

Small Groups

SERMON-BASED STUDY GUIDE

When in Doubt – Week 1 – *Doubt and Faith*

April 14, 2024

DIGGING IN:

1. What kind of experiences tend to cause Christians to doubt?
2. In your experience with church and Christians, what attitudes toward doubt have you seen expressed?
3. Do you readily admit your doubts to yourself, others, and God? Why or why not?

MAKING IT REAL:

4. Read John 20:24-19, then John 11:11-14 and Acts 1:12-14.
Thomas went on to bring the gospel to India and parts of Asia. As you think about Thomas, what are the character qualities you see? Possible personality traits?
5. How did Jesus respond to Thomas' doubt?
6. Alex said that "Doubt is a catalyst to a different kind of faith; a stronger or renewed faith." How do you see this playing out in Thomas' life?
7. How do *you* respond to someone who is expressing doubt?
8. In my experience, I have had people tell me "But, we *have to* trust Him! You can't be angry at God, or doubt His faithfulness" (and thus ends the conversation), and I have had others encourage me to express both doubt and anger to God – and *that* is where He met me.
 - a. Have you had an experience where God met you in your doubt? (If so, would you be willing to share it with the group?)
 - b. What would it take for you to be willing to express your doubt, your questions, even your anger at God, both to Him and to your group? Is there a doubt you are struggling with right now that you could share with the group? **[If someone shares, group members are *not* to give input, advice, scripture, etc. Simply sit with the person and allow them to share; express understanding of the questions and uncertainty they are experiencing.]**

PRAYER IDEAS

Pray around the circle, with each person expressing an area of doubt to God. Ask God to meet you in the places of doubt and reveal Himself to you.

WANT TO DIG A LITTLE DEEPER?

(Extra Bible study ideas)

1. Read Matthew 28:16-20. How does Jesus respond to the fact that “some doubted”?
2. Read about the lives of other people in the Bible, note how doubt was a part of their story, how God responded to them, and what ultimately took place in their lives. Here are a few examples to get you started:

Abraham (Gen 17:17 & others)
Sarah (Gen 18:12)
Moses (Ex 3:1-15)
Elijah (1 Ki 19:1-17)

John the Baptist Luke 7:18-23
Jesus' family Mark 3:20-21
Disciples Matt 26:55-56

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Faith Formation in a Secular Age: Responding to the Church's Obsession with Youthfulness (Ministry in a Secular Age Series, Book 1), by Andrew Root

A Secular Age, by Charles Taylor

Red Couch Theology Podcast

If you or group members have questions around parts of the sermon that are not included in the discussion guide, it's always helpful to listen to *Red Couch Theology*, where Alex and Aaron talk about the sermon and answer questions that come in from people in the congregation. <https://guysdrinkingtea.podbean.com/>