

When Doubts Attack

August 18, 2019

Genesis 3:1-5 ESV

1 Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God actually say, 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden'?"

2 And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden,

3 but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.'"

4 But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die.

5 For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

- *Casting doubt on God's intent, character and ways was Satan's original strategy against Adam and Eve.*
- *Adam and Eve had never sinned, had never entertained a sinful, rebellious or suspicious thought, had no reason to doubt God, received only good from God; and yet, in this pure and perfect environment, this strategy of doubt succeeded.*
- *How much more will such a strategy succeed in a sinful and depraved world?*

2 Corinthians 10:3-6 CSB

3 For although we live in the flesh, we do not wage war according to the flesh,

4 since the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but are powerful through God for the demolition of strongholds. We demolish arguments

5 and every proud thing that is raised up against the knowledge of God, and we take every thought captive to obey Christ.

6 And we are ready to punish any disobedience, once your obedience is complete.

- *Paul was fighting for the minds and hearts of the Corinthian Church.*
- *Paul states clearly that the battle for the mind is not an intellectual warfare; it is a spiritual battle which only be won by spiritual weapons having divine power.*

Hebrews 2:1-3 ESV

1 Therefore we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it.

2 For since the message declared by angels proved to be reliable, and every transgression or disobedience received a just retribution,

3 how shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation?

- *much closer (perissōs) exceedingly, beyond measure, superabundantly*
- *attention (prosechō) to apply oneself, attach oneself, be given to, addicted*
- *We don't all share in the same trials, but doubt is one spiritual battle that every Christian suffers.*

OVERWHELMED BY CIRCUMSTANCE

Job 30:16-23 ESV

16 And now my soul is poured out within me; days of affliction have taken hold of me.

17 The night racks my bones, and the pain that gnaws me takes no rest.

18 With great force my garment is disfigured; it binds me about like the collar of my tunic.

19 God has cast me into the mire, and I have become like dust and ashes.

20 I cry to you for help and you do not answer me; I stand, and you only look at me.

21 You have turned cruel to me; with the might of your hand you persecute me.

22 You lift me up on the wind; you make me ride on it, and you toss me about in the roar of the storm.

23 For I know that you will bring me to death and to the house appointed for all living.

John 20:11-16 ESV

11 But Mary [Magdalene] stood weeping outside the tomb, and as she wept she stooped to look into the tomb.

12 And she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had lain, one at the head and one at the feet.

13 They said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him."

14 Having said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing, but she did not know that it was Jesus.

15 Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?" Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away."

16 Jesus said to her, "Mary." She turned and said to him in Aramaic, "Rabboni!" (which means Teacher).

John 10:3-4 ESV

3 The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.

4 When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice.

- *In those times when you are overwhelmed and overcome by the circumstances, be assured that Jesus will be calling your name, reaching out to you, just as He came to His disciples in the storm at sea.*
- *Will you be able to hear and recognize Jesus' voice in the black of night, in the violence of the storm, in the confusion of the battle, when Satan attacks to destroy you and you are dazed with bewilderment?*

CARRIED VICARIOUSLY BY THE FAITH OF OTHERS

- *As God is trying our hearts, maturing our faith and exercising our convictions, He must, in His love, take us to a lonely place where it is impossible for us to go on vicariously in the faith of others, supported by group momentum.*

"Every man must do two things alone; he must do his own believing and his own dying."

— Martin Luther

- *If we don't have our own faith, our own relationship with the Lord, owning our personal convictions, we will fall away from the Truth and die.*

John 20:24-29 ESV

24 Now Thomas, one of the Twelve, called the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came.

25 So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see in his hands the mark of the nails, and place my finger into the mark of the nails, and place my hand into his side, I will never believe."

26 Eight days later, his disciples were inside again, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you."

27 Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side. Do not disbelieve, but believe."

28 Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!"

29 Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

CONDEMNED BY PERSON FAILURE

- *When you sin against the Lord and feel the brokenness, shame and condemnation, one of the hardest things to believe is that God still loves you, just as much as He always has and He longs to forgive and restore you.*
- *Many times we give the Lord no other choice but to allow us to fail, so that we learn by experience that His love is unchanging; it never fades, never fails and is never based upon our performance.*
- *Until we learn that we don't have to be good enough for Him to love, we will continue in vain to try harder, only to fail again and again.*
- *When we strive in our own self-righteousness, we forfeit all that His grace provides for us.*

Galatians 5:4-5 ESV

4 You are severed from Christ, you who would be justified by the law; you have fallen away from grace.

5 For through the Spirit, by faith, we ourselves eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness.

John 21:15-17 ESV

15 When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." He said to him, "Feed my lambs."

16 He said to him a second time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." He said to him, "Tend my sheep."

17 He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" Peter was grieved because he said to him the third time, "Do you love me?" and he said to him, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my sheep."

DOCTRINE WITHOUT RELATIONSHIP

- *If we have doctrine (no matter how accurate and true) without a personal relationship with Jesus, then we will be continually besieged with doubts.*
- *Sound doctrine with a living, growing, vibrant relationship with God will ground and secure your life on the Rock.*

- *When our communion with God wanes, the Word of God is no longer alive in our hearts, and we are not renewed by the Holy Spirit, what we know of God and His Word becomes empty, academic and intellectual dogma.*
- *If the Word of God is not renewed and alive in our hearts, then our minds will entertain all kinds of doubt, debates and rebuttals.*

John 6:60-61 ESV

60 When many of his disciples heard it, they said, "This is a hard saying; who can listen to it?"

61 But Jesus, knowing in himself that his disciples were grumbling about this, said to them, "Do you take offense at this?"

John 6:66-69 ESV

66 After this many of his disciples turned back and no longer walked with him.

67 So Jesus said to the Twelve, "Do you want to go away as well?"

68 Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life,

69 and we have believed, and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God."

2 Timothy 1:12 ESV

12 But I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, and I am convinced that he is able to guard until that Day what has been entrusted to me.