

EFCDP SERMON NOTES • March 3, 2024

Series: *Help My Unbelief* # 4

“*Delighting in Doubt*” • John 20:19-29

The Big Idea: *We can delight in our doubt if we never stop pursuing truth.*

1. God delights to reveal Himself to those who doubt.

Vv. 19-23

2. Some people need extra help to overcome their doubts.

Vv. 24-25

3. Honest doubt that pursues truth can result in great faith.

Vv. 26-29

Digging Deeper

A guide for personal and small group study for the week of March 3, 2023.



→ Was any part of the message unclear? Which aspect of the message do you think will be the most challenging to apply to your own life?

→ Do you agree with the “big idea” of this passage? Why or why not?

1. What have been some of your biggest disappointments in life?

(E.G. a job that turned out to not be what was promised, a romantic relationship that blew up, a major purchase that was a major disappointment, a failed investment, etc.)

→ Do you think you have recovered from those disappointments? Why or why not?

2. Have you ever tried to discuss an issue with someone who refused to consider your point of view/your evidence? If so, what was the outcome?

3. Have you been accused of not having an open mind? If so, what were the circumstances? What was the outcome?

4. Do people typically regard being a “doubting Thomas?” as a positive quality or a negative one? Why?

5. Under what circumstances could it be a positive thing to be a “doubting Thomas?”

6. Put yourself in the sandals of one of the disciples at the time when Jesus was arrested and crucified. How do you think you would have reacted to that chain of events?

- What do you think would have been your biggest fear?

7. Why do you think Thomas had such strong doubt about Jesus' resurrection that he refused to believe his closest friend's testimony about seeing Jesus on the first Easter?

8. What impact do you think Jesus' commission to the once-fearful disciples (John 20:21-23) had on their faith?

9. Describe Jesus' attitude toward his disciples when they were gathered in fear behind locked doors on that first Easter Sunday.

- In light of that, how do you think He regards you when you have fears and doubts?

10. When you have doubts about your faith, where do you go and/or what do you typically do? Which approach worked best?

Try not to think about them, hoping they will go away

Pray

Discuss them with my friends

Get depressed and stay away from church, friends, etc.

Try to find answers by studying, talking to others more knowledgeable than I am

Give up on my faith because it doesn't seem to work for me

11. Why did Pastor Steve say that John 20:23 does not mean the Holy Spirit came on the disciples as it did on Pentecost in Acts 2? How can these passages help? John 7:37-39; John 16:5-7; Acts 1:3-5

12. How can John 20:23 be related to the ministry of sharing the gospel with others? (See also Acts 2:29-41, 3:17-21, 10:34-43.)

→ Do these passages teach that the apostles have the power to forgive sin, or only God?

→ How might this relate to our efforts to share the gospel with unbelievers? (For instance, at what point can we assure someone their sins are forgiven, or that they remain lost in their sin?)

13. What can we learn from John 20:19-29 about how to relate to people who have strong doubts about the Christian faith?

14. What is the theological significance of Thomas' testimony in John 20:28? Why do scholars regard this as the climax of John's gospel? (See John 20:30-31.)

15. What would you say is the difference between honest doubt and spiritually dangerous unbelief? Which did Thomas have? How can you tell?

16. Read Hebrews 3:7-19. What does the role of doubt or unbelief play in this serious warning? Which did most of the Israelites have (except Joshua & Caleb)? What was the consequence?

17. What kind of doubts do you currently have about the Christian faith? What is your plan for dealing with them?

18. If someone came to you expressing doubts about the validity about Christianity, what would you do/say?