

General Topics :: doubt**doubt - posted by Jdl (), on: 2009/9/21 11:39**

Hi everyone...I need some help...prayers...I've fallen into some serious doubt about God and Christ...I'm scared that the early church scribes may have tampered with the manuscripts about the deity of Jesus...I've fallen into immorality and I feel like I have nowhere to turn...I can't go to God through Jesus becuz if He is there, He'll probably tell me "don't come to me with your doubts...come only when you are certain that I exist"...I would like to believe, but I'm scared it'll only be a superstitious belief...has anyone gone through similar experiences?...Any words of encouragement?...my mind is a mess and I can't enjoy life like this

Re: doubt - posted by roaringlamb (), on: 2009/9/21 15:45

Brother? Sister?

May I only point you to the wise words of one who was in a dire situation too-
"I believe; help my unbelief!"(Mark 9:24 ESV)

Remember dear friend that Peter renounced Christ, and His own closest friends fled from Him and did not believe that He was who He said He was.

Perhaps you could read Luke 24 and see how these disciples did not believe either.

I also think that if there is the slightest desire to go to Christ, it is Him who is drawing you and He is not a trickster who would draw you and then slam the door in your face.

Meditate upon this verse and may the Holy Spirit open your eyes to see Christ in a new way-
"God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us"(Romans 5:8 ESV)

I will be praying for you, and please know I have been there too, as has many a saint. You're not the only one who struggled with this even if it feels that way.

EDIT:If you can, I would highly recommend you listen to this wonderful series, it has helped me greatly.
(<http://theprodigalgod.com/resources.html>) The Prodigal God

Re: doubt - posted by Leo_Grace, on: 2009/9/21 21:10

Dear Jdl,

It seems that you are filled with suspicions regarding the accuracy of the Bible. You have to realize that ultimately, Christianity is based on faith, because you will need to truly believe in things "yet unseen". But when it comes to the Bible, there is a lot of evidence available that validate its authenticity. I have some links below that you might want to check out:

(http://www.clarifyingchristianity.com/b_proof.shtml) http://www.clarifyingchristianity.com/b_proof.shtml

(http://www.forerunner.com/forerunner/X0027_Scientific.html) http://www.forerunner.com/forerunner/X0027_Scientific.html

Maybe others could point you to other resources that could help.

Re: doubt - posted by twayneb (), on: 2009/9/21 21:45

I am glad Leo pointed you to the sites that can help settle some of the questions about the accuracy and dependability of the Bible. I was drawn to comment on another part of your post.

Quote:
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From what you said, I take it that you have at one time surrendered yourself to Jesus as savior and Lord? Paul the Apostle said something about your situation.

1Ti 1:18-19

(18) This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare;

(19) Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck:

When we put away a good conscience, when we harden ourselves and walk off into sin of any sort, it shipwrecks our faith. It brings us to a place where we no longer have any confidence in God and are constantly under condemnation from the enemy. Satan tempts us, ensnares us, and then blames and condemns us and makes us feel worthless in ourselves, and totally unworthy of God's love, forgiveness, and acceptance.

It sounds to me like you are under just such a load of condemnation, guilt, and the accompanying doubt and uncertainty. Jesus NEVER said, "fix your faith problem and then come to me!" He has a greater desire to restore you to Himself than you have to be restored. I want to encourage you to go directly to Him, doubts and all. Yes, many of us have been through similar experiences. I know what it is like to be under such condemnation that I wondered if God would still be willing to forgive me. I found that now only was He willing, but He was faithful and He was just to forgive and to cleanse and to restore.

Even though there are doubts, I don't think your belief is superstitious or you would not have written this post. I want to encourage you to visit the links that Leo posted, but also to be honest with God (He knows your heart anyway, better than you do). Pour out your heart to Him and trust Him to forgive and replace the condemnation with peace, joy, and confidence. You may need to repent of some things. You may need to turn your back on some things. One thing I do know, He WILL forgive and restore. 1 John 1:9. I am praying for you that God will reveal Himself to you in a powerful way. Thank you for allowing other believers like us to help you.

