

HOW TO HANDLE DOUBT

PRAYER

Scripture: John 20:24-25

This text is familiar to most of us who have been in the faith for any length of time. We commonly refer to it as the story of doubting Thomas. Some of us have criticized this man, ridiculed him and slandered his name. And I would dare to say that many people have done that because they see so much of themselves in this man. Because if we are truly honest with ourselves, wouldn't we admit that we have 'doubted' God at times. Especially when we had prayed fervently concerning a certain situation and the answer that we wanted didn't come. Sometimes we may even ask the question, 'where was God when this/that situation occurred?'

Some people may have asked that question when the body of Felicia Barnes was found. Where was God? The family of Katrina co-worker may have asked the same question when their mom, 33 years old and had a heart attack in the hospital and died. She had three small children who loved and depended on her. Where was God? Why would He allow this to happen? I am sure the family of Kym's co-worker's son who also died. While he was in the hospital he developed pneumonia. The question is again asked, 'where was God' and then the doubt starts to creep in. These are hard questions. And some of you may have similar ones. 'Where was God when I was fired from my job? Where was God when my husband/wife left me?' Some people think that if you are a child of faith you can't ask God hard question. But my brothers and sisters in Christ, you can!

Just as Scripture tells us that 'there is nothing too hard for God', is the same way that no question is too hard for God. The question 'where was God' is not hard to answer. Because He was right there all of the time, loving you (or the other person) through it all!

He was right there, hurting along with you. Because God knows what it feels like to lose someone that you love. God knows what it feels like to see someone that you love hurt and abused! God knows what it feels like to have your child die. So, yes, the answer to your question as to where God was is that He was there all the time! (pause)

But the question, 'why did God allow certain things to happen' is a much harder question for us, with our limited knowledge, to understand. And sometimes that will cause us to doubt! Look at Thomas for a moment. He knew that Jesus had been arrested by the soldiers and religious leaders. He was right there. He knew when Jesus had been sentenced to death. He knew that Jesus had died an excruciating death on the cross. And he knew that Jesus had been buried in a grave. I am sure that he had asked some of the same questions that many of you have asked. I am sure that in his heart and his mind, he had been questioning God. Asking 'why did you allow this to happen to Jesus, He was a good man, He never did anything wrong, etc.'" Then his friends come and tell him the most amazing story. They tell him that Jesus is no longer dead, but alive! And they tell Thomas that they have actually seen Him! Of course, He doubted.

I would dare to believe that most of us would have done the same thing. But what I want you to notice is that Jesus didn't condemn him for doubting. What did He do? Jesus gently led him to faith. Whereby, Thomas loudly proclaimed, 'my Lord and my God!!!' This is what Jesus wants to do for you today! He wants us to understand that doubts may come, but we don't have to make our home there. We don't have to build a house there and live in the land of doubt and unbelief. This morning God wants to do for you the same thing that He did for Thomas, He wants to lead you from doubt to faith. And then to lead you on to even greater faith.

How does God intend to do this? He has given me seven faith confessions for you today. He gave me seven because we know that seven is the number of completion, perfection. And God knows if we get these seven confessions inside of our heart and mind, that will

help to bring us closer to completion and perfection in Him. Why does God use 'faith confessions?' Because God knows that it is important what you speak out of your mouth. If you continue to speak doubt and lack of faith, that's what you'll have. But if you speak words of faith, God will stand behind His word. So let's do this! When your heart is troubled, confess:

- **Jer. 33:3 "Call to Me, and I will answer you, and I will tell you great and mighty things, which you do not know."**

Then say, "I may not understand what is going on in my life, but I do know the One who does understand. So I will go to Him and ask even 'hard questions.' And I know that He will answer me and show me *great and mighty things* that He is going to do in and through me!" (comments – H.S.)

- **Exodus 14:14 "The Lord will fight for you while you keep silent."**

Sometimes we just need to know when to keep our mouths shut!!! When you are going through, don't go around telling everybody what your problems are. Sometimes we just give Satan too much ammunition to attack us with. How! By letting him know everything that is going on, by letting him know what hurts us, etc. Instead of always confessing your problems, confess "*I know God is fighting for me because I am holding my peace. I have committed the battle to Him.*" Amen and hallelujah!!!

- **Mark 16:17b "In my Name they will cast out demons."**

Rebuke and bind the demonic forces that are coming up against you and your family. Rebuke and bind the spirit of doubt that will try to cloud your mind. Confess from your mouth that demons/spirits have to go out because you have commanded them to in the Name of Jesus!!! Remember:

- **Romans 8:31b "If God be for us, who can be against us." (comments – H.S.)**

Stand firm on the fact that no matter what has or will transpire in your life – God is still on your side. If God is for us He is more than a whole world against us! Stop believing Satan lies that God is not concerned about you. We just celebrated Good Friday and Easter. Doesn't that show you just how much God is 'for' each and every one of us. (comments – H.S.)

- **I Peter 5:7 “Casting all your anxiety upon Him because He cares for you.”**

Notice this Scripture says, “all of your anxiety” not just some of them. God doesn't want you walking around carrying all of your burdens and cares. He says ‘give them to me I bear them!’ Hallelujah! I like the way the Amplified Version says it. *“Casting the whole of your care (all your anxieties, all your worries, all your concerns, once and for all) on Him, for He cares for you affectionately and cares about you watchfully.”* (comments – H.S.) One thing you must always remember can be found in:

- **Romans 8:28 “And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to His purpose.”**

So many people misquote that verse. Perhaps it would be fairer to say that they just don't *finish* verse. They walk around quoting ‘all things work together for good.’ But they forget to say the rest, ‘for those who love the Lord.’ God has made us a powerful promise here. If we love Him, He promises to take the hurtful things in our lives and turn them around for our good! (comments – H.S.)

You say ‘how can anything good come out of losing a love one?’ Well, I can speak from experience on this one. Because you see I, too, lost a child at a young age. What was the good that came out of it. It drew me closer to the Lord, it made me stronger and taught me that I could depend on God for His strength. And it gave me a powerful testimony of the goodness and mercy of God. How?

- **Prov. 3:5-6 Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him and He shall direct thy path.”**

Remember the hard question that we asked in the beginning about ‘why God allowed certain things to happen.’ Remember I didn’t have an answer for the ‘why.’ I still don’t! But what I’ve learned is ‘when you don’t understand, you can still trust!’ **(comment on each section of verse – H.S.)**

Commit all of these verses to memory. Make them a part of your daily life. And when doubt, fear and anxiety try to take hold of your mind, don’t allow them to cloud your thinking. Use these verses and allow Jesus to do for you what He did for Thomas, taking him from doubt to faith. Amen!

PRAYER

INVITATIONAL HYMN