thomas,

John 20:25-29 (continued)

"Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe."

Thomas said to him, "My Lord and my God!"

Then Jesus told him, "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

Hope & Doubt

- From the mountaintop of certainty to the valley of doubt.
- Many of the Bible heroes struggled with doubt.

John the Baptist

- John 1:7-8 – He came as a witness, to testify about Jesus.
- John 1:29 – “Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.”
- John 1:34 – “I have seen and I testify that this is God’s Chosen One.”
- Luke 7:20 – “Are you the One who is to come, or should we expect someone else?”

Two Words for Unbelief

Apistia – Struggling to believe;

Inability to stick to something

Apistos – Conscious decision not to believe;

Make a choice against believing

Hope & Doubt

- Spiritual Doubt Virus around for centuries

C.S. Lewis

Now that I am a Christian, I do have moods in which the whole thing looks very improbable.

But when I was an atheist, I had moods in which Christianity looked terribly probable.

Real Question

- How do we prevent the virus from turning into a disease that ravages our faith?

When we keep doubt hidden, we give it more power over us.

1. What doubt really is.

- The opposite of faith is unbelief - *apistos*
- Unbelief is very different from doubt.

Os Guinness

Doubt comes from the word meaning "two". To believe is to be "in one mind" about accepting something as true. To disbelieve is to be "in one mind" about rejecting it as true. To doubt is to waver between the two, to believe and disbelieve at once, and so to be in two minds.

Believe in 1 mind accepting it is true

Disbelieve in 1 mind rejecting it is true

Doubt in 2 minds wavering between

Os Guinness

In the Bible, unbelief refers to a willful refusal to believe, or a deliberate decision to disobey God. But doubt is different. When we doubt, we're being indecisive or ambivalent about an issue. We haven't come down squarely on the side of disbelief or belief. We are temporarily stuck between the two over some questions or concerns.

Karl Barth

Doubt does not mean denial or negation. Doubt only means swaying and staggering between Yes and No.

You can be a full-fledged Christian without settling every single issue of life!

2. Doubt is a sin.

- Matt. 14:28 – “Lord, if it’s you,” Peter replied, “tell me to come to you on the water.” “Come,” He said. Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus. But when he saw the wind, he was afraid, and beginning to sink, cried out, “Lord, save me!” Immediately Jesus reached out His hand and caught him. “You of little faith,” He said, “why did you doubt?”

2. Doubt is a sin.

- Luke 24:36-43 – While they were still talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, “Peace be with you.” They were startled and frightened, thinking they saw a ghost. He said to them, “Why are you troubled, and why do doubts rise in your minds? Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself! Touch me and see; a ghost does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have.”

2. Doubt is a sin.

- Luke 24:40-43 – When he had said this, he showed them his hands and feet. And while they still did not believe it because of joy and amazement, he asked them, “Do you have anything here to eat?” They gave him a piece of broiled fish, and he took it and ate it in their presence.

2. Doubt is a sin.

- Matt. 28:16-19 – Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.”

3. Doubt always causes damage.

- God can use our doubt to produce positive results.
- When you are infected with the doubt virus, and you seek Biblical answers to your questions, then you end up stronger than ever before.

3. Doubt always causes damage.

- Mark Littleton: "Truth can be tested. Doubt is the fire through which it passes. But when it has been tried, it will come forth as gold."

1. Find the root of your doubt.

- Intellectual
- Emotional
- Spiritual
 - Distorted view of God as my "genie"
 - Refusing to deal with sin in life

2. Ask God & others for help.

- Mark 9:24 – “The father cried out, “I do believe, but help me overcome my unbelief!”
- Turn to God.
- Turn to Christians in your life.

3. Build your immune system.

- The human body is less susceptible to viruses when its immune system is strong.
- Building your spiritual immune system will help you fight off the Doubt Virus.

3. Build your immune system.

Read your Bible daily.

- Josh. 1:8 – “This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.”

3. Build your immune system.

Develop a deep prayer life.

- James 5:16 – “The prayer of a righteous person is very powerful in its effect.”

3. Build your immune system.

Don't miss Church & Life Group.

- Heb. 10:24-25 – “And let’s consider how to stir up one another in love and good deeds, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the habit of some people, but encouraging one another...”

3 Keys for killing Doubt Virus

1. Find the root of your doubt.
2. Ask God & others for help.
3. Build your immune system.

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