

**LifeGroup Study**  
**2024-04-07**  
**SKEPTICS WELCOME**  
**I Have Too Many Doubts**  
**Leader Notes**

**OVERVIEW:**

Welcome to our series, Skeptics Welcome. In this six-week series, we will explore common objections and questions people may have to the Christian faith. Our objection for week 1 is, "I Have Too Many Doubts." We hope that if you've had doubts about God or the Christian faith that you know that you're in good company. As you'll see today, the disciples worshipped and some of them doubted when they met Jesus after the resurrection. And, one of the twelve disciples, Thomas, doubts for a week when he misses out on seeing Jesus with the rest of the disciples. All this to say, it's normal to have doubts. We hope that this week you'll see how our doubts, as daunting as they are, can lead to a deeper and stronger faith in Jesus.

**ICEBREAKER:** Two Truths and a Lie

Here's a fun way to get to know each other more in group. Come up with two truths and a lie about yourself. For example, "I grew up in London." "I once rode a pig backwards." "I have my pilot's license." Which is the lie? 😊 **Share your two truths and a lie with your group** and see if they can figure out which one is the lie!

**STUDY:**

1. **What types of life situations are most likely to prompt a questioning of what you believe, and why?**
2. **"Doubt is not the end of faith." Do you agree with this statement? Why or why not?**

**The Story of Thomas**

READ: John 20:19-29

3. You may have heard the name, "Doubting Thomas". In John 20 we read about the man! **Do you think he has earned his nickname? Why or why not?**
4. At first, all of the disciples believe that Jesus has risen, except Thomas. **Why?**

LEADER NOTE: In John 20:24 we read that Thomas was not with the other disciples when Jesus appeared to them. Even though they tell Thomas they have seen Jesus, Thomas will not believe until he sees Jesus with his own eyes.

5. Thomas is with the disciples for a week before Jesus comes back for a special encounter with Thomas. **What do you think that week was like?**

LEADER NOTE: During the week the disciples, including Thomas, probably talked a lot about what had happened with Jesus. The disciples would have continued to share with Thomas about what they had witnessed, that Jesus was no longer in the grave. Although Thomas, at this point, had doubts about Jesus' resurrection, the disciples witnessed to him and welcomed him in their community.

6. **What can we learn from this story about how we treat doubters in our midst?**

LEADER NOTES: We can help doubters in our midst in ways that help them on their journey. We can share with them about our experience of Jesus, who he is and how he has worked in our lives. We can love and accept doubters wherever they are at in their journey. God can use you and me to help doubters take next steps of faith.

READ vs. 27 again.

<sup>27</sup> Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe." NIV

7. Thomas gets to have an amazing encounter with Jesus. **Share with your LifeGroup one of the most powerful encounters with Jesus you have had.**

READ: John 20:29 and John 20:8

<sup>29</sup> Then Jesus told him, "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed." NIV

<sup>8</sup> Finally the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went inside. He saw and believed. NIV

8. **What do you notice about how these two verses are connected?**

LEADER NOTES: It is likely that these two verses are connected by Jesus' teaching John about believing in Him. In vs. 29, Jesus is giving a little wink and blessing to John, who had believed without seeing.

### Some of the Disciples Doubt

READ: Matthew 28:16-20

<sup>16</sup> Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. <sup>17</sup> When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. <sup>18</sup> Then Jesus came to them and said, "All

authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. <sup>19</sup>Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup>and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” NIV

9. When the disciples saw Jesus on the mountain, they worshiped, but some of them doubted! **What do you think was causing them to doubt?**

LEADER NOTE: It is surprising to read that even after the disciples had seen Jesus with their own eyes, some of them still doubted. But the reality is, their entire time with Jesus was a mixture of times of faith and times of doubt (see Matt. 14:31, Luke 24:10-11). Our hearts can cause us to doubt, even when we have compelling evidence.

“Doubting does not prove that a man has no faith, but only that his faith is small. And even when our faith is small, the Lord is ready to help us.” **J. C. Ryle**

10. The Great Commission was given to at least a few disciples who doubted. **What encouragement can you take from this?**

LEADER NOTE: It is encouraging to read in Acts about how these early followers of Jesus were used by him to start and grow the church. Some of them doubted, but God still used them to accomplish great things for Him. The same is true for us. God will use you, doubts and all. His Spirit will empower you to move beyond your doubts and follow Jesus.

### **PRAYER:**

Spend some time today thanking God for making himself known to you through his Son, Jesus. Ask Him to help you with any doubts you have, to look to Him in faith.