

From the Desk of Our Pastor

Doubt is not all Bad!

Poor Thomas gets a bad rap. He does seem to be the "Eeyore" of the disciples when he darkens conversations with lines like:

- † "Let us also go, that we may die with him"
- † "Lord, we do not know where you are going; how can we know the way
- † and with this week's Gospel,
- † "Unless I see in his hands the print of the nails, and place my finger in the mark of the nails, and place my hand in his side, I will not believe."



The truth is all the other disciples doubted, either out loud or in the silence of their hearts. There can be no true faith apart from doubt. It is just that the phenomenon of doubt stuck with Thomas. All of us are more like him that we care to admit.

There is no virtue at all in believing all the mystifying and bewildering things Jesus places before us blindly and without questions. All this proves is that we are shallow and not genuine. The authentic believer struggles very hard with the incredible; most of what we see of Jesus is incredible, defying all natural logic. Without working through these doubts and coming to terms with them, we cannot grow in our faith. So, we must not view our doubts as sin *per se*; it is what we do with them that matters.

Because we look at doubt as essentially evil, we are ashamed of it, and either we try to ignore it, or we become overwhelmed with it. Doubts do not go away by ignoring them; they just fester underneath our consciousness, and in the end render us ineffective in our spiritual lives. If we are overwhelmed, then again, we become ineffective. Either way, it is the Devil that is behind our response to doubt. The result is the same – ineffectiveness. The Devil will settle for this if he cannot have your soul.

Finally, it has been in vogue since the beginning of our modern era to doubt everything; doubt has been raised as a virtue! In this way, many of us have grown quite comfortable with our doubts, and in doing so, slipped into disbelief. If all we have left are our doubts, what really do we have? Isn't it the doubt the serpent planted into Eve that directly resulted in active rebellion against God in her choices?

Jesus knows how hard it is to believe; He understands Thomas and the rest of us who struggle. True, He said that those of us who believe without seeing are blessed, but again, this does not mean that faith comes easy. Elsewhere Jesus says, "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent." Belief comes at a great cost. When we work through our doubts by prayer, reading, asking questions, and searching for the truth, our faith truly becomes ours, and out of this confidence we can be the missionary disciples we are called to be.

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