

What should I do if I am having doubts about my faith/God?

You remind us of the man who brought his son to Jesus for healing. "Lord," he shouted when he saw the Master, "I believe; help my unbelief!" (Mark 9:24). We know how Christ responded to that honest cry of the heart. The boy was returned to his father healthy and whole.

There's nothing "bad" or unusual about the struggles you're experiencing. Every Christian needs to wrestle with doubt and disbelief. A faith unquestioned and untested is no faith at all. That's why the great poet Lord Tennyson was able to write, "There lives more faith in honest doubt, believe me, than in half the creeds." Even the disciples of Jesus had to find their way through this dark, discouraging tunnel. At the very moment when belief should have come easiest to them – when the Risen Christ Himself stood in front of them on a mountaintop in Galilee – Matthew records that "some doubted" (Matthew 28:17). So you're not alone. As a matter of fact, you're in very good company. To put it another way, Christianity isn't about having faith in faith alone. In the language of the New Testament, *faith* (Greek *pistis*) is a derivative of *persuasion* (Greek *peitho*). In other words, it's not merely a blind, mindless acceptance of the things our mothers and fathers told us. Instead, it's a solid *confidence* based on convincing *evidence*. That's why Luke, the writer of the book of Acts, has nothing but praise for the Jews of Berea, who, after hearing Paul's preaching of the Gospel, "searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so" (Acts 17:11). You seem to be something of a Berean yourself.

Genuine biblical faith is only as strong as its object. I have faith in my chair because I'm convinced that it is strong enough to support my weight. I express that faith by sitting down. Similarly, I have faith in Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior. Why? Because I am *persuaded* by relevant evidence that He really was God-in-the-flesh. The New Testament documents tell me that He actually lived and walked the roads of Galilee and Judea 2,000 years ago, that He died on the cross for my sins, that He rose on the third day for my justification, and that He lives today in the hearts of those who believe in Him. I respond by trusting Him with the details of my everyday life.

Remember, the Bible defines faith as "the *substance* of things hoped for" and "the *evidence* of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1). This is why Luke, in the dedications to his Gospel and the Book of Acts, places so much emphasis on eyewitness accounts and "infallible proofs" (Luke 1:2; Acts 1:3). We don't believe simply because we *want* to believe. We believe because there are good, solid *reasons* to believe.

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