

“God Help Us In These Uncertain Times”

Doubt Goes Along With Faith

Wednesday 06 October 2021

6:30 PM-8:00 PM

Opening Prayer

Background

“Have mercy on us and help us, if you can.’ ‘What do you mean, If I can?’ Jesus asked. ‘Anything is possible if a person believes.’ The father instantly cried out, ‘I do believe, but help me overcome my unbelief’! Mark 9:21b-24

Doubt and discouragement go along with faith. Few of us have perfect faith. We are more like the father in the story above. It is rare to live a life of faith without doubts. Likewise, living without periods of discouragement is unusual. Especially in difficult times, doubts about God are likely to come to the surface. They are a natural part of life and we should accept them as such. Some of the disciples doubted the resurrected Christ according to the Gospel of Matthew. Ron Higdon, the pastor and writer, says that a less than perfect faith is acceptable to God.

Telling people who are struggling with difficulties or uncertainty that they need more faith is not useful and actually may do harm. A person suffering from a deadly health condition or some loss needs compassion, love, and help, not a lecture from us on having stronger faith or how faith will heal them.

Still, our challenge as people of faith is to overcome doubts and strengthen our faith to the degree that we can. That does not mean we will achieve perfect faith. We will not. Those who claim perfect faith are likely deceiving themselves.

Perfection is a property of God, not people. We will achieve the level of faith that we can, and that is satisfying to God.

Questions to Consider

1. What does the story in Mark 9:21b-24 tell you? Do you identify with the father? If so, how? Do you identify with Jesus? If so, how?
2. What do you think of the concept of perfect faith? Do you know someone whose faith is perfect? If so, how do you know?
3. Had you considered before that God does not expect perfection? Does that surprise you? What do you believe God expects of us?
4. What are your doubts and discouragements right now?
5. How do you overcome doubts? How can the church help you to do so? How can we help each other overcome doubt?
6. What do you believe is the relationship between doubt and hope? Can hope triumph?

Closing Prayer