Re: doubt - posted by Jdl (), on: 2009/9/23 11:42

Hi everyone...I'm a brother, by the way...it was nice to see your responses...At one time I did indeed surrender my life to Jesus, and lived a reformed life, but I had always had an underlying sense of uneasiness regarding my salvation...I don't know if I was ever truly convicted of sin, and I still had issues with some aspects of God's character...perhaps it was only an outward change and not of the heart...but only recently have I actually been plagued by doubts of His actual existence/diety...it makes me think that whatever I had before was void, since at this moment in time I am not trusting in Christ as the son of God...All I have is a big "I don't know anymore"...which absolutely terrifies me because I don't wanna be labeled an agnostic...

Thanks for the sites, they do help...I've been reading a lot of apologetic stuff, but sometimes they make things worse because they bring up objections that I never knew about before...and thus my mind latches on to the objections, which in turn fuel the doubt even more...I don't know exactly what to do...keep reading these things until one day it clicks that I am fully convinced that Christ was the son of God? It doesn't seem like it'll happen, and that frightens me...

Re: - posted by Leo_Grace, on: 2009/9/23 11:55

Christianity is not a matter of reason and logic. All Christians are "crazy" in the eyes of the world because they believe to tally in things "yet unseen". You must choose to believe, not demand that God prove himself to you while you yet do not believe - He will not. He will prove himself to you AFTER you have believed.

Re: - posted by MaryJane, on: 2009/9/23 12:26

Leo wrote: You must choose to believe, not demand that God prove himself to you while you yet do not believe - He will not. He will prove himself to you AFTER you have believed.

Leo, I agree completely with what you shared here. I will add that God does not have to save us, He does not owe us anything, in fact the opposite is true. We owe Him everything, absolutely everything. The very reason anyone of us is even here now is because God provides you with the air your breathing. He causes the sun to come up each day and the stars to come out at night. God saves us because of who He is not because we have ever done anything good or righteous worth being saved. God is merciful and loves us but He does not owe us anything. He sent His son to die for us, those who live their life rejecting the Lord Jesus gift of life are without excuse.

God Bless
maryjane

Re: - posted by Compton (), on: 2009/9/23 12:36

I'm always just a little wary of (edit: well-intentioned) Christians asserting that faith in God is not rational or logical, and does not need to be. Actually, the more we accept the reality of this world as presented by the bible, the more rational and logical we become. Denying reality is the very definition of irrational.

From passages like Psalm 14:1 and Romans 1:18-26 we see that Christian faith and agreement with scriptural precepts is the most rational and logical position a healthy mind and heart can take.

In contrast, the self-authorized "logic" that raises doubts in us is based on heart precepts that we've accepted from the world. This is corruption. Unless we are drawing a strange comfort from our noncommittal fog, we should be willing to state this as corruption in the very same black and white terms the bible uses, as demonstrated by the passages above.

For example, children are taught in grade school that similarities and between different animals are evidence of evolutionary relationships. Yet the bible clearly states what should be obvious to the uncorrupted mind; that similarities among animals are evidence of design relationship, not evolutionary relationship.

My point in saying all of this, is to be careful to not chase after answers for every little doubt you have, and thereby expecting corruption to answer corruption. In my experience, all of the many doubts we often have are really expressions of one or two faulty precepts we need to address.

The healthy mind and heart begins with a very childlike precept: This is God's universe, and we are allowed to live in it by his uncovenanted grace; not the other way around! If we start with that precept in our hearts, we'll be relieved to find out how easily many of our "profound questions" is really just irrational corrupt thinking.

Perhaps this is why Jesus was saying, "unless you become as a little child..." When we were much younger, we hadn't become fully indoctrinated by the world's faulty precepts, corrupted by their sense of entitlements, and puffed up with institutionalized scholastic rebellion.

(Psalm 131)

Blessings,

MC

Re: doubt - posted by Jdl (), on: 2009/9/23 14:47

Is believing really a choice? Some say it is, some say it isn't...I'm confused on the matter...I would absolutely love to believe! But for some reason, it feels like I can't with all these doubts...I heard someone say faith has to be grounded on assurance/certainty of the facts...almost like it leaves no room for doubt...

R.C. Sproul makes a distinction between child-like faith and child-ish faith...At this point I fear that any faith I have will only be a wishful thinking, pretend, child-ish faith...a faith that won't save...I mean, how can I have saving faith if I doubt the object Himself of that faith? Jesus, the son of God, is the one who saves...how can I expect to be saved if I am struggling to believe in His deity? This is awful!

