

1.21.2024

“Hey God I’ve Got A Question”

The Doubt Virus: “I’m a Christian... At Least I Think I Am.” So Why Do I Have So Many Doubts?

“...But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt, because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. That person should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. Such a person is double-minded and unstable in all they do.” James 1:6-8 (NIV)

I. The Good News and Bad News about Doubt.

- 1) Doubt is common...everyone has to deal with it. Nearly all the heroes in the Bible wrestled with doubt at some point. Their examples give us steps to follow to deal with our own doubts in a healthy way.

*“Everybody’s going to get it...
but because you’ve been vaccinated, it’s not going to kill you.”
Doctor to Jim when he and Jen got covid
the day before Josh and Hannah’s wedding*

- 2) Doubt can be dangerous...but it depends on how we respond.

Three Options in Dealing with Doubts:

- **Passively** accept our doubts. (**DANGEROUS**)
- **Turn away** from God because of our doubts. (**DANGEROUS**)
- **Go to God** with our questions and doubts. (**HEALTHY**)
 - **Bible Case Study: David**

*“My God, my God, why have you abandoned me? Why are you so far away when I groan for help?”
Psalm 22:1 (NLT)*

- **Bible Case Study: John the Baptist**

*[John] “Are You the Messiah we’ve been expecting, or should we keep looking for someone else?”
Matthew 11:3 (NLT)*

[Jesus] “I tell you the truth, of all who have ever lived, none is greater than John the Baptist...” Matthew 11:11 (NLT)

- **Bible Case Study: The Matthew 18:15 Principle**

“If another believer sins against you, go privately and point out the offense. If the other person listens and confesses it, you have won that person back.” Matthew 18:15 (NLT)

II. Where Do Our Doubts Come From?

- 1) Our **Intellect**: We need to know what we believe and why.
(Resource: The Case for Faith)
- 2) Our **Emotions**: Don't chase goosebumps; beware of fear, hurt, and anger.
- 3) Our **Choices**: If we choose to sin, that separates us from God and creates doubts.

III. Practical Steps to get over the “Doubt Virus”.

- 1) **LOCATE THE ROOT** of my doubts.
- 2) **GO STRAIGHT TO GOD** for help.
- 3) Make **A PLAN**.
 - **Intellect**: Write down your specific doubts.
 - **Emotions**: Talk to a professional counselor.
 - **Choices**: Be honest about what I'm holding back from God.
- 4) Take care of your **SPIRITUAL HEALTH**.
 - **Bible Case Study: Desperate dad of a sick child**

“The father instantly cried out, ‘I do believe, but help me overcome my unbelief!’” Mark 9:24 (NLT)

Keep the conversation going...

1. If you have friends that have doubts about God or the Bible, where do you think most of their doubts are coming from...intellect, emotions, or choices? Or other? (message outline II.)
2. When you have doubts what do you tend to do...accept your doubts, move away from God, or go to God with your questions? (outline I.2)
3. The next time you or a friend is struggling with the “doubt virus”, what do you think would be a good plan to help you get over it? (outline III.)
4. Pastor Jim mentioned several “Bible Case Studies” of people in the Bible that struggled with doubt (David, John the Baptist, & the Dad with the sick son). Can you think of others?
5. Let's pray for ourselves, and each other, that same plea from the desperate Dad: *“I believe (or I'm really trying), please help my unbelief.” Amen.*