

THE EVIDENCE FOR GOD: JESUS>BLIND FAITH

Breaking Down Faith:

1 Corinthians 14:20, Colossians 1:28-29, Hebrews 11:1

- **Child-like** faith vs. **childish** faith
- Faith is a **future hope** based on **past evidence**

What Would It Take To Trust Someone With Your Life?

- Make sure they aren't **a fraud**
Romans 1:19-21; 1 Corinthians 15:19
- Demonstrate **mastery** over the **subject matter**
1 Corinthians 15:55-57
- Know them **personally**
Psalm 139
- Point to a **proven track record**
Hebrews 11
- Some kind of **money back guarantee**
Genesis 15
- Demonstrate **concern for my safety**
Ephesians 5:1-2
- Make my **expectations clear**
Romans 10:9-11

Doubting Thomas:

John 20:24-28

Jesus meets us **in our doubts** to help us **believe**

Growth Group Homework

For the week of March 4, 2018

QUICK REVIEW

Looking back at your notes from this week's teaching, was there anything you heard for the first time or that caught your attention, challenged or confused you?

MY STORY

1. This weekend we heard that Jesus meets us in our doubts. We're all wired differently and some of us have a tendency to wrestle with doubt while others have little inner conflict. Which way do you tend to lean?

2. Which three reasons to trust someone with your life caught your attention the most in this weekend's teaching and why?

DIGGING DEEPER

1. This weekend we were given some great reasons why a commitment to trust and follow Jesus is actually not a "blind leap of faith" as some may think. A similar example of a "crazy leap of blind faith" is Peter climbing out of the boat and walking on water towards Jesus (Matthew 14:22-33). To most of us this seems like a crazy thing to do. But was Peter's faith really as blind or crazy as it seems? After each group of verses below, jot down how the insights and experiences Peter had with Jesus may have helped his "leap into the water" not seem so big or blind.

Luke 5:1-11 *New International Version (NIV)*

Jesus Calls His First Disciples

⁵ One day as Jesus was standing by the Lake of Gennesaret, the people were crowding around him and listening to the word of God. ² He saw at the water's edge two boats, left there by the fishermen, who were washing their nets. ³ He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little from shore. Then he sat down and taught the people from the boat.

⁴ When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into deep water, and let down the nets for a catch."

⁵ Simon answered, "Master, we've worked hard all night and haven't caught anything. But because you say so, I will let down the nets."

⁶ When they had done so, they caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to break. ⁷ So they signaled their partners in the other boat to come and help them, and they came and filled both boats so full that they began to sink.

⁸ When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus' knees and said, "Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!" ⁹ For he and all his companions were astonished at the catch of fish they had taken, ¹⁰ and so were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, Simon's partners.

Then Jesus said to Simon, "Don't be afraid; from now on you will fish for people." ¹¹ So they pulled their boats up on shore, left everything and followed him.

Matthew 4:18-22 New International Version (NIV)

Jesus Calls His First Disciples

¹⁸ As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. ¹⁹ “Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will send you out to fish for people.” ²⁰ At once they left their nets and followed him.

²¹ Going on from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John. They were in a boat with their father Zebedee, preparing their nets. Jesus called them, ²² and immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him.

Matthew 8:14-16 New International Version (NIV)

Jesus Heals Many

¹⁴ When Jesus came into Peter’s house, he saw Peter’s mother-in-law lying in bed with a fever. ¹⁵ He touched her hand and the fever left her, and she got up and began to wait on him.

¹⁶ When evening came, many who were demon-possessed were brought to him, and he drove out the spirits with a word and healed all the sick.

Matthew 9:10-12 New International Version (NIV)

¹⁰ While Jesus was having dinner at Matthew’s house, many tax collectors and sinners came and ate with him and his disciples. ¹¹ When the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, “Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?”

¹² On hearing this, Jesus said, “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick.

Matthew 14:13-21 New International Version (NIV)

Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand

¹³ When Jesus heard what had happened, he withdrew by boat privately to a solitary place. Hearing of this, the crowds followed him on foot from the towns. ¹⁴ When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them and healed their sick.

¹⁵ As evening approached, the disciples came to him and said, “This is a remote place, and it’s already getting late. Send the crowds away, so they can go to the villages and buy themselves some food.”