Re: - posted by Leo_Grace, on: 2009/9/23 14:59

Compton said:

Quote:
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This is very true, Compton. But this will be apparent to you only AFTER you believe because otherwise, the Bible will seem like nonsense to you. THEN you will know the wisdom of choosing God. THEN you will understand how wonderfully His grace works. But those who do not believe in God cannot see all of this. For unbelievers, our faith looks foolish.

Re: - posted by MaryJane, on: 2009/9/23 15:04

Jdl

I think the Bible makes it very clear that we either choose to believe God, that what He speaks is truth or we reject Him. It really comes down to the heart. If you are crying out to God, repenting of your sins and seeking to live your life in submission to His will daily, He is not a liar, He does not slam the door on you. God is faithful to His children!!!

Came across this article, it is only a small part of the article but it really has helped me in my walk to stop trying to justify my sin and to repent. Maybe Father may have something for you in this as well.

God Bless
mj

Embrace the Truth

The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness, since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse. For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools...

Romans 1:18-23

This verse from the Bible clearly tells us that God judges whether we "suppress the truth" that He shows us and choose to live wicked, self-centered lives, or if we embrace His Truth. Have we invested ourselves to find out what God's ways are? Or are we lazy and apathetic?

Our job in life is, as the Bible says, to "love the truth and so be saved." The person who seeks shall find. That's what all of us have to be doing no matter what stage we are at in our pursuit of Truth. God answers the prayer of those who are diligently seeking, not those who are resting on their laurels (looking into the past and counting some good things as sufficient).

No Excuses

What about the situation where our environment has somehow blinded us? Maybe we've grown up in a very wicked environment or in some very materialistic environment, and we are clouded to the truth of God. We had all these things pushed in our face year after year, either because of bad family situations or some terrible thing later in life. What about all these sorts of things?

While some would like to think that those are valid reasons to ignore God and His truth, the Bible says that God has made His truth clear. And God knows what He is doing. It says that all men "are without excuse." It doesn't matter what your environment was. It doesn't matter what your physical limitations are or what your sociological limitations have been—that has absolutely nothing to do with it. All men are without excuse because God has made it His project to show us enough truth to find out whether we are going to pursue truth, or walk away from it. He has shown us enough truth to make known the inclination of our hearts.

In John 16, it says the Holy Spirit was brought to convict the world of guilt in regard to sin. The "world"—in other words, everybody. Everyone is without excuse because God has shown us all enough truth to see whether we will pursue it, or let it lie by the road as we walk on by. In that sense, it is pretty easy to understand that when God has this thing called "Heaven" and this thing called "Hell" that He is not being unfair. He has made the choice clear to us—we are all without excuse.

God is just: He will pay back trouble to those who trouble you and give relief to you who are troubled, and to us as well. This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels. He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power on the day he comes to be glorified in his holy people and to be marveled at among all those who have believed. This includes you, because you believed our testimony to you.

2 Thessalonians 1:6-10

Re: - posted by Leo_Grace, on: 2009/9/23 15:05

Quote:

Jdl wrote:

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R.C. Sproul makes a distinction between child-like faith and child-ish faith...At this point I fear that any faith I have will only be a wishful thinking, pretended, child-ish faith...a faith that won't save...I mean, how can I have saving faith if I doubt the object Himself of that faith? Jesus, the son of God, is the one who saves...how can I expect to be saved if I am struggling to believe in His deity? This is awful!

Dear Jdl,

If you doubt Jesus Christ, then you do not believe him. If you WANT to believe, then choose to do so. Only after you take that step, after you open your heart to God's Spirit, only then can He lead you into knowledge and understanding. But your belief must be such that you are willing to do things to gain that understanding. If you say you believe but are not interested enough to learn about God by reading the Bible, then you are lying to yourself.

Believe... hunger for God (read the Bible)... pray for understanding (read the bible)... and if you do all these sincerely, God is faithful... He will reveal Himself to you, and help you to understand. Then you will know, then you will experience, and then you will see the wisdom of believing in God.

Re: - posted by whyme, on: 2009/9/23 15:33

Jdl,

doubts about your own salvation...we all experience that at times.

doubts about the deity of Christ...not normal for a Christian.

Find a mature Christian. Talk to them. Chat rooms aren't for that. Turn away from sin to God and faith towards Jesus Christ... guaranteed you'll be saved.

