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**DAILY  
BIBLE  
STUDY**



CEDARCREEKCHURCH

# Remember He is God – The Bible is Greek to Me

August 1, 2022

Doubt is sometimes viewed as the opposite of faith, but the truth is that you can have questions and still have faith. In fact, asking questions and being open to the answers can grow your faith tremendously.

In his weekend message, Lead Pastor Ben Snyder mentioned five sources of doubt: desert, depletion, discouragement, deconstruction, and disobedience.

- **The Desert** is the place God puts us to test our faith. Ben reminded us to repeat what we know to be true to get through the desert.
- **Depletion** is the place where you overdo it. To get over the doubt, take time to rest.
- **Discouragement** is the place of doubt that comes from hurt. To get through this doubt, reconnect with God and others.
- **Deconstruction** is undoing some belief to rebuild what you know now. Take the time to consider thoughtful investigation.
- **Disobedience** is when you refuse to do what you ought to do. Come before God in the space of doubt and repent.

Why does this matter? Because it is OK to live in seasons of doubt.

Often, I find myself doubting whether I am able to navigate what's next. I will graduate college this spring. Thankfully, I have a job to support myself in the meantime, but I am currently dealing with a situation with my employer that I can't control. I can't help but think, "Now what?" I don't know what the next step is.

Ben explained that the two most common reactions to doubts are:

1) To sweep them away, thinking that we can't ask questions and should just have more faith; and

2) To start demanding answers we understand and like, forgetting that we are under God's authority.

Neither reaction is right, however. The solution is found in the bottom line: *Your question has validity under God's authority.*

### **Isaiah 55:8-9**

<sup>8</sup> *"My thoughts are nothing like your thoughts," says the Lord. "And my ways are far beyond anything you could imagine."* <sup>9</sup> *For just as the heavens are higher than the earth, so my ways are higher than your ways and my thoughts higher than your thoughts.*

This verse reminds me I am not God. Faith and questions can coexist. We can ask God questions, but we need to remember that he has ultimate authority. He knows the answers, and we need to trust him with the outcome.

I can see now that I am overworking to figure out the situation with my employer all on my own. I'm depleted, and my efforts aren't working. Rest is probably exactly what I need to get through my doubt. In resting, I trust God will open the right door.

### **Questions:**

What is your source of doubt?

How do you react to doubt?

What questions of doubt do you have? Why?

### **Next Steps:**

Write down your questions and prayerfully submit them to God.

Take a personal next step to address your source of doubt.

### **Prayer:**

*God, you are who you say you are. You are all-knowing. Your ways are higher than my ways, and your thoughts are higher than my thoughts. I do not know what you know, but I have questions. I am dealing with doubt, but it is under your authority. I ask questions because I am being open handed to answers. I pray that despite this season of doubt, it would increase my faith. Amen.*

*This post was written by Becca Roberts, a regular contributor to the LivingItOut.*

# Exercise Your Faith! – The Bible is Greek to Me

August 2, 2022

I exercise almost every day. While I love the benefits exercise gives me and trying new types of exercise, my aging body doesn't always love the *day after!* I'm not great at warming up or stretching after. So the next day when I have soreness in places I didn't realize I had muscles, I can associate that new pain with the previous day's activity—I know the source.

I feel like that is how the tools Lead Pastor Ben Snyder gave us last weekend could work. If I can figure out what's going on in my spiritual life, there are ways I can deal with it. The thing I know for sure, both about faith in God and exercise (The only two disciplines I possess!), is they are both good. The pain, distress, and challenges will be used for my benefit.

In a *desert* season, when my routine just isn't bringing the results I want, I can repeat what I know to be true—my fitness will not improve overnight, nor will my relationship with God. But I know that spending consistent time with both will ultimately reap the rewards I seek.

There are times, though, when I have physically reached the end of my rope and feel *depleted*. Over the years, I have learned to reduce the level of exercise for a time. I don't quit; I just don't hit it so hard. I believe the same is true for my relationship with God. Sometimes, I need an off day to rest and reflect, to do another activity that speaks to me about God's goodness in a different way.

It is difficult not to be *discouraged* as we look at the mess our world is in. In these times, reconnect with positive people who encourage you in your journey. They encourage me to keep going even when it's tough. My [Group](#) does that for me spiritually just as exercising with friends keeps me going in a tough workout. When I feel frustrated or disconnected, regularly meeting with this Group always encourages me.

I believe Jesus has called me into a discipleship lifestyle—one where I care for myself physically through exercise and spiritually by spending time connecting with Jesus. As a result, my body and my faith are stronger, and I am capable of

running the race God has placed in front of me. I think the writer of Hebrews says it well:

### **Hebrews 12:1**

*Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith, let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily trips us up. And let us run the race God has set before us.*

### **Questions:**

When you are facing doubt in your spiritual life, do you seek the source of that doubt? Do you ask questions of yourself that might lead to resolution? Do you find someone with whom to share your doubts? Why or why not?

