

DEVOTIONAL

Hollywood Prayer Network

DOUBT

I think one of the greatest plights of man is this phrase: "I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!" We believe God completely in some circumstances and then we doubt Him a moment later and get fearful, angry, or discouraged. This week, try to face doubt head on and ask the Lord to grow your faith so that you can move mountains!"

DAY 1

WHY DO WE DOUBT?

"CHRIST NEVER FAILED TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN DOUBT AND UNBELIEF. DOUBT IS CAN'T BELIEVE. UNBELIEF IS WON'T BELIEVE. DOUBT IS HONESTY. UNBELIEF IS OBSTINACY. DOUBT IS LOOKING FOR LIGHT. UNBELIEF IS CONTENT WITH DARKNESS."

-HENRY DRUMMOND

New International Version

Luke 24:37-39

They were startled and frightened, thinking they saw a ghost. He said to them, "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts rise in your minds? Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself! Touch me and see; a ghost does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have.

DAY 1

PRAY: Dear Lord, as I start my week focusing on doubt, I want You to fill me up with peace and trust in You so that I do not question You and Your love. You told the disciples not to doubt. You knew that they were troubled by seeing You and You even had them touch You to show how real You are. Would You help me to KNOW, without a doubt, that You are real, all-loving, and the only one in whom I should put all of my trust? Thank You for proving Yourself to the disciples so that I don't have to doubt. I pray this in Your holy name. Amen.

REFLECT: Do you ever question why you would doubt Jesus? The definition of doubt is: "To waver or fluctuate in opinion; to hesitate; to be in suspense; to be in uncertainty; to be undetermined." God tells us over and over again throughout the Bible not to doubt His existence or His love. And yet we doubt! What would it take for you to stop doubting God? A vision, a miracle or a change of heart? Ask God to show you how to get rid of your doubt.

DAY 1

ACT: What are TWO areas of your faith where you find yourself doubting God's love? Is it in your finances, protection, security, relationships? Is it when you're alone in the dark, or when you're sick or angry? Choose the two most prominent areas and write them down on an index card. Then write Luke 24:37-39 on the same card and as you memorize the verse, pray that the Lord takes control of those two areas so that you won't doubt anymore. When the Lord's presence and promises have replaced those two areas of doubt, then define two more. Face your doubts and allow the Lord to heal you or help you manage them, once and for all!

DAY 2

JESUS IS PATIENT WHEN WE DOUBT

"DOUBT DISCOVERS DIFFICULTIES WHICH IT NEVER SOLVES; IT CREATES HESITANCY, DESPONDENCY, DESPAIR. ITS PROGRESS IS THE DECAY OF COMFORT, THE DEATH OF PEACE. "BELIEVE!" IS THE WORD WHICH SPEAKS LIFE INTO A MAN, BUT DOUBT NAILS DOWN HIS COFFIN."

-CHARLES SPURGEON

New International Version

John 20:27

Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe."

DAY 2

PRAY: Oh Lord, You understand us so well that You address the very issues with which we all struggle. You know that we all doubt and we need proof of Your love and power. Thank You that You are patient and You show us mercy when we doubt. Thank You for giving me Thomas as a role model whom I can relate to. You loved Thomas so much, knowing that he doubted You. So, I thank You that You love me the same way. I want to trust You more, lean on You, turn to You and rest in You more often. Help me to do that, in Your name. Amen.

REFLECT: Isn't Jesus lovingly patient when he says to Thomas, "... Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe." Can you imagine Him lovingly guiding Thomas's hand to the very spot on His side that revealed His divinity? He's not disappointed or mad at Thomas. He has no judgment in His statement. He wants to help Thomas through his unbelief. That's how He is with all of us. He loves us SO MUCH that everything He says and does is loving, patient, gentle, and kind. Isn't it amazing that Jesus loves you even as you doubt?! This should help you to let go of your doubt more easily. Be easy on yourself and choose, moment by moment, to trust Him. You'll watch the doubt slowly disappear...

DAY 2

ACT: Sit alone for 5 minutes and visualize Jesus holding your hand, guiding you through a storm, covering your head from the rain, wrapping his cloak around you to keep you dry, and constantly telling you not to worry, not to be afraid, not to question. Feel Him putting His arms around you and telling you how much He loves you. Rest in His love, know that He's walking with you and He knows everything you're facing right now. Don't move until you can sense His presence and His love right now. There is no need to doubt!

DAY 3

DO YOU DOUBT GOD'S LOVE AND FAITHFULNESS?