Re: - posted by Jdl (), on: 2009/9/23 15:41

Leo, whyme...I am confused though...does that mean then that we are not allowed to doubt at all? As long as I am battling these doubts, is that an indication that any belief I have in the midst of them is a false belief? Do I shrug them off and just "believe" or do I need to convince myself more until they go away?

As far as choosing God, is it something we really do? Reformed doctrine says no, that God enables us to believe...I really don't want this to turn into a calvin/arminian debate, but I'm mentioning it because it confuses me as far as belief goes...Do I ask the Holy Spirit to reveal Jesus to me or do I delve deeper into apologetics to convince my intellect first, on my own?

Re: - posted by MaryJane, on: 2009/9/23 15:57

Jdl

Can I ask you something honestly..., is by any chance your name John and have you posted under another name before Bible4life, . I am not trying to accuse you of anything, its just that with each post you write you sound exactly like another young man who has posted here of the same things? If this is not John(Bible4life) perhaps reading through some of the threads and posts that are here on the forum may help you find some of the answers you are looking for as well, since they seem to be along the same lines. I think you can use the search and look up post by Bible4life.

God Bless
maryjane

Re: - posted by Leo_Grace, on: 2009/9/23 16:07

Quote:

Jdl wrote:

Leo, whyme...I am confused though...does that mean then that we are not allowed to doubt at all? As long as I am battling these doubts, is that an indication that any belief I have in the midst of them is a false belief? Do I shrug them off and just "believe" or do I need to convince myself more until they go away?

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All these conflicting "isms" of doctrine aside, my personal experience is: I chose to believe and then God revealed himself to me through the Word. But that doesn't mean that God has not been reaching out for you. Many believers (like me) can look back and see how God had been leading them to Him long before they actually decided to follow God.

Please understand that believing God is not a simple prayer of acceptance that may come and go without changing your life. If you TRULY BELIEVE IN GOD, your life will be turned upside down. This can happen instantly, or it can happen over time. For me, the key was feeding on God's Word, the Bible, until I knew more about God. As you grow in knowledge of God through His Son, Jesus, by reading His Word, you will learn to love Him more and more, and you will eventually realize that you want to live your life to please Him and Him alone.

For me, it was at this point that I was born again. I died to a life lived for myself, and I was born to a new life dedicated to pleasing God, whom I love above all.

Once you have truly believed in Jesus (reborn), I don't think you can ever again doubt his existence.

Re: - posted by Jdl (), on: 2009/9/23 16:09

Hi Mary...I'm not him, but you know, it's funny...I was actually reading some of his posts about his doubts and I was floored because I thought I was the only one who experienced this type of thing...I actually meant to get ahold of him and perhaps discuss these things together...

Re: - posted by whyme, on: 2009/9/23 16:19

Jdl, reformed doctrine like others holds that all believers choose to believe. In addition, though, the reformed faith holds that one chooses to believe after they have been regenerated and given new desires so that the choosing is born out of a new heart for God.

Re: - posted by Compton (), on: 2009/9/23 16:24

Regarding my comments, in the interest of compassion it's worth noting that my intention wasn't to introduce a feeling of condemnation for experiencing doubts, but rather an assurance that it is quite rational to believe in Jesus Christ.

I understand what Leo is saying about choosing to believe...and can go along with that statement. Joshua was asked to step into the river first, and only then did it part for him.

Also, I want to make sure that I am not being heard as saying that you must remove all doubt from your mind. I remember this old Star Trek episode where Kirk and Spock had to defeat these aliens' psychological weapons by not believing in them. Since the slightest doubt could kill them, Spock had to do a mind-meld hypnosis on Kirk to remove all doubt from his mind.

This is not at all like faith in Christ...who saves not because we have no doubts at all, but because we have faith in him!

I have little doubtful thoughts popping into my head all the time to be honest. How can I say I have unwavering faith then? It's a simple proposition actually... I have learned to doubt myself all the more. Though I still sadly doubt the faithfulness and assurances of Christ from time to time, I still put my faith in him, and not myself!

A man may have a fear of flying, or doubt that aerodynamics actually is trustworthy, but he can nevertheless place his faith in the airline and board the plane, doubts and all. He may be in nervous disbelief the whole time he is in the air, but he will arrive at his destination along with the other passengers who were sleeping like babies the whole flight. His disbelief prevented his peace, but not his journey.