### **Next Steps:**

If you are experiencing doubts about God or your faith, don't keep it to yourself!

First of all, use a Bible concordance to look up the emotions you are having, and read what God's word has to say. Give yourself permission to question and seek answers. Be vigorous in your exploration. Invite someone to journey with you and share what you are learning. Memorize [Psalm 23](#).

### **Prayer:**

*Abba Father, I am so grateful that you, like a good parent, are not afraid of my questions, fears, and doubts. You come to me as a loving father, cherishing me as I learn more about who you are by asking questions and seeking answers! I also love that there are things that I can never know about you, because you are way, way more than I could ever imagine! You are God, and you are good. In your beautiful name I pray, amen.*

# Why Do You Doubt? – The Bible is Greek to Me

August 3, 2022

One of the best parts of growing up was gathering with family and listening to the stories passed down from older generations. Some were far-fetched, but there was always some semblance of truth sprinkled within the sentences. As I grew older, my stories became listening affairs during our holiday celebrations and small reunions. Tales that were less fun in the present carried their weight in gold.

Creating those memories in a time before smartphones and the internet meant you relied on witnesses to back you up. (We didn't all have camcorders to capture the details.) Our witnesses guaranteed our trustworthiness, even without recorded footage. Many of my stories were about teenagers being teenagers, but the best accounts were about basketball.

My oldest daughter is going into eighth grade and also plays basketball. Naturally, I offered up my sage wisdom throughout her last season, but she never followed my advice. This summer, I finally asked why she chose not to listen. She said, "I don't believe your basketball glory days happened. Where's the proof?"

Can anyone doubt you more than a teenager? Apparently, my daughter's stance is that seeing is believing. And she's certainly not the only one with this outlook.

## **John 20:25-27**

<sup>25</sup> *They told him, "We have seen the Lord!"*

*But he replied, "I won't believe it unless I see the nail wounds in his hands, put my fingers into them, and place my hand into the wound in his side."*

<sup>26</sup> *Eight days later the disciples were together again, and this time Thomas was with them. The doors were locked; but suddenly, as before, Jesus was standing among them. "Peace be with you," he said. <sup>27</sup> Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and look at my hands. Put your hand into the wound in my side. Don't be faithless any longer. Believe!"*

Thomas, who had once faithfully followed Jesus, doubted what his fellow disciples believed. For Thomas, any future belief would be on his terms. Jesus could've demanded Thomas fall in line, but he understood that Thomas had missed out on what the others had witnessed.

### **John 20:29**

*Then Jesus told him, "You believe because you have seen me. Blessed are those who believe without seeing me."*

Not everyone is given the unique position to witness the glory of Jesus the way Thomas and the disciples did. This reminds me of the quote by Joseph Solomon. ["I'm not telling you to have a blind faith. I'm telling you to consider the blind men who had faith and believed my words before they were even able to see me."](#) It's sometimes easier said than done, but the world is full of true stories of people who believed without seeing.

### **Questions:**

Do you take your questions to God? Are you open to receiving the answers?

### **Next Steps:**

Read your Bible to understand God's word instead of relying only on what others say about the Bible. Join a [Group](#) to experience new seasons with other Christians. Build relationships, and don't be ashamed to voice your doubts.

### **Prayer:**

*Father God, forgive me when I live in my doubts instead of trying to understand the source. Grant me the wisdom to understand the answers to the questions I bring to you. Help me discover new ways to connect with you and revisit the old ways that served me well. Amen.*

*This post was written by Jaron Camp, a regular contributor to the LivingItOut.*

# Hope – The Bible is Greek to Me

August 4, 2022

My daughters are among the greatest blessings of my life. I love and adore them. They are amazing women, whom I often refer to as “my girls.” When my girls are suffering, ill, or hurting, I hurt deeply. I am a momma bear when it comes to them—I have a difficult time forgiving people who hurt them or make fun of them.

Lead Pastor Ben Snyder spoke this week about the father of the demon-possessed boy ([Mark 9:14-29](#)). My heart really went out to the father—his son had been suffering terribly since he was a little boy. The boy was possessed by an evil spirit that wouldn't let him speak. The demon would seize the boy and throw him to the ground, causing him to foam at the mouth. It even tried to kill the man's son by throwing him in fire and water. The boy suffered physically and emotionally and was very likely ostracized and bullied.

At that time, illness and possessions were thought to be caused by the sin of the parents or child. Can you imagine the pain this man suffered watching helplessly as his child suffered? I imagine the father did everything he could possibly do to help his son. I bet he had given up hope.

Then one day, the father hears about Jesus' disciples healing people and casting out demons. He starts to hope and takes his son to them. He sees people all around him being healed and finally has hope that his son will be healed. He is overjoyed and excited.

I picture one of the disciples walking up to his son and laying a hand on him. The disciple attempts to cast out the demon and nothing happens. The father is heartbroken and hopeless. He probably believes this was the boy's last chance to be set free from the demon.

