



PART 3: DEALING WITH DOUBT

Sermon Notes

Text: Matthew 28:16-17, John 20:24-31

Introduction:

"Doubt is not always a sign that a man is wrong. It may be a sign that he is thinking." ~Oswald Chambers

1. The nature of doubt

Matthew 28:16-17 "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

i. Unbelieving Doubt: The kind of doubt that isn't seeking faith; it's only seeking an excuse.

James 1:5-8
James 1:17

ii. Believing Doubt: Instead of letting unbelief in, seeks to overcome it.

2. The Downside of Doubt

"I'll be honest about it. It is not the atheists who get stuck in my craw, but agnostics. Doubt is useful for a while. We must all pass through the garden of Gethsemane. If Christ played with doubt, so must we. If Christ

spent an anguished night in prayer, if He burst out from the Cross, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" then surely we are also permitted doubt. But we must move on. To choose doubt as a philosophy of life is akin to choosing immobility as a means of transportation." (Pi, *Life of Pi*).

John 6:66-68 "From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him. "You do not want to leave too, do you?" Jesus asked the Twelve. Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom shall we go?"

To down one belief is to accept another.

"It is materialist atheism that is not merely an arid creed but totally irrational. Materialist atheism says we are just a collection of chemicals, and it has no answer whatsoever to the question of how we should be capable of love, or heroism, or poetry if we are simply animated pieces of meat." ~A. N. Wilson

Every belief system has problems, which set of problems can you live with?

3. Dealing with Doubt

John 20:29 "Then Jesus told him, "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

i. Move Beyond Matter
1 Peter 1:8-9

ii. Study the Signs
John 20:30-31

iii. Worship While you Wait

Conclusion:

Life Group Discussion

1. Warm up: When is the last time you tried something you didn't think you could do? How did it go?
2. Share a personal example of a doubt you've had, or still have, regarding your faith. How are you dealing with that doubt? Does anyone else struggle with the same thing? How can we help each other?
3. What is the difference between unbelieving doubt and believing doubt? How do we spot it in our own life? How can we turn unbelieving doubt into believing doubt?
4. Read John 20:24-31. Why do we typically give Thomas such a hard time? Was there anything wrong with his request? What does v. 29 mean?
5. Read the quote from *Life of Pi* (see notes). What do you think of Pi's statement? How does doubt immobilize us? How did Jesus deal with doubt?
6. Consider the three tips for dealing with doubt:
 1. Move beyond matter: Since God is invisible, and Jesus is not *physically* present, how can we experience him? Can you think of any scriptures that talk about this?

2. Study the signs: Read John 20:30-31. What do the miracles ("signs") of Jesus say about him? (consider healing the paralytic - John 5:1-18, or feeding the 5000 - John 6:5-14).
 3. Worship while you wait: How does worship help us during seasons of doubt?
7. Pray together:
- a) Pray that God would help you overcome doubt.
 - b) Other requests:
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