So believing in Christ, abiding in him for safe passage to heaven as a man boards a plane while still harboring doubts is not going to condemn you or exclude you from heaven...but refusing Christ altogether leaves you condemned already.

John 3 He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

2 Tim. 2:11 If we endure, we will also reign with him. If we disown him, he will also disown us; if we are faithless, he will remain faithful, for he cannot disown himself.

That is to say, place your ultimate faith in Christ, and take your doubts to him!

Like Leo says, I don't need to understand everything before believing...that is foolishness and even a bit presumptuous. I can understand some things, but the most important thing to understand is that we can believe in Christ to save.

Mike

Re: doubt, on: 2009/9/26 11:34

Hi Jdl,

I apologise I don't have much time online. My reply is not intended to sound peremptory, but I'm writing fast and hope you will discern I have no condemnation in my heart towards your predicament, but rather, I know that if you are determined to find God again and meet with Him, He is watching and waiting until He hears your heart cry out to Him.

I've read this whole thread, and I know all the answers bring something of the truth of God's existence and the testimony of scripture to that truth, but, I think you are making one of the mistakes Bible4life has tended towards, which is to be far too ready to base your 'faith' on what you think you feel, or what you think you might know in your mind.

God is far simpler than this, and the apostle Paul explains God's viewpoint ruthlessly. (I don't mean God is ruthless! But He is in some ways. He cannot tolerate sin in His presence, and He will not make allowances for anyone who knew the truth, but decided not to acknowledge it properly. Let me explain...)

You are in a worship system. Either you put your trust in idols, or you put your trust in God. (John 4:21, 22, 23, 24) Not e: 'you know not what you worship'. Compare this with the scathing condemnation in the Old Testament which God thro the prophets made of handmade gods.

Today, we also must rule out self-worship - whether it be the gratification of the flesh, the mind, or thinking that by our minds we can judge whether God's thoughts are believable or not. We MUST bow our minds to Him. That's not faith. That's worship. God is pleased with this.

This is not the same as whether or not we have 'understanding'. It is plain from Proverbs (read the early chapters), that God puts great store on 'understanding' and 'wisdom'. However, He is not talking about the understanding available to us through the fallen mind, or the wisdom of the world (1 Cor 1:20 - end of chapter), but of the understanding and wisdom which we develop as our minds are renewed through the operation of the Holy Spirit as we obey God's word. There is no way to succeed in this, apart from to admit defeat from a natural point of view, and acquiesce to the operation of the death of Christ which is spoken of in Rom 5, 6, which puts an end to the wretchedness in Rom 7 leads to the overcoming life of Rom 8.

Now, in Rom 10, Paul points out that 'faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God'. The practical application of this, is that you must seek God until **you** have **heard Him speak** to you, or, you must trust the testimony of the millions of Christians before you, that the written word of God is true, and start holding God to His word by trusting He is faithful who promised, who also will do it (Heb 10:23).

Going back to Rom 1, as Compton and MaryJane recommended, the 'choice' you have is not whether to believe or not to believe, but whether to glorify God as Creator, or worship the created thing (creature) instead (v 25).

Here is Paul's *logical* explanation of God's behaviour, in response to man's response to His pre-existing statement of His existence and presence: 18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; 19 **Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed unto them.** 20 **For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:** 21 **Because that, when they knew God, they glorified not as God, neither were thankful;** but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. 22 Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,

So we see that that you must make the CHOICE to GLORIFY GOD, in order that He shed light in your mind. Otherwise, He will let your mind become dark and foolishness will set in, with His permission.

25 Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen. 26 **For this cause God gave them up** unto vile affections

Repentance, in this case, means going back towards the time when you acknowledged God as you ought, and you glorified Him as you ought, and you withheld your mind and body from wilful sin - which includes not believing in Jesus Christ whom He has sent (John 16:9).

Please try to see 'unbelief' as a luxury you cannot afford, and with the same enthusiasm you have opened the door to it, now, work at closing the door, and keep leaning on it as hard as you can to keep it shut!

I have one last verse to share, because I also had trouble with faith (as you may have seen in my replies to Bible4life), until 1) I asked God for a gift of faith, and graciously He gave me some, and 2) I heard the 'Have faith in God.' of Mark 11:22 expounded as 'Hold the faithfulness of God'. Somehow, that change of wording enabled my mind to give up all its trying, and rest in the faithfulness of God to do me good. And He has. All praise to His Name!

