

Grace Notes

Doubt

2.23.10



***Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. When they saw Him, they worshiped Him; but some doubted.
(Matthew 28:16-17)***

Whenever I meet another believer who trusts me enough to admit they've had doubts about their faith I simply respond, "You sound normal to me." I read once that "doubt is a parasite of faith." I tend to agree with that statement. Scripture certainly supports it. Paul wrote, "When I want to do what is right and good, evil is ever present with me...." (Romans 7:21, Amplified) In both Matthew's & Luke's account of the Wilderness Temptation, twice Satan attempts to plant a seed of doubt in Christ: "If you are the Son of God....". The temptation to doubt seems to be one of Satan's "ever present" specialties. Simply put, God frequently allows our faith to be tested. And Satan is always only too happy to oblige.

Oh, there are those who proudly proclaim, "I've never had doubts!" Good for them.

But what makes the Bible so incredibly comforting for people like me is that it's unsanitized, unedited and raw in its description of human nature. The Bible, without apology, sets on public display the inherent weaknesses of the human condition. As a result, I find myself in its pages and, consequently, drawn to the cross of Christ, through which I find the one and only cure to this fatal disease of mine called sin. "What a wretched man I am!", Paul cried out. "Who will rescue me from this body of death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Romans 7:24-25)

Some 60 years ago, Charles Templeton was Billy Graham's preaching partner and close friend. Templeton eventually founded a church that would quickly outgrow its 1200 seat sanctuary. Sadly though, Templeton, nagged by—and finally succumbing to—doubts, eventually left the ministry, denounced Christianity, and urged Graham to do the same. In his book, "The Case for Faith," Lee Strobel recounts Graham's anguish over his dear friend's decision, how Templeton's arguments against the faith vexed Graham and, finally, what settled it for Graham. Graham's response is treasured counsel for all believers.

"If I was not exactly doubtful, I was certainly disturbed," Graham would recall. He knew that if he could not trust the Bible, he could not go on. He searched the Scriptures for answers, he prayed, he pondered. Finally, in a heavy-hearted walk in the moonlit San Bernardino Mountains, everything came to a climax. Gripping a Bible, Graham dropped to his knees and confessed he couldn't answer some of the philosophical and psychological questions that Templeton and others were raising. He recounts, "At last the Holy Spirit freed me to say it — 'Father, I am going to accept this as Your Word—by faith! I'm going to allow faith to go beyond my intellectual questions and doubts, and I will believe this to be Your inspired Word.'"



Soli Deo Gloria, Nick