

Our Doubt And The Truth Of God



**OUR DOUBT AND THE
TRUTH OF GOD**



Biblical Heroes Who Struggled With Doubt

- Thomas
 - Job
 - Moses
 - Jonah
 - Elijah
 - John the Baptist
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Matthew 11:1-3

- 1 Now it came to pass, when Jesus finished commanding His twelve disciples, that He departed from there to teach and to preach in their cities.
- 2 And when John had heard in prison about the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples
- 3 and said to Him, “Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?”



Matthew 11:4-6

- 4 Jesus answered and said to them, "Go and tell John the things which you hear and see:
- 5 The blind see and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them.
- 6 And blessed is he who is not offended because of Me."



Matthew 11:7-9

- 7 As they departed, Jesus began to say to the multitudes concerning John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind?”
- 8 But what did you go out to see? A man clothed in soft garments? Indeed, those who wear soft clothing are in kings’ houses.
- 9 But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I say to you, and more than a prophet.



I. About Our Doubt

II. Route To Doubt

III. Bout With Doubt

IV. Out With Doubt


A. The Biblical Words For Doubt

- ***Dipsychos*** – dual minded (James 1:8)
- ***Diakrino*** – lit. to judge between two, to distinguish (James 1:6; Rom 14:23)
- ***Dialogismos*** – carefully think through, reason, to think so deeply that you remain in doubt (Lk 24:38)
- ***Distazo*** – to doubt, waver (Mt 14:31; 28:17)



B. The Practical Definition For Doubt


- Os Guinness: “To believe is to be ‘in one mind’ about accepting something as true; to disbelieve is to be ‘in one mind’ about rejecting it. To doubt is to waver between the two, to believe and disbelieve at once and so be ‘in two minds.’” *(Two Minds)*

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- ➔ J.I. Packer “What is doubt? It is a state of divided mind...and it is found both *within* faith and *without* it.”
(*Growing In Christ*)

The English word “doubt” comes from the Latin *dubitare* from an Aryan root meaning “two”

- Chinese proverb sees doubt as a foot in 2 boats





C. A Realistic Evaluation Of Doubt

C.S. Lewis:

- ***Theologically Liberal*** = too soft on doubt, hailing ambiguity and uncertainty as spiritual virtues
- ***Theologically Conservative*** = too hard on doubt that propagates a sense of spiritual perfection that causes guilt, results in shipwrecks



The Purpose For Doubt

- God designed “doubt” for us to grow our faith on.
- Doubt is not intended to bring us guilt about being perfect in our faith.
- Doubt demonstrates that our mortal thoughts will never compare to the perfect thoughts of God.
- Doubt is to bring us to subjection to God in faith, not to bring us to despair and guilt for not being perfect in faith.



II. Route To Doubt

A. Troubling Circumstances

2 *And when John had heard in prison about the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples*

Flavius Josephus

(1st century Roman historian)



Machaerus from the East
with Dead Sea in background

Adapted from a photograph by BiblePlaces.com

- Accordingly, he [John the Baptist] was sent a prisoner, out of Herod's suspicious temper, to Macherus, the castle I before mentioned, and was there put to death. (Antiquities of the Jews 18.5.2).



II. Route To Doubt

A. Troubling Circumstances (2)

B. Misguided Expectations (3)

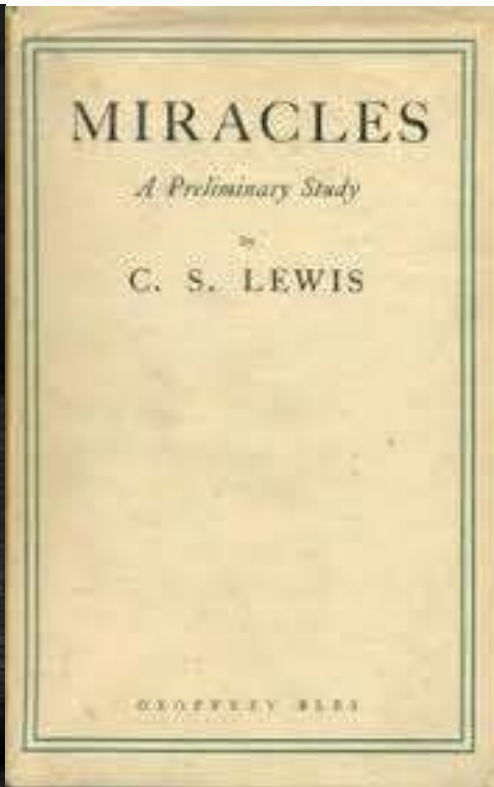
3 *and said to Him, “Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?”*



B. Misguided Expectations (3)

- 1. Misguided Expectations About God**
- 2. Misguided Expectations About Faith**

C.S. Lewis vs. Elizabeth Anscombe





II. Route To Doubt

- A. Troubling Circumstances (2)
- B. Misguided Expectations (3)
- C. Insufficient Knowledge (3)**



III. Bout With Doubt

A. Resistance

- “I Doubt, Therefore There Is No God”

B. Paralysis

- “I Doubt, Therefore I Don’t Care Either Way”

C. Pursuit

- “I Doubt, Therefore I Seek”



IV. Out With Doubt

Matthew 11:3-9



A. Pursue The Truth With Questions (3)

- *³and said to Him, “Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?”*
- Mark Littleton: “Turn your doubt to questions. Turn your questions to prayers. Turn your prayers to God.”




B. Go To The Source Of Truth

➡ *³and said to Him, “Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?” ⁴Jesus answered and said to them, “Go and tell John the things which you hear and see:*



Truth Is What Is Right According To God



- **Ephesians 4:21** ²if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the **truth** is in Jesus:
- **Revelation 15:3** ³They sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying: “Great and marvelous are Your works, Lord God Almighty! Just and **true** are Your ways, O King of the saints!

