

“Dealing with Doubts”

Worldview Camp 2019 – Pine Haven Christian Assembly
Web Resources: www.worldvieweyes.org/pinehaven2019.html

Dr. Rich Knopp
Professor of Philosophy & Christian Apologetics
Program Director, Room For Doubt (www.roomfordoubt.com)
Program Director, WorldViewEyes (www.worldvieweyes.org)

Email: rknopp@lincolnchristian.edu
Lincoln Christian University

I. Background

- A. Churched teens
- B. Doubt: When is it not-so-good and when is it good?
- C. Faith and Doubt

II. Believe and Don't Doubt: Biblical Examples

- A. **Thomas** (John 20:27).
- B. **Jesus** (Matt 21:20-21).
- C. **Peter** (Matt 14:31).
- D. **James** (James 1:6).

III. A Biblical Double-Check on Doubts

- A. **Thomas** (John 20)
- B. **John the Baptist** (compare John 1:19–34 and Matthew 11:1–11).
- C. **Peter**: Jesus said, “Why did you doubt?” (Matt. 14).
- D. **Paul** (2 Cor 5:7; 1 Cor 13:12).
- E. **Father of son with unclean spirit** (Mark 9:14-27).

IV. The Sources of Doubts

- A. **Psychological** (self doubts):
- B. **Spiritual**
- C. **Intellectual**

Christian Smith, *Soul Searching*: Students leave faith behind primarily because of intellectual doubt and skepticism (page 89). “Why did they fall away from the faith in which they were raised?” This was an open-ended question there were no multiple-choice answers. 32% said they left faith behind because of intellectual skepticism or doubt. (“It didn’t make any sense anymore.” “Some stuff is too far-fetched for me to believe.” “I think scientifically and there is no real proof.” “Too many questions that can’t be answered.”)

David Kinnaman (*You Lost Me*) says that 12% says it’s “completely true” and 23% says it’s “completely or mostly true” that they have significant intellectual doubts. (Kindle, 3045-3047).

D. Volitional

Thomas Nagel (atheist philosopher): “It isn’t just that I don’t believe in God and, naturally, hope that I’m right in my belief. It’s that I hope there is no God! I don’t want there to be a God; I don’t want the universe to be like that.” (*The Last Word*, 130)

V. The Significance of Doubts

- A. Doubts about _____ matters (what is not essential).
- B. Doubts about _____ matters (what is essential).

VI. The Severity of Doubts

- A. Slight
- B. Standard
- C. Severe

VII. Reflections

- A. Doubt can be a _____ thing.
- B. Doubt can be a _____ thing.
- C. Doubt is not _____.
- D. Having doubts is normal, because absolute _____ is unachievable.
- E. Having doubts is _____ to be rational (reasonable doubt vs. absolute certainty).
- F. Christians can have _____ reasons for their belief that are not just _____ (John 20:30-31; I John 1:1-4).
- G. Christians can have a _____ assurance of their relationship to God that goes beyond intellect and evidence (Romans 8:16-17).