

PERMISSION GRANTED: To Doubt

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Text: Luke 7:18-28

Doubt can either catapult us towards belief or towards the trap of unbelief.

Doubt is present because faith is present.

God is both a self-revealer and a self-concealer.

Doubt has the potential to be the first step towards faith, or the next step towards a stronger faith.

The only way to deal with doubt is to go to the Word.

In your doubt look to the life change that Jesus brings about.

He gives us permission to doubt, but He doesn't give us permission to stay in our doubt.

Blessings come when we take our doubts to Jesus and lay them down.

Even though John doubted Jesus, Jesus never doubted John.

2 ways to ask questions:

1. Like a child.
2. Like a prosecutor.

Food for Thought for the week of April 10, 2016

(Questions and Scriptures for further study and discussion.)

1. Looking back at your notes from this week's sermon, was there anything that particularly caught your attention, challenged, or confused you?
2. Share with the group about a time when you doubted God. What triggered your feelings? Identify the work of the Holy Spirit in your life during this period. What was the eventual outcome?
3. Read **7:18-35**. What circumstances, feelings, or emotions might have led up to these doubts as John languished in prison?
4. What is the difference between doubt and unbelief? True or False: Unbelief says, "that's not true so I reject it." Doubt says, "I'm not sure so I'm investigating it."
5. Read Luke 7:18-35 again. How do we know that Jesus was not disappointed with John for doubting?
6. How did Jesus' response to John and his disciples show both truth and grace?
7. What other Bible heroes questioned/doubted God? How were their faith dilemmas resolved?
8. How should we respond to a spouse, our children, extended family members, or friends when they question God and/or His Word?
9. What doubts are you wrestling with today? Are you hesitant to share them with others for fear you might be judged as an unbeliever? What is Jesus teaching you through the Word?

Discuss the following statements:

Doubt happens within the context of faith; unbelief is a decision.
Doubt can lead us into belief or into unbelief.
Doubt is a matter of the mind; unbelief is a matter of the will.
We might doubt Jesus, but Jesus never doubts us.
God's sustaining grace promises His presence in the midst of our doubt.

For further study: Matthew 11:1-18, John 10:3-4; John 20:24-29; Hebrews 11; I Peter 1:6-9; Isaiah 55

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