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- **Deuteronomy 32:4** He is the Rock, His work is perfect; for all His ways are justice, a God of **truth** and without injustice; righteous and upright is He
 - **Jeremiah 10:10** But the Lord is the **true** God; He is the living God and the everlasting King.
 - **John 14:6** Jesus said to him, “I am the way, the **truth**, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.”
 - **John 17:17** Sanctify them by Your **truth**. Your word is **truth**.



C. Expect The Gospel To Be The Superior Answer To All Our Doubts (5)

⁵“The blind see and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them.

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- **Isaiah 35:5-6** “Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the dumb sing. For waters shall burst forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert.”
 - **Isaiah 61:1** “The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon Me, because the LORD has anointed Me to preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound”



D. Realize The Work Of Christ Leads To Blessing Not Abandonment (6)

- *“And blessed is he who is not offended because of Me.”*



E. Allow Your Faith To Be Forged Through The Fire Of Doubt (7-9)

- *⁷ As they departed, Jesus began to say to the multitudes concerning John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? ⁸ But what did you go out to see? A man clothed in soft garments? Indeed, those who wear soft clothing are in kings’ houses. ⁹ But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I say to you, and more than a prophet.*

Thomas Bilney

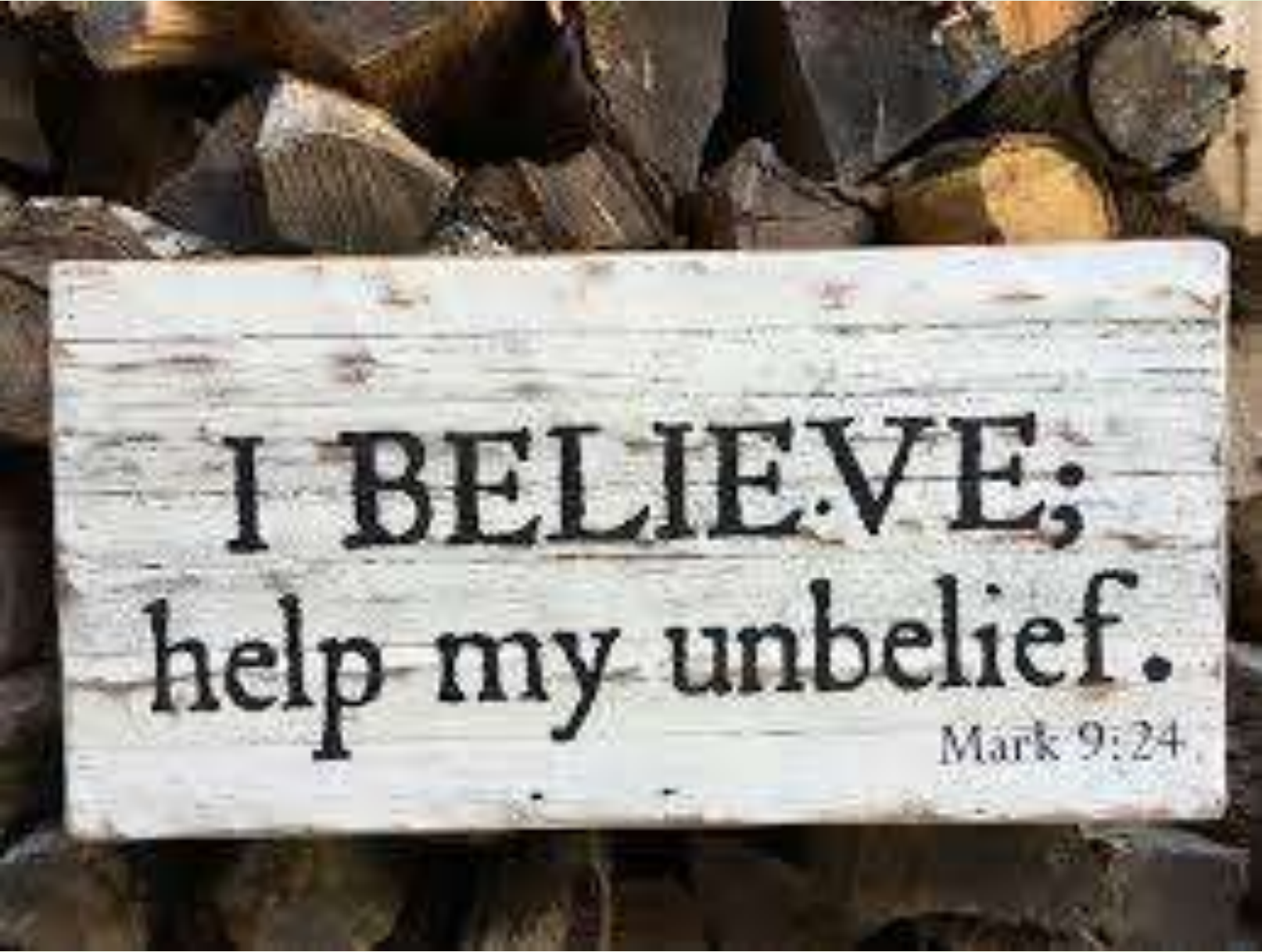
The English Reformation





Conclusion:

1. Let your doubts move you to seek God, not turn away from God.
2. If you find it hard to trust Him, will you ask Him for the strength to believe?
 - ▶ **Mark 9:24** Immediately the father of the child cried out and said with tears, “Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!”
3. Let courage be forged under the intense heat of fear and doubt.



I BELIEVE;
help my unbelief.

Mark 9:24