

When we go through a time of doubting

When we are doubting God, it should not lead us away from God but that it helps us to gain a deeper understanding of who God is / his character.

Readings

Psalm 27

Psalm 24

Deuteronomy 31: 1-8

Hebrews 13: 1-6

Matthew 28: 16- 20

The great commission

A few weeks ago Julia preached on the great commission and pointed out verse 17: “When they saw him, they worshipped him; but some doubted”.

I have read the great commission so many times and have heard many sermons on the great commission and yet this time what struck me was that some doubted.

Julia also mentioned that even though they doubted they were not excluded from the great commission.

And even if there is doubt you and I are not excluded from the great commission.

Most of us go through a time of doubting God at some point

For some the doubting is so severe and it seems like the answers are too little or too shallow that they eventually turn away from God.

What do we do in these times?

Psalm 24 asks a significant question

Who is this King of glory?

The Psalmist also gives us the answer to this question

The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle

The LORD Almighty— he is the King of glory

I believe that in our time of doubt we should also ask the question the Psalmist asked:

Who is this King of Glory?

In times of doubting it is good for us to gain a deeper understanding of who God is and to know key aspects of his character

Lee Strobel was an investigative journalist with the Chicago Tribune when his wife became a Christian.

As time passed he saw the transformation of his wife as she got more and more involved with the church as he saw it

But we might say as she drew closer to God

He also realized that this was not a passing phase that his wife was going through but that she made a true commitment to this new religion of hers.

So he decided to investigate this Jesus character

And more so to prove to his wife that this Jesus person was not real

The good investigative journalist that he was he left no stone unturned

He interviewed critics of Christianity in many different fields: archeology, medicine, theology, psychology and more....

He consulted more than one expert in each of the fields he investigated

During his time of investigating Jesus he had a personal encounter with the living Christ

And so documentation that started off as the case against Christ become the Case for Christ.

Lee is now a teaching pastor at Willow Creek Community Church

I wanted to share this story because I believe there is value in what Lee did

When in doubt of who God is or what Christianity is all about why not investigate it?

Why not dive deep into the Bible or other literature to gain a greater understanding of who is this King of Glory that we worship?

Gaining a deeper understanding of God's character and who he is, as much as we can humanly understand it, will help us in our times of doubt

In a movie that documented the early life of the country singer star Lee Ann Rhymes' life there is this significant scene that I often think off

Lee Ann is on a bus tour singing in different places and she takes some time out to call her grandmother

She says: "Granny, it just feels that God is so far away from me right now".

Almost like he turned his back on me.....

Her grandmother says: "Remember that God never leaves us but it is us human beings that allow ourselves to feel far away and cut off from God".

What wise words from this grandmother

Deuteronomy 31 reminds us of a key aspect of God's character

Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the LORD your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you.

It is important to remember in our times of doubt that God will never leave us nor forsake us

Nic mentioned in his sermon on the trinity that the trinity can be described as

God around us
God with us

God within us

God around us - God

God with us - Jesus

God within us - the Holy Spirit

We are immersed in the presence of God each day and each moment of our lives

Around us, with us and within us even if we do not pay attention to the presence of God all the time

Psalm 27 reminds us that

Though my father and mother forsake me, the LORD will receive me

In times of doubt remember this important character of God

That he will never leave you nor forsake you

That God is around you

God is with you

And God is within you

There are many more aspects of God's character that are important for us to know but I am not going to take the time today to talk about it

For today I want to remind you that when we are going through a time of doubt, even if we do not feel close to God,

That God is around us, with us and within us

But also that we should draw nearer to him by studying the Bible and other literature

Read and study things that challenge you like Jesus was a challenge to Lee Strobel

Like Lee you might just be pleasantly surprised and even transformed by your experience

I want to end with these verses that I hold dear from Psalm 27. When I go through a time of difficulty I read them or remember them often.

Verse 13 and 14 says

I am still confident of this:

I will see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living.

Wait for the LORD;

Be strong

And take heart

And wait for the LORD