

The Danger of Doubting

1 Sam 27:1

1

1 Then David said to himself, "Now I will perish one day by the hand of Saul. There is nothing better for me than to escape into the land of the Philistines. Saul then will despair of searching for me anymore in all the territory of Israel, and I will escape from his hand."

Doubt, that nagging, gut wrenching feeling of uncertainty that everyone has experienced at one time or another. Doubt, the strength of which can keep a man from achieving his goals and aspirations, the depth of which can keep a man from believing. Doubt is an enemy that is one of the most difficult to fight because it doesn't attack us from without, but from within. That's what we see here with David, he doubted that he would live through the situation with Saul. 2

John 20:25

3

25 So the other disciples were saying to him, "We have seen the Lord!" But he said to them, "Unless I see in His hands the imprint of the nails, and put my finger into the place of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe."

This is the statement Thomas made after Christ had risen from the grave and the other disciples had told him about it. Even after seeing all the wondrous things Jesus had done in His life, Thomas still doubted that He was indeed the Christ, the Son of God nor that God could rise from the dead.

Doubt is at the very core of unfaithfulness. You see, the science of psychiatry says that only the insane will engage in activity that they know is detrimental to their health. We all know that putting our hand into a fire will burn us and cause us pain, so only the person is not in control of their mental faculties will knowingly and willingly put their hand into a fire. That would seem to be fairly obvious, that said, I don't believe that the world labors under a blanket of insanity and goes about doing things that only an insane person would do, yet Albert Einstein is thought to have said that the definition of insanity is repeating the same thing over and over expecting a different result. But that is exactly what is seen in the world, and has been since the time of Christ, man continues to repeat actions of life over and over again that constantly result in unfaithfulness and disobedience. That's insanity, and that is what doubt does to man. It dooms man to constantly repeat engaging in his own desires and agendas because he doubts the existence, the power, and or the promises of God and Christ seen in their Word. Part of the problem is that to doubt God or the power of His promise, or the certainness of His existence is thought by many to be a very small sin. One of the very real problems with that thought is that it borders on atheism. Atheism, by definition, is a denial of the existence of God, and unbelief is akin to Atheism, that said then, lets follow this progression;

4

- A) Belief demands Obedience
- B) Disobedience is a result of Unbelief or, by definition, is insanity
- C) If the truth is known and unbelieved, then it borders on denial, which is insanity

Atheism denies God's existence-unbelief denies His goodness, and since goodness is essential to God, these doubts do, in reality, stab at His very being. Doubt is the catalyst that leads man into unfaithfulness and cause the type of giving in and giving up that we see in David's statement and the lack of acceptance that is seen in Thomas'.

We are going to look at some thoughts seen David's statement from 1 Sam 27:1...

- 5
- 1) The thought of David's heart was false
 - 2) How did David come to this conclusion
 - 3) What are the results of doubt

Our first thought may at first seem out of line, but let's examine it before we dismiss it...

- 6
- 1) The thought of David's heart was false

Because of his doubt in God and the fact that God had chosen him to be king of Israel, David made a statement that conflicted with the truth of God's intent. God didn't intend for Saul to be the cause of David's death but David's doubt in what God's intent was brought him to the false statement he made. He says...

7 ***"I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul"***

In one sense his statement here can be seen to be false because there was no evidence of it occurring, and any conclusion drawn without evidence, while not necessarily false, is also not necessarily true, it's speculation and nothing more. David had never been deserted by the Lord. In fact, he had been in perilous and difficult positions often, but not one single instance had occurred in which God's strength didn't carry him through. Now, this isn't to say that the circumstances David found himself in were made easy by God, they weren't. But the point is that God gave David whatever strength, faith, comfort, patience, whatever to get through them. That's how God works through His truth in us. He doesn't make the circumstances of our lives easy; He provides the necessary things we need through His Word to get through them. Doubt causes us to allow the circumstances of life to become overwhelming. Doubt leads us into thinking that God doesn't care enough for us to show us the way out. Doubt weakens our faith that God can or will help.

John 16:33

8

33 These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world."

There is nothing in this world, including the god of this world, Satan, that Christ has not already overcome, but doubt in God, doubt in His love and power, leads us, just like it led David to a lie, a false idea, that takes root in our hearts and minds, that's what I mean by...

- 9
- 1) The thought of David's heart was false

David's conclusion that he was to be killed by Saul ignored God's anointing, ignored the power that God had already shown in taking care of him, and weakened his faith. Why?

10 2) How did David come to this conclusion

The first answer, and probably the most obvious, is because he was a man. The best of men are human at best; and man at his best, is still subject to his inner doubts and questionings.

11 *“Tell a lie often enough and loud enough and it so becomes the truth”*

This statement is often attributed to Vladimir Lenin. William James said something similar: "There's nothing so absurd that if you repeat it often enough, people will believe it.

Why will people accept the absurdity, the lie, regardless of how often it is screamed from the rooftops? The answer to that is the mind. The mind is able to ignore evidence, overcome logic, and accept the ridiculous to make it truth unto itself. I don't mean that to sound verbose or complicated, simply put, in our minds we can make anything true. David looked around at his circumstances and convinced himself that regardless of all that God had done for him, his situation was helpless and Saul was going to kill him.

