
the

FOLLOWERS

Thomas: Can My Doubts Be Good?

John 11:16, 14:5, 20:19-29

Three areas in which Satan will create doubt: Genesis 3

- **Doubt trusting God's Word.** Genesis 3:1
"Indeed, has God said..."
- **Doubt that certain sins are really wrong.** Genesis 3:4
"You surely will not die!"
- **Doubt that God's plans for me are good.** Genesis 3:5-6
"When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate."

The Danger of Doubts:

- **Some will judge people with doubts.** Matthew 23
- **My heart of doubt becomes hardened to the truth.** Romans 1:21-23
- **I am susceptible to false teaching.** Genesis 3

When Doubts Are Good:

- **Doubts can cause me to ask relevant questions to know the full truth.** John 14:5; Mark 9:31, 32
"Thomas said to Him, 'Lord, we do not know where You are going, how do we know the way?'"
- **Doubts that are freely expressed in a community of love and grace.** John 20:19-26
Vs. 25 - *"So the other disciples were saying to him, 'We have seen the Lord!' But he (Thomas) said to them, 'Unless I see in His hands the imprint of the nail...I will not believe.'"*
- **Doubts move God to reveal the full truth so I believe in Jesus.** John 20:27; Proverbs 8:17
Vs. 27 - *"Then He said to Thomas, 'Reach here with your finger, and see My hands...'"*
- **Doubts when I am willing to learn the full truth and submit to it.** John 20:25, 28,29
Vs. 28-29 - *"Thomas answered and said to Him, 'My Lord and my God!' Jesus said to him, 'Because you have seen Me, have you believed? Blessed are they who did not see, and yet believed.'"*

Digging Deeper:

In our ongoing series on the followers of Jesus, we learn from Thomas' life. He is best known as Doubting Thomas. Thomas' full identity however is Thomas Didymus. Didymus can mean twin so it is thought that he had a twin brother or sister. Our first introduction to Thomas is anything but a doubting man. We first learn about Thomas as Jesus is about to go and raise Lazarus from the dead. Lazarus and his two sisters, Mary and Martha, were close friends of Jesus and lived in Bethany, just outside of Jerusalem. There was a growing opposition to Jesus in Jerusalem, but Jesus was willing to go and heal Lazarus. When Thomas realized that Jesus would travel close to that hostility, John recorded this response by Thomas, "Therefore Thomas, who is called Didymus, said to his fellow disciples, 'Let us also go, so that we may die with Him.'" John 11:16. Thomas expected opposition and clearly revealed his commitment to Jesus by his willingness to die with Him. No doubts there.

But, after watching Jesus die on the cross and not being present when Jesus revealed His new resurrected life to the other disciples, Thomas had doubts. But those doubts quickly gave way as Thomas encountered the resurrected Jesus and submitted to Him as his Lord and God.

LifeGroup Discussion:

1. What doubts do you have about God, His plans, or challenges/issues that you face in life?
2. Doubts can cause me to ask needed questions to more fully know the truth. What question did Thomas ask in John 14:5 and what truth did that reveal for all of us in John 14:6?
3. **Read Mark 9:31-32.** What did Jesus say about His plans in vs. 31? How did the disciple respond in vs. 32? Why did they respond that way? What might have happened if they did ask more questions of Jesus in that moment?
4. **Read the following passages and reflect on how the disciples responded to Jesus' message: Mark 9:9-10; Mark 8:31-32; Mark 10:33-34**
How would you have responded? What was good or bad about the disciple's response? What promise does Jesus make to those willing to know Him and His truth in John 8:31-32; Proverbs 8:17; Jeremiah 29:12, 13? What "truth" are you seeking to know from God? How do these promises help you?
5. John 20:19-29 gives us four important truths about Jesus to help erase our doubts:
 - The resurrection demonstrated that Jesus' prediction of being raised from the dead was true. Mark 8:31, 32
 - The resurrection proved that Jesus is God. Romans 1:4
 - The resurrection revealed the success of Jesus' mission to bring us salvation. Romans 4:25
 - The resurrection entitled Jesus to a position of glory as our Lord and God. 1 Peter 1:11; Acts 2:36

How do these facts offer you assurance?

Next Steps:

1. **Join the Alpha Course this Wednesday night from 6:00 - 8:30 pm in the Worship Center Lobby.** We will be discussing the question, "How Can I Have Faith?" Come have an open, honest conversation about this question and more over a relaxed time of dinner, learning and group discussion. Learn more at calvarylife.org/alpha
2. **Join in 'Following Jesus', Calvary's ongoing discipleship ministry, to journey through the foundational elements of how to live and love like Jesus.** If you're a new follower of Jesus, or want to become more grounded in the basics of Christianity, this is perfect for you! Learn more at calvarylife.org/discipleship
3. **Seek counseling or prayer support if your doubts are inhibiting a healthy growth in your life.** Discover more about receiving counseling or prayer through Calvary Care Ministries by contacting 714.550.2334 or care@calvarylife.org or visit calvarylife.org/care