

Where will your doubt lead you – Darkness or Light?

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Introduction: Doubt is a doorway that can lead to God.

- A. God wants us to walk by faith but faith *requires examination and thinking*.
 - 1. Jesus encouraged questions and often *responded with questions*. Why? He wanted all men to “search!” (**Mt 12:3-5**)
 - 2. When we *know God* then we will not be afraid to “test all things!”
 - 3. When doubt is handled God’s way, then there will be an open and honest pursuit of light. We *really want to know and do!* (**Jn 7:17**)
- B. Satan also has a “gameplan” for how we are to handle doubt. He wants to *keep you in doubt and uncertainty* in isolation and darkness.
 - 1. He hates truth and light. Pride often leads people to fear light! They already have a desire of *what they “want the truth to be!”*
 - 2. Lazy people want darkness because it is *easy and predictable*.

I. Start with God and His character

- A. If one does not have an understanding and a deep faith in God they are *ill-equipped to handle doubt*. (**Heb 11:6**)
 - 1. Strong men *can have doubts*. Consider the great prophet, John the Baptist. (**Jn 7:19-20**)
 - 2. Why did he have doubt? He did not doubt God, but he did have a *misunderstanding about the plan of God*.
 - 3. What did he do with his doubt? (**Jn 3:21; Lk 7:21-23**)
- B. How did Peter handle doubt? He had a foundation! (**Jn 6:66-68**)
 - 1. We need to teach our children how to struggle and learn (Ex. Charlottesville)
 - 2. I can remember times in my life crying out to God for knowledge.
 - 3. How can I know that I will know? I must be a diligent seeker! (**Heb 11:6**)
- C. What should we know about God?
 - 1. Jesus urged all with much effort build a foundation. (**Lk 6:48-49**)
 - 2. A foundation is strong when it is built on reality. *Begin with God!* (**Isa 55:6-7**)
- D. Our *very identity* must be founded upon God. (**Ps 63:1-8**)
 - 1. Consider the expressions: “thirsts,” “longs,” “looked,” and “meditate.”
 - 2. The things that this world identifies with *are discarded*. (**Jer 9:23-24**)
 - 3. If you were to introduce God to another, *what would you say?* (**Isa 40:28-31**)
 - 4. Often I help people deal with doctrinal doubts by *first looking at the holiness of God*. When that is understood many questions are answered!
- E. We carefully study God’s word to *stand upon “unchangeable truths.”* (**2 Jn 1-2, 4**)

II. How Satan uses doubt to pull us into darkness

- A. He will take advantage of *our personal sin and guilt*. (**2 Cor 2:10-11; Prov 28:1**)
 - 1. Some may be caught up in ongoing sin and try to run and hide. They may express doubt about matters that *are not the real source of their pain*.

2. This one needs to have his *heart cut open and exposed!* (**Jn 5:42-44; 12:42-43**)
 3. Often I have seen past hurt be the cause of a desired doubt. Is this a problem of *the mind or the will?*
- B. Satan wants us in relationships where *our doubts are magnified and applauded.* (**Ps 1:1-2**)
1. Consider the work of Absalom. (**2 Sam 15:1-6**)
 2. There are some who work hard *to plant bitterness in private.* (**2 Pt 2:1, 3**)
 3. When you are angry you can *easily accept false doctrine* because of your hatred of “legalistic brethren.” (**Deut 29:18-19**)
 3. You *become poison!* If you stay like this, *it is just a matter of time* before you leave “sectarian brethren” and take others with you. (**Prov 14:10**)
 4. Please do not *closely associate* with an angry man. (**Prov 22:24-25**)
- C. He plants *bitterness towards brethren.* (**Heb 12:15**)
1. It is *very easy* to spread anger and bitterness. The world is not concerned with justice and mercy. They are *quick to believe a falsehood!* Let us not do this.
 2. Bitterness takes away just and fair thinking.
- D. He plants pride towards brethren. (**James 3:14**)
1. In pride you *will look down* on “ignorant” brethren and not listen. (**1 Cor 8:1-3**)
 2. Pride rejoices in the faults of others. You live in *the land of “throw-away” people.* You write them off with no attempt to work with them.
 3. The faults of brethren are often discussed *as proof of almost anything!* (**Lk 18:9, 11; 2 Cor 10:12, 18**)
- E. He leads men to *a learned dishonesty.* (**Lk 20:4-7**)
1. This creates a heart that cannot receive the word of God. (**Lk 8:15 KJV**)
 2. Men of faith and conviction are *open and bold.* (**2 Cor 4:2; 3:2; Jn 1:47**)
 3. Some are always “misunderstood” and *love to wear martyr’s clothes.* (Quote)
 5. How did Jesus teach others? Why do men *hide their beliefs?* (**Jn 18:20**)

III. How to find answers to all doubts

- A. Seek to have a pure and honest heart! Do not run away from personal guilt.
1. How *did Nathanael overcome* his doubt? (**John 1:46-49**)
 2. There are many things that can *divide our hearts and block answers* that we dearly need. (**James 1:6-7**)
- B. Never *be satisfied with questions alone.* Take one step at a time. (**2 Tim 3:7**)
1. Do not quit because of the one that asks lots of questions and scoffs at any attempt to find answers! Is there *any attempt to open the bible?*
 2. Jesus quickly pointed out the flaw in this approach! (**Mk 12:23-24**)
- C. Do not accept “easy answers.” *Test both sides!* (**John 1:46-49**)
- D. *Pray.* Let all of your studies have a faith in God at its foundation. (**Hab 2:1-4**)
- E. Do not *run from an open study* of any truth that you have found. (**Jn 3:19-21**)
1. On principle be willing to talk to those who are *willing to study with you!*
 2. Who is willing to talk and who wishes to create anger in you? (**1 Jn 2:9-11**)

Conclusion: God will always bless those that seek and knock!