

WHEN IN DOUBT

-Matt Downing, Student Pastor

DID DOUBTING THOMAS REALLY DESERVE HIS NAME? WAS HE REALLY A DOUBTER?

John 11:7-11:16- ⁶ So when he heard that Lazarus was sick, he stayed where he was two more days, ⁷ and then he said to his disciples, “Let us go back to Judea.” ⁸ “But Rabbi,” they said, “a short while ago the Jews there tried to stone you, and yet you are going back?” ⁹ Jesus answered, “Are there not twelve hours of daylight? Anyone who walks in the daytime will not stumble, for they see by this world’s light. ¹⁰ It is when a person walks at night that they stumble, for they have no light.” ¹¹ After he had said this, he went on to tell them, “Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep; but I am going there to wake him up.” ¹² His disciples replied, “Lord, if he sleeps, he will get better.” ¹³ Jesus had been speaking of his death, but his disciples thought he meant natural sleep. ¹⁴ So then he told them plainly, “Lazarus is dead, ¹⁵ and for your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him.” ¹⁶ Then Thomas (also known as Didymus^(a)) said to the rest of the disciples, “Let us also go, that we may die with him.”

John 14:1-6- Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God^(a); believe also in me. ² My Father’s house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. ⁴ You know the way to the place where I am going.” ⁵ **Thomas said to him, “Lord, we don’t know where you are going, so how can we know the way?”** ⁶ Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

John 20:19-31- On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you!” ²⁰ After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord. ²¹ Again Jesus said, “Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.” ²² And with that he breathed on them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³ If you forgive anyone’s sins, their sins are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven.” ²⁴ Now Thomas (also known as Didymus^(a)), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. ²⁵ So the other disciples told him, “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.” ²⁶ 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!” ²⁷ Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe.” ²⁸ Thomas said to him, **“My Lord and my God!”** ²⁹ Then Jesus told him, “Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”

AS BELIEVERS TODAY HOW CAN WE DEAL WITH DOUBT?

1. UNDERSTAND THE ROOT OF OUR DOUBTS

Some typical reasons we doubt are:

- God doesn’t meet our expectations or we don’t see positive results.
- We don’t have an accurate view of God and His Word.
- We focus on our problems rather than His power.
- We tend to listen to the wrong voices.

3 TYPES OF DOUBT

- Intellectual
Ex. is the Bible the word of God? Is Jesus the Son of God? Did he really rise from the dead?
- Spiritual
Ex. Am I really a Christian? Why is it so hard to pray? Why is it taking so long to get better?
- Circumstantial
Ex. Why is this happening? Why is my child sick? Why did my marriage break up?

2. CHOOSE TO LET DOUBTS WORK FOR YOU RATHER THAN AGAINST YOU

Our doubt is not necessarily sinful or wrong, but how we deal with it can be.

The greatest doubters can often become the strongest believers.

HOW DO WE DEAL WITH DOUBT?

1. Admit doubts and ask for help.
2. Don't be afraid to borrow some faith.
3. Act on faith, not doubts.
4. Dig deeper to find some answers.
5. Keep going back to what you KNOW to be true.
6. We can be among those Jesus mentioned when he said blessed are those who believe and do not see.

1 Peter 1:6-9- In all this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. ⁷These have come so that the proven genuineness of your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. ⁸Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, ⁹for you are receiving the end result of your faith, the salvation of your souls.