We look around at the circumstances of our lives, whatever they are, and decide that regardless of the promise of God for eternal life if we will just remain faithful and obedient, we can't win. This is really a question of faith, belief, acceptance, whatever you want to call it.

Ps 144:3

12

3 O Lord, what is man, that You take knowledge of him? Or the son of man, that You think of him?

David asked "Lord, what is man?" Faith, the great transformer, the conduit if you will to God through Christ.

Heb 11:6

13

6 And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.

Faith is what brings us to God. Faith is how God works in us. John says it this way...

1 John 4:13

14

13 By this we know that we abide in Him and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit.

We abide in God when we invite Him to abide in us through His Word. That's the key. God doesn't forcibly intrude Himself on us. He waits for and demands that we invite Him into our hearts and minds. That, my friends, is faith. We must believe to find God. We must believe that Jesus is the Son of God, is God, to come to God through Him.

15

“Without faith it is impossible to please Him”

John alludes to this in the very next verse in 1 John 4...

16

14 We have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son to be the Savior of the world.

“We have seen and testify,” when we express our faith to everyone we come into contact with, we testify to what we have seen with our hearts and minds. That’s faith. Faith makes us strong. Faith makes us patient. Faith gives us endurance.

Judg 15:15

17

15 He found a fresh jawbone of a donkey, so he reached out and took it and killed a thousand men with it.

What were the hosts of the Philistines to Samson? And what were the pillars of the temple to him? He bowed himself with all his strength, and pulled down the palace of the Philistines on the princes and the assembled multitudes. Faith can do everything for the man that believes. But the truth of the matter is that a man full of faith is still just a man, but is a man within whom God abides. And man that has God within can face anything. It wasn’t David who achieved the victories, but God’s grace working within him.

Luke 17:5-6

18

5 The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith!" **6** And the Lord said, "If you had faith like a mustard seed, you would say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and be planted in the sea'; and it would obey you.

Now this isn’t to say that if our faith is strong enough we will be able to transplant trees or move mountains. Those things are miracles and miracles stopped in 1 Cor. 13 when that which was perfect came, God’s Word, perfect, complete, able to transform a man into a child of God and thoroughly furnish him unto every good work, through faith.

Matt 14:30-31

19

30 But seeing the wind, he became frightened, and beginning to sink, he cried out, "Lord, save me!" **31** Immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and took hold of him, and said to him, "You of little faith, why did you doubt?"

We know the story, Peter sees Jesus walking across the water and says, “If that is you Lord call me to come to you.” Peter steps out of the boat and begins to walk to Jesus. Now look at what the scripture says...

20

30 But seeing the wind, he became frightened, and beginning to sink

Peter began to doubt because he got frightened. He began to see the trouble of the world crashing around him and he took his eyes off Jesus. That is the definition of the doubt we have been talking about. That’s exactly what Jesus says to him...

21

"You of little faith, why did you doubt?"

That is the danger of doubt. There is our last thought...

22

3) What are the results of doubt

I wonder if this was what David was talking about...

Ps 25:7

23

7 Do not remember the sins of my youth or my transgressions; According to Your lovingkindness remember me, For Your goodness' sake, O Lord.

Doubt is a sin, a sin of the worst nature. Sin can come in many forms. We all make mistakes of judgment, mistakes of rashness, mistakes of falling prey to lusts, but these mistakes are mistakes of action. Yes, all of these things can and probably are attributed to a weakness of faith, but doubt is a weakness of character, or strength of faith. Peter was admonished by Paul for siding with the Judaizing teachers...

Gal 2:11-12

24

11 But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned. **12** For prior to the coming of certain men from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he began to withdraw and hold himself aloof, fearing the party of the circumcision.

Peter made a mistake, not caused by doubt, though I suppose an argument could be made that doubt of the truth was at the root of his mistake, but I don't see the mistake he made as being caused by his doubt, I see it as being caused by his poor judgment. Doubt, lack of faith that the Lord could prevent him from being overcome by the waves, is what caused him to sink.

Doubt, when we quit believing that Jesus is the answer, that God can and will save us, will cause us to pay more attention to the difficulties that surround us and weakens our faith.

The world never stops, Satan never stops, doubt never stops. That is our battle. Fighting the doubt that pervades into our very being whenever we face what seems to be insurmountable tasks. How do we maintain our faith? I know of only one way.

2 Peter 1:1-3

READ

1 Simon Peter, a bond-servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who have received a faith of the same kind as ours, by the righteousness of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ: **2** Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord; **3** seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us

5 Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in your moral excellence, knowledge, **6** and in your knowledge, self-control, and in your self-control, perseverance, and in your perseverance, godliness, **7** and in your godliness, brotherly kindness, and in your brotherly kindness, love. **8** For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they render you neither useless nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. **9** For he who lacks these qualities is blind or short-sighted, having forgotten his purification from his former sins. **10** Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you; for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble; **11** for in this way the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be abundantly supplied to you.