

OVERCOMING YOUR DOUBTS (Overcoming Series – Part 4)

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THE LORD'S FLOCK GROW DIGEST

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We all experience doubts as we go through life. Doubt is a part of life; it creates uncertainty and makes us uncomfortable. On the positive side, doubt leads us to a learning process that is a component of growth, wisdom and faith.

Three Kinds of Doubt and How to Overcome Them:

1. **Emotional Doubt** arises from feelings of uncertainty and can be triggered by a personal traumatic experience or emotional turmoil.

1.1. The loss of a loved one or a severe health diagnosis may lead us to question our faith and doubt God's love.

1.2. This kind of doubt requires compassionate support rather than a purely intellectual response, for a problem shared is half the problem solved. Offering our presence and understanding is more appropriate rather than an intellectual response.

2. **Spiritual Doubt** may consist of questions about the goodness of God, the truth of religious teachings or the validity of personal experiences/testimonies of faith. Spiritual doubt is a common struggle.

2.1. This can be addressed by spiritual discipline: prayer, meditation/reflection, reading the Bible. We need to pause and spend time with God to be enlightened.

2.2. Community support is important. Just speaking about our problems or listening to others can lighten our load and clear our uncertainties.

2.3. Spiritual doubt leads us to a deeper journey of faith and understanding. When we take the time to think and learn from our experiences about the things we do not understand, we deepen our faith.

2.4 Doubting God, especially during challenging periods, is not a sign of weak faith; rather, it can reflect a genuine desire to understand His will and purpose. Doubt is an element of faith, not the opposite of faith.

2.5 The disciple Thomas doubted that Jesus rose from the dead; he needed proof by touching Jesus' wounds. All the apostles probably had the same doubt, but only Thomas articulated it. Jesus later appeared and invited Thomas to touch His wound. He declared, "blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe" (Jn. 20:24-29). Thomas was vilified, and yet he actually died a martyr in India.

2.6 "To see is to believe" is not valid. There are many things that we do not see but believe as true (e.g. the wind is not visible). Faith is belief in things that we do not see; the substance of what we hope for (Heb. 11:1).

3. **Self-doubt** acts as a traitor that hinders progress and kills dreams. God believes in us; thus, let us believe in ourselves.

3.1 Let us not doubt God or put Him to test. The challenge is to believe first that we can do it, because God believes in us and we can overcome trials.

3.2 The elderly should not doubt their abilities. They can find a new purpose in life; look for a ministry or apostolate.

Conclusion: Let doubt be a part of our faith journey and strengthen our faith. When things are uncertain, let us simply go to God and He will dispel our doubts.

Reflection: What is your coping mechanism when you have doubts? How can you strengthen your faith during times of uncertainties and trials?

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