"MY COMING TO FAITH DID NOT START WITH A LEAP BUT RATHER A SERIES OF STAGGERS FROM WHAT SEEMED LIKE ONE SAFE PLACE TO ANOTHER, LIKE LILY PADS, ROUND AND GREEN, THESE PLACES SUMMONED AND THEN HELD ME UP WHILE I GREW. EACH PREPARED ME FOR THE NEXT LEAF ON WHICH I WOULD LAND, AND IN THIS WAY I MOVED ACROSS THE SWAMP OF DOUBT AND FEAR."
-ANNE LAMOTT

New International Version

Matthew 14:28-32

Lord, if it's you," Peter replied, "tell me to come to you on the water." "Come," he said. Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus. But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, "Lord, save me!" Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. "You of little faith," he said, "why did you doubt?" And when they climbed into the boat, the wind died down."

DAY 3

PRAY: Lord, thank You for the reminder of Your presence and faithfulness when I am afraid. Just like Peter, help me to stop doubting that You are present in my life and in Hollywood. Don't let me doubt that it's a place that You can redeem, and that Christians are there. Help me stop judging the people in Hollywood, and instead believe You love them and You are with them, just as You were with Peter in the water. Lord, help my unbelief. Thank You. Amen.

REFLECT: Christians trust Jesus when we're safe, but we doubt Him when we're in a scary place. Peter was staying afloat as long as he kept his eyes on Jesus. But the moment he looked away he started sinking. What's the place that you're afraid of? Is it Hollywood or another place where you think Jesus is not present? Can you trust that God is in control of our nation's culture creators? Don't doubt that He is there. He is working in the lives of the unsaved there through the Christian creative professionals and they need your prayers.

ACT: Take a moment to think honestly about the people who create our nation's entertainment. Is Jesus big enough to be in control of loving and saving the people in Hollywood? Are you walking on water right now and calmly looking up at Jesus, or are you looking down into the dark waters of Hollywood and sinking in doubt? Release your doubts about Hollywood and watch the waters become still, as the winds of anger and fear die down.

DAY 4

QUESTION YOUR DOUBT

"THERE WAS A CASTLE CALLED DOUBTING
CASTLE, THE OWNER WHEREOF WAS GIANT
DESPAIR."

-JOHN BUNYAN

New International Version

1 Peter 5:8

Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy
the devil prowls around like a roaring lion
looking for someone to devour.

DAY 4

PRAY: Dear God, I know that the enemy lies to me and fills me with doubt. I need Your help to be alert and have self-control so I don't believe his lies. As he prowls around me like a roaring lion I need Your Holy Spirit to give me discernment and confidence in You so that the enemy won't devour me. I need You to give me the strength to fight off his lies and to rest in Your truth. Thank You for keeping my eyes and heart on You alone. Amen.

REFLECT: Have you thought about the spiritual world in which we are all living and how it's even more powerful than our physical world? In that spiritual world the enemy is always attacking our heart, soul, mind, and emotions with his lies and temptations. How can you arm yourself with God's truths so that doubt won't take over in any area of your life? Be aware of the devil's schemes and pray to God to keep you strong and self-controlled in every situation, conversation, and decision. The devil is prowling, but God has already won the battle and He loves you so much. There is nothing to doubt.

DAY 4

ACT: Take a piece of paper and make two columns. The top left says WHEN I DOUBT. The top right says WHEN I'M ALERT. Then write down whatever comes to mind in both columns. Know that when you are alert and self-controlled, you don't doubt, you make clear decisions and take direct action. But when you're doubting, things seem fuzzy, the options aren't clear, and the lines start blurring in your mind. So, see where you need prayer and where you can praise God for His definitive presence in your life. When we completely trust God we don't experience doubt. It's when the enemy is prowling around that the confusion and doubt creep or barge in. Pray over your list and ask God to keep you alert.

DAY 5

DOUBT HELPS US BECOME STRONG IN FAITH

"DON'T DIG UP IN DOUBT WHAT YOU
PLANTED IN FAITH."

-ELISABETH ELLIOT

New International Version

Matthew 21:21

Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, if you have faith and do not doubt, not only can you do what was done to the fig tree, but also you can say to this mountain, 'Go, throw yourself into the sea,' and it will be done.

DAY 5

PRAY: Jesus, You are so powerful that You can look at a tree and say "May you never bear fruit again!" And immediately the tree will wither. You can move mountains, part seas and raise people from the dead. And yet I doubt You. You tell me to trust completely in You and You give me the power to throw a mountain into the sea. And yet I still doubt. Oh Jesus, fill me new and fresh with Your Holy Spirit and take away my unbelief. I want to move a mountain and make a tree wither, but I need faith and confidence in You to do that. Right now, I ask that You can change me so that I won't doubt. Thank You for that. Amen and Amen.

