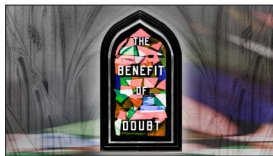




Your
story
matters.

SEPT 14, 2025

Message Notes



The Benefit of Doubt “A Laughing Matter”

Pastor Tom Lundeen | Sept 14, 2025

...we're going to focus on different people in the Scriptures who _____ with doubt. But God actually used their doubts to ultimately deepen their faith and not have doubt be what _____ them.

Today we're going to explore a person who, at first glance, seems to be the least likely individual to be an _____ of someone doubting God.

1. God's _____

What names would you like to put on your resume as a _____?

Note **2 Chronicles 20:7**; **Isaiah 41:8**; **James 2:23**

Though thoroughly _____ and chosen by God for no apparent reason, he was a remarkable person.

He's not just listed in Hebrews 11 (*Faith Hall of Fame*), but he's _____ to more often in Hebrews 11 than anyone else.

...you can see so many experiences where Abraham demonstrated a _____ faith:

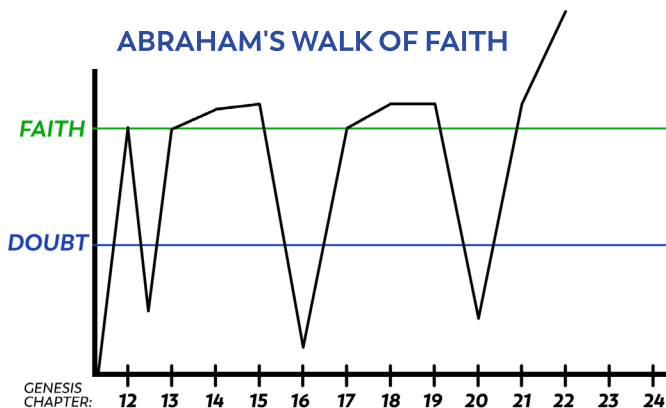
- Enthusiastic _____ (note **Genesis 12:1, 4-5**; **James 2:20-23**; **John 15:14**)
- Heartfelt _____ (note **Genesis 12:6-8**)
- Risk-taking _____ (note **Genesis 15:6, 22:15-18**)

2. God's _____ Friend

If you graph Abraham's life, it will look like a _____ between faith and doubt.

This graph shows us that God's friends fail and doubt; but when they _____, they don't stay there long; and to walk by faith is an everyday experience.

Note **Genesis 12:9-13**



At the first _____, Abram turned his back on God's promises (land and children) and God Himself (note **Genesis 12:14-16**).

God's promise, if left just to Abram, is in _____.

Note **Genesis 12:17**

God would have to use plagues to restore Sarai to her destiny and _____ to get Abram back to Canaan. (Kidner)

Note **Genesis 16:12-5, 18:9-15, 20:1b-3**

So important = Abraham didn't earn friendship with God because of his _____.

It was simply a _____ of God's grace.

God's friends do believe and have _____.

But they're not _____ and they can still struggle with doubts.

They're _____ dependent on God's grace.

Note **Genesis 18:17**

Abraham becomes a person, that despite his doubts, not only trusts God, but also become a person God can _____ (note **John 15:14-15**).

So can there be benefit to my doubt?

- Isn't it encouraging to _____ that the *Captain of the Faith Hall of Fame*, Abraham, struggled at times with doubts, fears, and failures?
- What Abraham learned is that doubt doesn't _____ well.
- Faith always leads to a _____ outcome (note **Genesis 15:6**).
- You can be God's friend because God's _____ grace is more than sufficient to turn your heart towards Him, forgive your sins, and help you discover that faith is always the better choice than doubt.

Tell us about the next step you took today in your spiritual journey!

Let us know, too, and fill out our connect card (digital* or hard copy), get your book and other materials, then make sure to sign up for a small group at GroupLink at any of our campuses.

***App:** Message Notes/Connect Card **Or:** MYRC.LINK/CONNECT



Your group matters.

DISCUSSION GUIDE

- Icebreaker -

If you never had to pay for food again at the restaurant of your choice, which restaurant would you pick and why?

1. As a group, explore what you have been processing from reading Chapter 2 of *The Benefit of Doubt*.
2. Read **2 Chronicles 20:7**, **James 2:23**, **Genesis 12:9-17**. Abraham was called a “friend of God,” even though he still had doubts about trusting God with the details of his life. How do you respond to knowing your doubts don’t disqualify you from friendship with God?
3. Three times the Scriptures show Abraham trying to manipulate the situation by being clever rather than by trusting God at His word (**Genesis 12:11-17**; **16:1-5**; **20:1b-3**). Share a time when your doubts caused you to depend on your cleverness rather than God. How did that work out?
4. Pastor Tom stated, “Abraham didn’t earn friendship with God...It was simply a gift of God’s grace.” Where do you need to stop trying to earn God’s friendship and just accept His grace?
5. How does God’s trust in Abraham, even knowing all of his shortcomings past, present and future, encourage you to trust God with your life despite your own shortcomings? (**Genesis 18:17**; **John 15:14-15**)
6. By grace, Jesus desires and invites you to be His friend. What doubts are keeping you from saying “YES!” to Jesus today?

WEEKLY READING

Before you attend your small group, read Chapter 2 (pages 21-39) of *The Benefit Of Doubt*.

Not in a small group? Go to **GROUPLINK** after services today!



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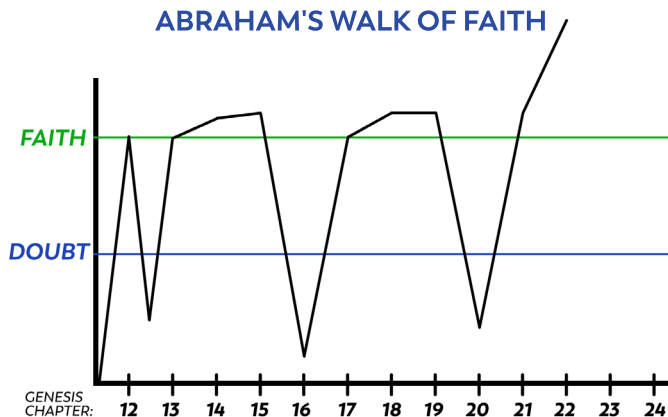
...you can see so many experiences where Abraham demonstrated a beautiful faith:

- Enthusiastic obedience (note **Genesis 12:1, 4-5**; **James 2:20-23**; **John 15:14**)
- Heartfelt worship (note **Genesis 12:6-8**)
- Risk-taking trust (note **Genesis 15:6, 22:15-18**)

2. God's Imperfect Friend

If you graph Abraham's life, it will look like a rollercoaster between faith and doubt.

This graph shows us that God's friends fail and doubt; but when they stumble, they don't stay there long; and to walk by faith is an everyday experience. Note **Genesis 12:9-13**



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