



Certain of What We Do Not See

Series: *Faith* Hebrews 11:1

April 15, 2018

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What is faith?

Hebrews 11:1

God **understands** our doubts

Hebrews 11:1-3; Isaiah 55:9; John 20:31

Two men in the New Testament who doubted...

1. John the Baptist

Luke 7:18-22, 28; John 1:29; 2 Peter 3:9

Adversity *sharpens your faith*

2. Thomas

John 20:25,29

Examine *the evidence*

Jeremiah 29:12-13; James 4:8; John 3:16

Growth Group Questions

All references from New International Version (NIV)

QUICK REVIEW

Looking back at your notes from this week's teaching, was there anything that particularly caught your attention, challenged or confused you?

MY STORY

1. Brian described a phenomenon called "Blindsight." It's where a blind person occasionally has a sense of what's happening around them. Have you ever sensed something was happening around you, but didn't see it? Explain.
2. Do you know someone who is a person of great faith? Describe their faith.

DIGGING DEEPER

1. One of the best biblical definitions of faith is in Hebrews 11:1. It says "...faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see." Clearly, faith has close ties to 'things that are unseen'. Read these verses.

Romans 8:24

²⁴ For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have?

2 Corinthians 4:18

¹⁸ So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

2 Corinthians 5:7

⁷ For we live by faith, not by sight.

1 Peter 1:8

⁸ Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy.

What is one thing that, if God allowed you to see it, would immediately strengthen your faith?

If you could ask God one question, what would it be?

2. In Matthew 8:26 Jesus and the disciples are in a boat on the Sea of Galilee when a storm blew up. Jesus was asleep. The disciples were afraid, so they woke Jesus, and He said, "You of little faith, why are you so afraid?" Then He got up and rebuked the wind and the waves, and it was completely calm. How often is our fear the basis for our lack of faith? Read these verses.

Matthew 6:30

³⁰ If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith?

Matthew 14:31-32

³¹ Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. “You of little faith,” he said, “why did you doubt?” ³² And when they climbed into the boat, the wind died down.

John 14:27

²⁷ Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

John 16:33

³³ “I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”

What is your biggest fear? In light of the verses above, how should you deal with that fear?

How do you define peace? Are you experiencing peace in your life right now? Why or why not?

3. Brian told us about a doubter in the New Testament. His name was John the Baptist. From prison John wanted to know if Jesus was the one who is to come. Initially Jesus didn't answer his question, He simply pointed to His works. What kinds of things did Jesus do to strengthen the faith of His disciples?

Matthew 17:1-2

¹ After six days Jesus took with him Peter, James and John the brother of James, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. ² There he was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as the light.

Mark 5:34

³⁴ He said to her, “Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace and be freed from your suffering.”

Mark 9:22-23

²² “It has often thrown him into fire or water to kill him. But if you can do anything, take pity on us and help us.” ²³ “If you can?” said Jesus. “Everything is possible for one who believes.”

John 5:6

⁶ When Jesus saw him lying there and learned that he had been in this condition for a long time, he asked him, “Do you want to get well?”

Is this a true statement: “If you have enough faith, God will answer your prayers”? Why or why not? Refer to Mark 9:23 in your answer.

When you see all the miracles Jesus did in the presence of His disciples, do you ever think, “Why did the disciples struggle with their faith in Jesus?”

4. Brian mentioned that we don’t follow Jesus Christ in blind faith. God has given us evidence. Brian challenged us to ‘examine the evidence.’ Read.

Deuteronomy 4:29

²⁹ But if from there you seek the LORD your God, you will find him if you seek him with all your heart and with all your soul.

Jeremiah 29:12-13

¹² Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you.

¹³ You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.

Matthew 7:7-8

⁷ “Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. ⁸ For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.”

James 4:8a

⁸ Come near to God and he will come near to you.

Brian said that one of the reasons non-Christians don’t want to examine the evidence for Christianity is, they’re afraid if Christianity is true, then they’ll have to change their behavior. Do you think that’s true? Why or why not?

On a scale of 1 to 10 how strong is your faith right now, 10 being strong, 1 being weak. What are some practical ways you could grow in faith this week?

TAKING IT HOME

Based on this week’s sermon and homework, what is the most important thing for you to remember and why?