REFLECT: Have you ever walked up to a mountain and said, "Go, throw yourself into the sea," and it happened? Have you ever walked up to a tree and told it to stop bearing fruit and it immediately withered? That's the POWER Jesus is offering that we want to embrace. He told us that we can do even greater things than He did. But what stops us? DOUBT. What would it take for your faith to grow so much that you can move mountains and wither trees? Could doubt come from an inability to give up all of our control to God and truly believe that He has our backs? Pray about your faith and your doubt so that someday maybe even you can throw a mountain into the sea!

DAY 5

ACT: Read Matthew 21:18-21 and reflect on the power behind Jesus' words. It's almost overwhelming, and yet He tells us that we can do the same thing! Jesus' disciples were amazed and asked how that tree withered so quickly. Re-read the text and then question your own unbelief. Are you like the disciples or can you say that your God can wither trees and move mountains and you don't doubt Him for a second?!

DAY 6

STAND FIRM, TRUST GOD

"SOME SAY IF ONLY MY FEARS AND DOUBTS
WILL LEAVE THEN I WILL GET TO WORK. BUT
INSTEAD YOU SHOULD GET TO WORK AND
THEN YOUR FEARS AND DOUBTS WILL LEAVE."
-DWIGHT L. MOODY

New International Version

James 1:6

But when he asks, he must believe and not
doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave
of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind....

Mark 9:24

Immediately the boy's father exclaimed, "I do
believe; help me overcome my unbelief!"

DAY 6

PRAY: Lord, I ask that You help my unbelief. You tell us that if we doubt as we pray, we are like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. I must trust Your word and stand firm in Your promises. I want to be solid in my walk with You, so please help my unbelief. The example of the boy's father saying, "I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief" is the desire of my heart, Lord. Amen.

REFLECT: Read the verse again. "I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!" What does that mean to you? As Christians we all struggle with believing God, living for Him and yet doubting. Maybe our faith is "both/and." We believe but we doubt. We are strong but afraid. We trust God but we're unsure. Don't be hard on yourself when you pray as a wave that is blown and tossed by the wind. But you can change and come to know that God loves you too much to leave you as you are! What would it take to curb your doubt and try to stand firm in your faith and trust completely in God—in all circumstances?

ACT: What are you doubting at this moment? Define your doubt and then say out loud: "I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!" What else are you doubting? Define it and then again say out loud: "I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!" Don't be like a wave blown and tossed by the wind. Stand firm and choose to nip your doubts in the bud the moment they creep up by proclaiming audibly to the Lord, "I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!"

DAY 7

WHEN YOU OR OTHERS DOUBT

"HAVE THE STRENGTH TO EXPLORE THE THINGS YOU DON'T KNOW, ALL THE WHILE HOLDING ON TO THE THINGS YOU DO KNOW."

-JEREMY HALL, #DOUBT

New International Version

Jude 1:22

Be merciful to those who doubt.

Jeremiah 31:3

The Lord appeared to us in the past, saying:
"I have loved you with an everlasting love; I have drawn you with loving-kindness."

DAY 7

PRAY: Dear Lord, I know that there are times when I doubt Your strength and even Your willingness to help me. So, how can I be merciful to others when they doubt? You are patient with all of us. I want to remind others and myself that You love all of us with an everlasting love and with unfailing kindness. May I show that same love and kindness to others? Thank You that though You tell me not to doubt, You also tell me that You are merciful, and that we need to show Your mercy to others. Thank You, Lord, for your consistent faithfulness. May I show that to others, just like You show it to me. In Jesus' name. Amen.

REFLECT: It's true that what people are most frustrated about in the traits or behavior of others is actually what they're struggling with in their own lives. So, if I get frustrated with others for doubting God or His love for them, that's probably my own area of weakness. God knows it's hard to fully trust Him, so that's why He reminds us so often to pray and not doubt, and to be merciful to others who doubt. It's good to reflect on our own spiritual walk and check ourselves for areas of doubt. If we are honest about our own struggles, we will be much more patient with others. God loves us with an everlasting love. No doubt about it!

DAY 7

ACT: Take a moment to think about someone in your life whom you think doubts God's love. Does it frustrate you that they worry too much, or they don't trust that God will supply, heal or change their circumstances? If so, can you forgive them and show them supernatural mercy? Then ask the Lord where you doubt Him. Self-examine areas of fear, worry, control, or anxiety. Accept His mercy in your life and then give mercy to that person you see doubting God. Remember that He loves you with an everlasting love!