Following Jesus in Times of Doubt

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### Introduction

**Goal:** To be like Abraham, who “grew strong in his faith” (Rom. 4:20–21). To be grown up in our faith rather than “tossed to and fro” (Eph. 4:14).

#### 🖋️ Journal: My Story

* Are there stages of my **academic training** that have taught me to be critical, maybe even to the point of skepticism or cynicism? What were these stages?

* Have I been in **spiritual environments** or communities (churches, etc.) where people look down on critical questions or ignore them? What were these environments like for me?

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### 1. What is doubt, and is it always bad?

Three kinds of doubt: q \_\_ \_\_ \_\_ \_\_ \_\_ \_\_ \_\_ \_\_ \_\_ \_\_ ,   
w \_\_ \_\_ \_\_ \_\_ \_\_ \_\_ \_\_ , r \_\_ \_\_ \_\_ \_\_ \_\_ \_\_ \_\_ .  
People in the Bible who had these kinds of doubt:

Q:

W:

R:

In relationship to doubt, faith is *not*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Faith *is* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Is doubt sin?

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#### 🖋️ Journal: Kinds of Doubt

* Which of these **three kinds** of doubt do I tend to have in life situations? Which kinds have I had about God?
* Am I **willing to believe** if God provides the evidence?
* Have I taken my doubts **to God**? How has he responded?

### 2. Where does doubt come from, and what does it do to me?

Doubt happens when my \_\_ \_\_ \_\_ \_\_ \_\_ \_\_ \_\_ \_\_ \_\_ \_\_ \_\_ are   
\_\_ \_\_ \_\_ \_\_ \_\_ \_\_ .

Life situations that might cause doubt:

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Emotional reactions to doubt:

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#### 🖋️ Journal: Doubt in Life Crises

* What situations have I been in (or am in now) that have shaken my **core beliefs**? How are these related to my doubts?
* How does doubt make me **feel**? Am I ashamed to admit it? Scared to lose my faith? Scared that God or others will reject me?
* Do I **look down on** people who admit they have doubts? Am I scared to let them process their doubts with me?

### 3. How can I help myself and others with doubts?

Ways doubt can help me:

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Don’t let doubt fester. Instead, take these steps of faith:

**F** \_\_ \_\_ \_\_ my faith so I can continue to experience God through the Bible, prayer, and his people.

**A** \_\_ \_\_ \_\_ \_\_ \_\_ \_\_ \_\_ a friend who is strong enough to listen compassionately.

Weigh the **I** \_\_ \_\_ \_\_ \_\_ \_\_ \_\_ \_\_ \_\_ \_\_ \_\_ \_\_ of my questions for my overall faith. (Which ones can I leave unanswered?).

**T** \_\_ \_\_ \_\_ \_\_ \_\_ my remaining questions by informing myself of the evidence.

**H** \_\_ \_\_ \_\_ onto facts, not excuses.

#### 🖋️ Journal: Help in Doubt

* Can my doubts really **help me grow stronger** in my faith? Have there been times in my life when my faith grew stronger by examining the questions I had?
* Regarding doubts I have now or had in the past: which of the **FAITH steps** (above) have I already taken? Which ones do I still need to take, and how would I do that specifically?

* Which **friend/spiritual mentor** (maybe even here at the conference) do I want to ask to walk with me as I examine my doubts?
* Do I know **someone who is struggling** with doubt? How can I be a friend to them in this time and maybe even help them with these steps?