Then Jesus shows up. They have a discussion. Finally, the father asks Jesus:

## **Mark 9:22b-24**

*<sup>22</sup> “Have mercy on us and help us if you can. <sup>23</sup> What do you mean, ‘if I can’?” Jesus asked. “Anything is possible if a person believes.” <sup>24</sup> The father instantly cried out, “I do believe, but help me in my unbelief.”*

I love this. The father is so heartbroken. He wants to believe Jesus can heal his son, yet, he is afraid to have hope. He is desperate and hopeless. He looks to Jesus and humbly asks him, "Help me in my unbelief."

We will have doubts in this life. We will go through tough times when we'll question God.

Ben gave us tips on what to do when we have doubts:

- Stay curious: Ask questions.
- Stay humble: Trust in God not yourself.
- Stay faithful: Lean on God during the tough times.

God loves us so much. He wants us to share everything with him, including our doubts. He can take our questions. We can trust him. He is our refuge and strength.

**Psalm 62:8** NIV

*Trust in him at all times, you people; pour out your hearts to him, for God is our refuge.*

**Questions:**

How do you deal with your doubts about God? How can doubt help your faith grow stronger? How often do you discuss your doubts with God?

**Next Steps:**

Next time you have doubts go to the Lord in prayer. Admit to God that you have doubts and ask him to help you in your unbelief. Journal what happens.

**Prayer:**

*Lord, I love you so much. I am so grateful that the God of the universe loves me and wants a personal relationship with me. He wants me to come to him with all of my questions and doubts. I praise him that I can lean on him during the tough times and that he is always with me. I know he uses these tough times to increase my trust and faith in him. I praise you for being my refuge and my strength. I trust you and revere you! Amen.*

*This post was written by Marsha Raymond, a regular contributor to the LivingItOut.*

# Do You Limp? – The Bible is Greek to Me

August 5, 2022

Two weeks ago, my wife and I ran a 50-mile trail race in the Rockies. The race started at midnight, and we ran through darkness, mud, streams, mosquitoes, and storms. We climbed and descended mountains and navigated rocky trails, twisting and rolling our ankles countless times.

I was confident when I signed up, but during the race, there were many ups and downs. I wrestled with doubt: Could I really do this? Could I finish? Would I take the wrong path and get lost? Would I get hurt and be unable to continue?

*Fifteen hours* after we started, we limped across the finish line.

At the finish, other runners milled about dirty, bleeding, limping, and fatigued after hours of wrestling with the same doubt I had experienced. All of us were banged up, but we knew the adventure was worth it. We leaned into our doubts and came away with a unique experience and a deeper understanding of ourselves.

I think our faith is like this. We hear the stories of the victory we have in Jesus and set our sights on the finish line, but sometimes we forget we're going to get banged up along the way. They'll be times of joy and peace, but we'll also wrestle with doubt. We'll question God and feel it's wrong or that our faith is weak. But these are actually the times when we are growing closer to him.

The Old Testament tells the story of the nation of Israel. Throughout the story, the people of Israel—God's chosen people—are in and out of slavery, exile, and the Promised Land. They follow God, they turn away; rinse and repeat. They question, they doubt, they wrestle. It's in their nature.

It's in their *name*.

## **Genesis 32:24-28**

<sup>24</sup>This left Jacob all alone in the camp, and a man came and wrestled with him until the dawn began to break. <sup>25</sup>When the man saw that he would not win the match, he touched Jacob's hip and wrenched it out of its socket. <sup>26</sup>Then the man said, "Let me go, for the dawn is breaking!"

*But Jacob said, "I will not let you go unless you bless me."*

<sup>27</sup> *"What is your name?" the man asked.*

*He replied, "Jacob."*

<sup>28</sup> *"Your name will no longer be Jacob," the man told him. "From now on you will be called Israel, because you have fought with God and with men and have won."*

Jacob walked away from his struggle with God limping, but also with a unique experience and deeper understanding.

I limped across the finish line of my race, but with an incredible experience. And I hope to walk away from this physical life limping because that will mean I truly experienced the adventure Jesus promises us and victory will be that much more satisfying.

### **Questions:**

Are you facing a season of doubt in your faith? If so, what are you doubting?

Do you feel ashamed of your doubt or that it's wrong? Why or why not?

Have you ever wrestled with God and walked away limping? Describe that experience.

### **Next Steps:**

Make a list of the doubts or questions you have for God. Dig into them: search the Bible app, visit <https://bibleproject.com>, ask a trusted friend, write about it. Don't get caught up in seeking an "answer." Instead, seek a deeper understanding.

### **Prayer:**

*Dear Lord, thank you for showing us that you want us to be active in our faith, to question you, and yes, even to doubt you. But, Lord, give me the boldness to trust you, even when my human mind cannot understand you. Help me to trust you more completely in these times and to praise you more knowing your understanding far exceeds mine. In Jesus' name, amen.*

*This post was written by Ryan Leone, a regular contributor to the LivingItOut.*