Re: - posted by ADisciple (), on: 2009/9/26 14:04

Quote:

Jdl wrote:

As long as I am battling these doubts...

It's good that you recognize the nature of what's going on in you, dear brother.

You have an enemy, and you're in a battle. And you're not the only one who has had to fight this one out.

But, "Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life..." (1 Tim. 6.12).

You have doubts about God? Well... have no doubts about the Devil. He will do anything he can to deceive you, lie to you, cheat you, and rob you of your relationship with Jesus Christ.

Let me tell you, brother, let me assure you: the Lord Jesus Christ is REAL, more real than the air you breathe, the food you eat, the ground you walk on. He is as real as Rock.

...I encourage you, put on the helmet of salvation... and take your doubts straight to Jesus in prayer. Earnest prayer. Pour out your heart unto Him. Tell Him, Lord Jesus, I am doubting you... and tell Him just how you are doubting. He will not hit you with a big stick. He loves you, and He will listen, and yes, even with regard to the immorality you mentioned. Pour it all out to Him.

And then, YOU listen; receive His forgiveness, and learn to discern HIS loving Voice from the voice of the whisperer, or even the voice of your own anxious thoughts. Hear what Jesus is saying to you, with that Voice of the Shepherd of your soul.

I'll tell you, brother... trusting Jesus is the Way through this dark place. "Trust in Him **at all times** ye people, pour out your heart before Him; God is a refuge for us..." (Ps. 62.8).

AD

Re: doubt, on: 2009/9/27 15:08

Hey Jdl,

I found a post to you all by itself in its own thread.

You can find it under this link (https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?topic_id30694&forum35&1) a new heart

God bless you.

In association with Compton's reply to RobertW's article

(https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?topic_id30713&forum34&1) The Horns and Their Abusers, please try to listen to the first half hour of Paul Washer's address to the Deeper Conference, 2008, (<https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/mydownloads/visit.php?lid17392>) here. (There is a video version if you prefer. His introduction is a comparison of modern philosophies, set against the true gospel.) It might help you work out which modern philosophy you're the *most* unaware you have absorbed. They all contribute to doubting God's word one way or another. Just remember all the time, Jesus Christ was that 'word' - Word - made Flesh.

1 John 5:18 We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and th at wicked one toucheth him not. 19 we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness. 20 And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are i n him that is true, in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life. 21 Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen.

John 17:3

1 John 1:1 That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; 2 (For the life was manifested, and we have seen , and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) 3 That whic h we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship with t he Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. 4 And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full. 5 This then i s the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.

Re: - posted by Jdl (), on: 2009/9/28 18:43

Hi everyone, thanks for taking the time to respond...you know, it's odd...when I'm off reading apologetic stuff, my doubts come in at me full force...but when I'm here reading everyone's responses, it's as if Christ truly is divinely real...there's a few things running thru my mind that I'd like to share, if you all don't mind...

1- It was only two months ago that I was crying out to God for my salvation, or assurance of, fully believing that He was t here....crying out for conviction of sin...but since then, ever since I started trying to get a firm foundation of my beliefs thr ough apologetics, there have been nothing but a flood of doubts...Is it possible that for a weak mind like mine, apologetic s can actually do more harm than good? Because through apologetics you read of the many objections to Christianity, a nd through those there have been so many newly planted seeds of doubts in my head! And these are objections and sk epticisms that I was never really aware of before! Did I make a mistake in delving into all this information overload? Is it too late? I can't even read my Bible without thinking "the scribes added this...they are copying pagan mithra religion her e...did Jesus really say this?...etc etc"...Jesus Seminar, Ehrman, etc...I can't believe my mind is actually being pulled aw ay by these guys and asking "well what if"!!!

2- Alive-to-God, is it possible that God Himself has darkened my mind? I surely hope not, but it does indeed feel that wa y! Did you have serious doubts along the lines of the ones I am having? I'm frightened because like I said, it's hindering on actual unbelief and full blown skepticism...so many "what ifs"...

3- ADisciple, please encourage me further about how you have come to believe that Jesus is as real as the air I breathe. ..I am slowly losing sight of it!...

4- Compton, what kind of doubts do you have?

