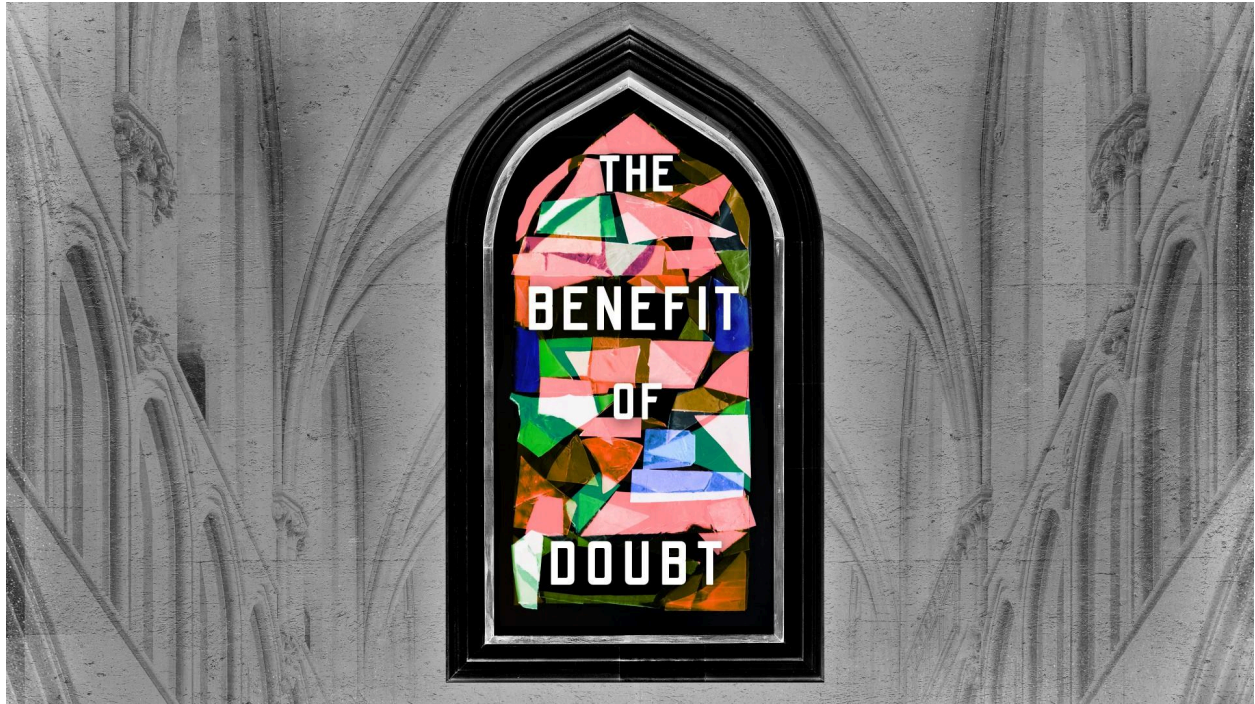




The Benefit of Doubt

Week two - *"The Goodness of God"*

Genesis 2:7-9,15-17 and Isaiah 53:1-6

Bottom line: If love is a choice, suffering is a possibility, but Jesus is enough.

1. How have you wrestled, or not, with the idea of the existence of evil and the goodness of God? Was there a circumstance in particular that made you question how God could exist in light of what was happening, or if God could be considered good in light of what was happening?
2. How would you describe the idea of free will? What is the relationship between free will and love? Do you think love can exist without free will?
3. Read Genesis 2:7-17
 - a. Why do you think God gave Adam the freedom to eat from any of the trees while also asking him not to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil?
 - b. Is there a difference between God denying us things and God setting boundaries? How do you think about that difference?
4. What does it mean to say, "If love is a choice, suffering is a possibility"? If you believe that's true, does it help you understand suffering differently?
5. What's the difference between understanding suffering and experiencing suffering? Why does it matter that Jesus both understood and experienced suffering?
6. How are you wrestling with God this week, and how can this group pray for you?