

# JESUS CONVERSATIONS | Doubt and the Life of Faith

## Discussion Guide

Doubt is not the same as unbelief. In fact, God uses our doubts to make us honest in our beliefs. Don't dismiss your doubts; bring them before God, anchor yourself in scripture, and find support in your community. Not every doubt will have an immediate and satisfactory answer, and this is part of a life of faith - knowing that you cannot know everything but choosing to understand what you can leads you to trust, which leads to childlike (not childish) faith.

## **Discussion Questions**

1. What is doubt, and why is it not the same as unbelief?
2. What doubts do you struggle with?
3. Are there any doubts you have that you often choose not to face, or not to question? Why?
4. What doubts has God already put to rest in your heart, or in your past?
5. Who do you talk to when you have doubts and questions?

## WEEKLY PRACTICE:

Identify any doubts you have and bring them to Jesus in prayer

## Sermon Notes

**Luke 24:13-32, “Now that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem. They were talking with each other about everything that had happened. As they talked and discussed these things with each other, Jesus himself came up and walked along with them; but they were kept from recognizing him. He asked them, ‘What are you discussing together as you walk along?’ They stood still, their faces downcast. One of them, named Cleopas, asked him, ‘Are you the only one visiting Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?’ ‘What things?’ he asked. ‘About Jesus of Nazareth,’ they replied. ‘He was a prophet, powerful in word and deed before God and all the people. The chief priests and our rulers handed him over to be sentenced to death, and they crucified him; but we had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel. And what is more, it is the third day since all this took place. In addition, some of our women amazed us. They went to the tomb early this morning but didn’t find his body. They came and told us that they had seen a vision of angels, who said he was alive. Then some of our companions went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but they did not see Jesus.’ He said to them, ‘How foolish you are, and how slow to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Did not the Messiah have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?’ And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself. As they approached the village to which they were going, Jesus continued on as if he were going farther. But they urged him strongly, ‘Stay with us, for it is nearly evening; the day is almost over.’ So he went in to stay with them. When he was at the table with them, he took bread, gave thanks, broke it and began to give it to them. Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him, and he disappeared from their sight. They asked each other, ‘Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?’”**

**“There are two equal and opposite errors into which Christians are inclined to fall when thinking about doubt. On the one hand, those who are theologically liberal tend to be too soft on doubt, lionizing such notions as ambiguity and uncertainty and verging on a spiritual permissiveness that becomes a slipway to unbelief. On the other hand, those who are theologically conservative tend to be too hard on doubt, demonizing the dire consequences of unresolved doubt, and verging on a spiritual perfectionism that leaves doubters in such a state of guilt or despair that they dare not acknowledge their doubts to others or even to themselves.” - Os Guinness**

**Jude 1:22, “Be merciful to those who doubt”**

**Doubt is part of the human condition**

**'Doubts are messengers of the Living One to the honest.' - George McDonald**

**Philippians 2:12, “Continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling”**

**“Scratch the surface of any cynic and you will find a wounded idealist underneath.” - John Ortberg, *Know Doubt***

**Faith presupposes doubt**

**Matthew 28:16-20, “Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. Then Jesus came to them and said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.’”**

**Faith is part of the human condition**

**Stay anchored in Scripture**

**Don't go it alone**

**“I did not come to the conviction easily, but finally there was no getting around it: there can be no maturity in spiritual life, no obedience in following Jesus, no wholeness in the Christian life apart from immersion and embrace of community. I am not myself, by myself. Community, not the highly vaunted individualism of our culture, is the setting in which Christ is at play.” - Eugene Peterson, *Christ Plays in Ten Thousand Places***