

**Doubt-Full Conversations**  
Gospel Conversations – Part 10  
Coast Community Church; Pastor Earl Miles; May 14, 2017

**1. What is doubt?**

- Doubt is to waver between two opinions.
  - Peter - Matthew 14:31
  - Disciples at the Ascension – Matthew 28:17
  - Disciples after the Resurrection – Luke 24:38
  - Believers in NT churches - Jude 1:22
  - Asaph (Psalm 73)
  - Doubting Thomas (John 20:24-25)
  - Boy's Father: 'I believe, help my unbelief' (Mark 9:24)
  - John the Baptist – Luke 17:17-23
- Doubt is not unbelief, but '*the mind in suspension between faith and unbelief.*' (Os Guinness, *I Believe in Doubt*)
- In this fallen world, there is no 'doubtless' faith.
- Doubt is serious (it can go toward either faith or unbelief), but it is not terminal (it is not an obvious indication of apostasy).

**2. What might we doubt?**

- The goodness and mercy of God.
- Our own sinfulness and need for a Savior.
- The ability and willingness of Jesus to save.
- The evidence for the resurrection.
- The reliability of the New Testament.
- The sufficiency of faith alone.

**3. Why might we doubt?**

- Meeting a moral, happy atheist.
- Meeting a suffering, faithful believer.
- Wrestling with the fairness of hell and salvation
- Encountering a corrupt religious institution.
- Encountering an apparent contradiction in Scripture.
- Physical reasons (sleep deprivation)

- Intellectual reasons (failure to look at the evidence)
- Emotional reasons (negative experiences)
- Moral reasons (desire for sexual freedom, etc)
- Spiritual reasons (discouragements with sin and failure)

#### **4. What do we do in response to doubts that people have?**

- Have mercy on them. (Jude 1:22)
- Address the issue of ‘doubtless faith.’ (Mark 9:24)
- Be patient and give them the right to struggle with questions and doubts. (1 Thessalonians 5:14)
- Encourage them to seek answers to their doubts and look hard at the truth and evidence for it. (1 Peter 3:15)
- Encourage them to realize that no one has all his questions answered (ie, live with mystery). (Deuteronomy 29:29)
- Encourage them to realize that no one operates on the basis of 100% certainty.
- Encourage them to realize that science (ie, the scientific method) is not the only source of knowledge.
- Encourage them to seek the answers in the means of grace: Word, prayer and fellowship with believers.
- Encourage them to focus on the main issues. (1 Corinthians 15:3)
- Encourage them to be careful of an unwillingness to deal with sin.
- Encourage them to ‘doubt your doubts (don’t automatically give more weight to your doubts than you do to your beliefs/convictions).’
- Encourage them to see ‘doubt’ as a bridge to greater faith.