

GROUP DISCUSSION

Questions for facilitating dynamic discussion

When in Doubt (Easter)

Week 1: The Upside of Doubt

John 20:1-28

Week of April 4, 2021

(Jeff Griffin, Senior Pastor)

We all want to know the truth. And even when we find it, doubt still haunts us. But ... *what if our doubt could actually draw us closer to God? What if there's an upside to doubt?* In this new sermon series, we examine how facing our doubts can fuel our faith.

Kicking it off: In honor of Easter ... if one national holiday had to be celebrated twice a year, six months apart, which one would you want it to be? And why do you enjoy it so much?

Discussion:

1. Take a look at this list of some doubts that people have about their faith. Which ones do you think are the most prevalent around us today?
 - Maybe Jesus was a great teacher, but did He really die on a cross?
 - Is Easter simply a day that brings out a bunch of misdirected people?
 - Does God really exist?
 - Is the Bible true?
 - Does God answer prayer?
 - Does God love me?
2. What did you think of the idea of having doubts before this week's message? Have your views changed at all, and if so, how?
3. In John chapter 20, we see how John, Mary Magdalene and Thomas reacted to seeing a resurrected Jesus. Whose story feels the most like your faith story, and why do you think that is? And if you're still investigating Jesus, which one do you lean toward?
 - DOUBT + **INVESTIGATION** = BELIEF.
John in v. 8, "*Finally the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went inside. He saw and believed.*" (NIV)
 - DOUBT + **RELATIONSHIP** = BELIEF.
Mary Magdalene in v. 16, "*Jesus said to her, 'Mary.' She turned toward him and cried out in Aramaic, 'Rabboni!' (which means 'Teacher').*" (NIV)
 - DOUBT + **EXPERIENCE** = BELIEF.
Thomas in v. 27b-28, "*Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Stop doubting and believe.'* Thomas said to him, *'My Lord and my God!'*" (NIV)
4. The word "apologetics" comes from the Greek term *apologia*, defined as "giving an answer/defense." It means to give a reasoned answer for why one believes something to be true. How do you think identifying our doubts can help us defend or contribute to having a stronger faith?
5. Read [1 Corinthians 15:12-21](#). What makes Jesus' resurrection so significant? What is at stake if this turns out to be false?

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Wrapping It Up: Read Hebrews 11:1, as a reminder that we can have confidence in things we cannot see.

Pray for God to do a mighty work in your heart through this study. If you've been a believer for some time, pray God helps you strengthen your faith and/or encourage a friend or family member to follow Jesus. If you're newer on your faith journey, pray God helps you find Him personally.

Additional Scripture Passages

1 Corinthians 15:12-21 (NIV)

¹² But if it is preached that Christ has been raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? ¹³ If there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. ¹⁴ And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith. ¹⁵ More than that, we are then found to be false witnesses about God, for we have testified about God that he raised Christ from the dead. But he did not raise him if in fact the dead are not raised. ¹⁶ For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised either. ¹⁷ And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins. ¹⁸ Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ are lost. ¹⁹ If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied.

²⁰ But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. ²¹ For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man.

Hebrews 11:1 (NIV)

Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.