

HOW I OVERCAME MY DOUBTS

Part 3 of HOW I ... Luke 7:18-23.

Peter Foxwell. Cornerstone Church. August 20, 2023.

DOUBTING PETER

Doubt is not the same as unbelief.

- Doubt is uncertainty, questions, or skepticism.

Today, I want to share with you how I overcame my doubts.

QUESTION ONE:

IS CHRISTIANITY BASED ON ACTUAL PEOPLE AND EVENTS?

Doubts about our faith are normal.

John the Baptist sent messengers to Jesus to settle his uncertainty.

Luke 7:18-19 (ESV) And John, 19 calling two of his disciples to him, sent them to the Lord, saying, "Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?"

When I had questions about the the Christian faith, I looked for answers.

- *Evidence that Demands a Verdict* by Josh McDowell.

I concluded that:

- Jesus is real. His miracles are real. His crucifixion/resurrection are real.
- The Bible is accurate, reliable, and dependable.

QUESTION TWO:

IS CHRISTIANITY COMPATIBLE WITH REASON AND SCIENCE?

I became a Christian in law school, so logic and evidence were important.

Jesus responded to John the Baptist's messengers with evidence.

- The facts could be confirmed by hundreds of eye-witnesses.

Luke 7:22 (ESV) And he answered them, "Go and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the poor have good news preached to them."

I looked for evidence and I found it.

- Evidence related to Jesus: *A Doubter's Guide to Jesus* by John Dickson.
- Reason, science and Christianity: Dr. John Lennox - Oxford mathematician ((www.johnlennox.org/). Watch *Does God Exist?* www.youtube.com/watch?v=otrqzITuSqE
- Logic and philosophy: Dr. William Lane Craig - influential philosopher ((www.reasonablefaith.org/). Watch: www.youtube.com/watch?v=0tYm41hb48o
- Answers to critics of Christianity: Tim Keller - the late NYC church leader - (gospelinlife.com/) wrote *Reasons for God: Belief in an Age of Skepticism*.
- Answers to critics of Christianity: Dr. Rebecca McLaughlin wrote *Confronting Christianity: 12 Hard Questions for the World's Largest Religion*.

Is Christianity compatible with reason and evidence?

- In my opinion, based on my research, YES!

QUESTION THREE:

AM I TRULY A CHRISTIAN, TRULY SAVED? DOES GOD LOVE ME?

I've wrestled with these three questions over the years.

- These kinds of doubts are normal. Every believer has felt this way.
- Martin Luther: "Faith is a wrestle with doubt."

Many of the Psalms express doubts. For example:

- People without faith don't reach out to God with those kinds of questions.

Psalms 13:1 (ESV) How long, O LORD? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me?

I overcome doubts about salvation by drawing closer to Jesus & gospel.

- Jesus speaks life into me. His Spirit renews my faith.

Romans 8:15-16 (ESV) you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!" 16 The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God ...

- Jesus told John's messengers:

Luke 7:23 (ESV) "Blessed is the one who is not offended by me."

- Offended = tripped up, derailed.

Resources:

- RC Sproul's video on assurance of salvation: www.youtube.com/watch?v=1NxjBI5b8Uk.
- JD Greear's book on assurance: *Stop Asking Jesus into Your Heart*.
- Online article on assurance: www.navpress.com/stories/10-assurances-salvation

THE CHRISTIAN FAITH IS CREDIBLE

The author and speaker, Josh McDowell, was challenged to research the Christian faith when he was a skeptical college student. This is his story ...

“Jesus Christ?” I snapped. “I’m fed up with religion. I’m fed up with church. I’m fed up with the Bible.”

Immediately she shot back: “I didn’t say religion. I said Jesus Christ!” She pointed out something I had never known: Christianity is not a religion. Religion is humans trying to work their way to God through good works. Christianity is God coming to men and women through Jesus Christ.

Then my new friends issued a challenge I couldn’t believe. They challenged me to make rigorous, intellectual examinations of the claims of Jesus Christ – that He is God’s Son; that He inhabited a human body and lived among real men and women; that He died on the cross for the sins of humanity; that He was buried and was resurrected three days later; and that He is still alive and can change a person’s life even today.

I took the challenge seriously. I spent months in research. I even dropped out of school for a time to study in the historically rich libraries of Europe. And I found evidence – evidence in abundance; evidence I could hardly believe with my own eyes.

Finally I could come to only one conclusion: If I were to remain intellectually honest, I had to admit that the Old and New Testament documents were some of the most reliable writings in all of antiquity. And if they were reliable, what about this man Jesus, whom I had dismissed as a mere carpenter? I had to admit that Jesus Christ was more than a carpenter. He was all He claimed to be.

Adapted from: www.cru.org/us/en/how-to-know-god/my-story-a-life-changed/my-story-josh-mcdowell.html

Watch McDowell’s video testimony: www.youtube.com/watch?v=9H6NjZx9xmQ