



THE BENEFIT OF DOUBT

WHY DID GOD LET IT HAPPEN?

Have you ever asked yourself, If God is _____, then why _____?

- If God is kind, then why did He let me get sick?
- If God is caring, then why do His followers show so much hate?
- If God is love, then why do I feel so alone?
- If God is making all things new, then why did my loved one die?
- If God is peaceful, then why are wars and violence so common?
- If God is truth, then why do I have so many doubts?

If you've ever asked a question like this, you're not alone. Just about every Christian has wondered at some point why our daily experiences don't match God's perfect character.

In fact, we actually find several people in Scripture who experienced doubt.

In the Old Testament, Elijah said that everyone faithful to God had either given up their faith or died, and now he was the only faithful person left (1 Kings 19:10). **His question might have sounded like this: If God is faithful, why does it seem like His plan failed?**

Later in the Old Testament, Job was a wealthy and faithful follower of God who suddenly lost all his wealth, children, and health (Job 13:24). **His question might have sounded like this: If God is love, why did I lose almost everyone I love?**

In the New Testament, we meet Peter, one of Jesus' closest disciples. But when Jesus was arrested, Peter denied knowing Jesus three times (Luke 22:61-62). **His question might have sounded like this: If God is Jesus, then why did He have to die?**

How did God respond to each of these doubters? Was it with anger, rejection, or surprise? Nope. Instead, God met their doubt in a personal, kind, and loving way.

God met Elijah in his doubts and provided for him, and Elijah followed Him despite his doubts, leading Elijah to hear from God again. (1 Kings 19:11-13)

God met Job in his pain and reminded Job of His complete control over the earth. Job followed God even in his grief and received blessings from God. (Job 38-41)

Jesus met Peter in his shame and reminded Peter of his purpose. Peter wholeheartedly followed Jesus despite past doubts and became a leader of the early church. (John 21:1-19)

NOTICE THE PATTERN?

God meets with people in their doubts, provides a personal reminder of His love and care, and invites them to keep following Him. And as they follow Him, they experience Him in a new and encouraging way.

So what does this mean for us?

First, it means **God is with us in our doubts**. He's not angry, dismissive, or shaming. Instead, He wants to meet you in a caring, personal way.

Second, **God wants you to keep pursuing Him**. Sometimes, people experiencing doubt put themselves in an unneeded spiritual "time out." We stop attending church, reading Scripture, or serving others. But this isn't a healthy way to deal with doubt. Why?

- Fellow followers of Jesus at church can offer support and help you refine the parts of your faith that need to adapt, grow, or be discarded.
- Reading the Bible can help you uncover the true heart of faith in Jesus that may have been distorted by spiritual leaders or influencers you've followed in the past.
- And because there are few better ways to experience Jesus for yourself than by imitating His service-centered life.

Church isn't a place for people who have everything figured out, the Bible isn't a book for "super-Christians," and serving isn't just a practice for the spiritual "elite." So don't put yourself in spiritual time out.

Instead, keep asking your questions, stay involved, and trust that God is with you even in your doubts.

In *The Benefit of Doubt*, you'll get to find out more about how to find peace, purpose, and confidence in the midst of tough questions. We hope and trust that it can be a way God will guide you through your spiritual doubts.