5- I'm 27 years old and single and just got back from my best friend's wedding this weekend...I am so sad! I have such a desire to get married, and I already have the girl in mind, but I can't because of all this! I am at least encouraged because if God is real, then my desire for marriage was planted by Him...is it wrong that my desire for marriage is a huge motivational factor to seek God rather than God Himself being the motivation? I feel like I'm not allowed to get married until I find Him...but what if I don't?

6- There is a question that I have been struggling with and can't seem to find an answer to...maybe you guys can help me...why wouldn't such a big event like the drowning of Pharaoh's army be recorded in Egyptian history?

7- On the positive side though, Christianity seems to be the only religion that claims a personal relationship with the creator...I can't imagine it having gone on this long if it weren't the least bit true...it doesn't seem possible that billions of people have been "psychologically duped" into thinking they actually commune with the living God...

8- Secondly, D.L. Moody once said that there was a day in New York when God showered His love upon him so much that he actually had to ask Him to stop...and I always go back to that with my doubts and think "if God doesn't exist, can that at all be explained psychologically?"...doesn't seem like it...

9- Are these doubts ever going to go away? I know Jesus existed...but right now I am struggling mainly with the idea that the early church tampered with history and deified Him...please, please don't be upset at me...I want to be rid of them, it just doesn't seem possible...apologetics surely haven't been helping...I guess every morning I wake up hoping God takes these thoughts away...should I keep at the apologetics to regain confidence in the Bible, or should I just from now on go straight to the Bible and hopefully let God do His thing, in time?

Re: - posted by TaylorOtwell (), on: 2009/9/28 19:15

Brother,

Here are a few things to think about.

1) Christ's **enemies** knew he claimed to be God. That is one of the reasons they wanted to kill him. This wasn't something that Christ's followers just made up.

2) I've read quite a few of the writings of the Apostolic Fathers (the generation after the Apostles), and none of them deny that Christ is God. In fact, they affirm that Christ is God.

3) We have a lot of manuscripts from early church history. A massive cover-up of the scale you are talking about would be next to impossible without serious evidence of it. Also, if such a change would have happened, we would have records of massive accusations in early Christian history of a conspiracy to deify Christ. That doesn't exist. In fact, the opposite exists, we have a controversy over those who would want to make Christ a mere man.

4) Just stepping back and looking at this from a judicial perspective. What motive would the early church have for even doing such a thing? Worshiping Christ as God and King instead of Caesar is what got them killed. They would have been safer (in this world) to have denied that Christ was God, not affirm it.

Praying for you.

With care in Christ,
Taylor

Re: - posted by ADisciple (), on: 2009/9/28 20:26

Quote:
-----ADisciple, please encourage me further about how you have come to believe that Jesus is as real as the air I breathe...I am slowly losing sight of it!...

Brother, I could perhaps say many things here, but simply it is because He is with me. His Presence is with me. I know-

- in measure-- His Spirit in my heart. Of course I go through times when it seems He hides His face from me... or seems far away... and those are difficult times. But as I seek Him earnestly, He is always faithful to minister into my heart that fellowship of His Presence that is more precious to me than anything else in the universe.

...And, I have heard Him speak. I know what it's like to have the living Word of God speak into my heart in such a way that, like the disciples on the Emmaus Road, their hearts burned within them while He talked with them (Lk. 24.32). I have experienced the same... whether in my own personal communion with Him, or through the words of a brother, or someone ministering a word faithfully in the anointing... and I recognized His Voice, that it was HE HIMSELF who was speaking to me. We must come to know His Voice.

...May I encourage you in two or three things?

1. Begin to discipline yourself to pray, and to LISTEN. Recognize the Voice of the Lord, and differentiate it from the voice of your Adversary the Devil, or even your own thoughts. There's nothing like the peace of God that seeps into your heart when He speaks into your heart His living Word.
2. Obedience. You can't sidestep this. Listen for that still small Voice, and what he says to you, DO IT. Every step of obedience however small will give you an increasing sense of assurance, and confidence, and the smile of His approval over your life (recognizing, of course, that our foundation is that we are "accepted in the Beloved" Eph. 1.6).
3. I think you should set aside this apologetics stuff, and listen to some good solid teaching, someone who has the word of the Lord with vision in it... that can lay hold of your heart and help you get established.

AD