¹⁶ Jesus replied, “They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat.”

¹⁷ “We have here only five loaves of bread and two fish,” they answered.

¹⁸ “Bring them here to me,” he said. ¹⁹ And he directed the people to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the people. ²⁰ They all ate and were satisfied, and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over. ²¹ The number of those who ate was about five thousand men, besides women and children.

Before you knew Jesus, can you think of any experiences, people, teaching/bible studies, etc. that helped you take the “leap of *not so blind* faith” to follow him?

As you follow Jesus, what helps you to continue to take the daily steps and “leaps of faith” to follow him, obey and do what he calls you to do?

2. It can be difficult to understand how faith and doubt can co-exist. How does Mark 9:14-24 help us understand that we can have both doubt and faith?

Mark 9:14-24 *New International Version (NIV)*

Jesus Heals a Boy Possessed by an Impure Spirit

¹⁴ When they came to the other disciples, they saw a large crowd around them and the teachers of the law arguing with them. ¹⁵ As soon as all the people saw Jesus, they were overwhelmed with wonder and ran to greet him.

¹⁶ “What are you arguing with them about?” he asked.

¹⁷ A man in the crowd answered, “Teacher, I brought you my son, who is possessed by a spirit that has robbed him of speech. ¹⁸ Whenever it seizes him, it throws him to the ground. He foams at the mouth, gnashes his teeth and becomes rigid. I asked your disciples to drive out the spirit, but they could not.”

¹⁹ “You unbelieving generation,” Jesus replied, “how long shall I stay with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring the boy to me.”

²⁰ So they brought him. When the spirit saw Jesus, it immediately threw the boy into a convulsion. He fell to the ground and rolled around, foaming at the mouth.

²¹ Jesus asked the boy’s father, “How long has he been like this?”

“From childhood,” he answered. 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.”

²⁴ Immediately the boy’s father exclaimed, “I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!”

Can you think of any explanations of what this man meant by his request to overcome unbelief?

We all deal with doubt at times. Have you ever found yourself asking God to help you with your doubt or unbelief? If so, explain.

3. We have been reminded this week that our trust in Jesus is credible, not a blind leap of faith, and that our faith can even coexist with doubt. Understanding both of these view points are foundational to navigating all that life throws at us. It builds a confidence that we can live boldly and securely following Jesus, doing all we can to help others do the same. How does James 2:14-26 reinforce that this confidence is not just an idea to hold onto but also something to act on?

James 2:14-26 *New International Version (NIV)*
Faith and Deeds

¹⁴ What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save them? ¹⁵ Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. ¹⁶ If one of you says to them, "Go in peace; keep warm and well fed," but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? ¹⁷ In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.

¹⁸ But someone will say, "You have faith; I have deeds."

Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by my deeds. ¹⁹ You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that—and shudder.

²⁰ You foolish person, do you want evidence that faith without deeds is useless? ²¹ Was not our father Abraham considered righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? ²² You see that his faith and his actions were working together, and his faith was made complete by what he did. ²³ And the scripture was fulfilled that says, "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness," and he was called God's friend. ²⁴ You see that a person is considered righteous by what they do and not by faith alone.

²⁵ In the same way, was not even Rahab the prostitute considered righteous for what she did when she gave lodging to the spies and sent them off in a different direction? ²⁶ As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead.

Is there anything small or large that God is calling you to take action on that you've neglected or need to pay better attention to?

TAKING IT HOME

Looking back at this weekend's teaching, is there anything specific you'd like to focus on this next week or ask your group to pray about?

Praise/Prayer Requests:



RESOURCES TO TOUGH QUESTIONS ABOUT CHRISTIANITY

- Article – [7 Questions Skeptics Ask – Christianity Today](#)
- Book – [The Case For Faith](#) - Strobel
- Book – [Who Made God?](#) – Geilser/Zacharias

BIBLE AUDIO

Looking for some apps or websites that read the Bible to you? Here are a few suggestions:

Apps:

- YouVersion - [iPhone](#) / [Android](#)
- Bible.is - [iPhone](#) / [Android](#)

Online:

- Biblica - <https://www.biblica.com/bible/>
- BibleGateway - <https://www.biblegateway.com/resources/audio/>