

Defeating Doubt

Luke 7:18-28

Have you ever struggled with doubt? Have you doubted God's existence or the truth of the gospel? Or have you doubted something the Bible says about God, that He loves you, forgives you, hears you? If so, you are not alone. All believers struggle from time to time with doubt, even such mature saints as Moses, Elijah, and in Luke 7, John the Baptist. From John's example we learn that doubt is not necessarily sin or a sign of immaturity. It can actually be a cause of great growth in our lives IF we respond to it rightly.

Questions

Is doubting sin?

Is doubting a sign of spiritual immaturity?

Answers

Luke 7:18-28

- Background – vv24-27
 - Result – vv17-18; Luke 3:16-17
 - Jesus' Response – vv20-23, 28a
 - A compassionate answer
 - Praise
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- Doubt is not necessarily a sin
 - Nor necessarily a sign of immaturity

So Moses said to the Lord, "Why have You been so hard on Your servant? And why have I not found favor in Your sight, that You have laid the burden of all this people on me?... So if You are going to deal thus with me, please kill me at once..."

—Numbers 11:11,15a

You might struggle with doubt if

- Unmet expectations
- Suffering
- Intellectual challenges to your faith
- Hypocrisy in the church
- A crossroads in life
- Major sin in your own life

"Doubt is the skeleton in the closet of faith..."

"...and I know no better way to treat a skeleton than to bring it into the open and expose it for what it is: not something to hide or fear, but a hard structure on which living tissue may grow... Those who honestly confront their doubts often find themselves growing into a faith that transcends the doubts."

—Philip Yancey

Big Idea

Doubt can grow our faith **IF** we respond to it rightly

“Although we cannot control doubt, which often creeps up on us uninvited, we can learn to channel it in ways that make doubt more likely to be nourishing than toxic.”

—Phillip Yancey

Responding to Doubt

DON'T...	DO...
• Fear	• Pray
• Isolate	• Confide
• Ignore	• Seek answers
• Excuse sin	• Endure

DON'T: Fear

For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, **nor any other created thing**, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

—Romans 8:38-39

DO: Pray

I say to God my Rock, “Why have you forgotten me? Why must I go about mourning, oppressed by the enemy?” My bones suffer mortal agony as my foes taunt me, saying to me all day long, “Where is your God?”

—Psalm 42:9-10

DO: Confide

Two are better than one because they have a good return for their labor. For if either of them falls, the one will lift up his companion. But woe to the one who falls when there is not another to lift him up.

—Ecclesiastes 4:9-10