

FOUNDATIONS: TRANSFORMATIONS

LESSON #1 "FROM DOUBTING TO BELIEVING"

Intro. The Christian life is all about transformation.

1. It takes us *from, to...*

Acts 26:18 (NKJV) to open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and ***from the power of Satan to God***, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me.

2 Corinthians 3:18 (NKJV) But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image ***from glory to glory***, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.

- *In tonight's lesson we're going to look at being transformed or changed from doubting to believing*

ex. *The following verses were written after Jesus had risen from the dead and appeared to the disciples who were there.
Thomas missed church that day and he missed a lot!*

John 20:24-25 (NKJV)

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

25 The other disciples therefore said to him, "We have seen the Lord." So he said to them, "Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe."

- *The key phrase in these verses is, (Thomas) "was not with them when Jesus came."*

ex. *The question is why wasn't Thomas there? All the other disciples were there; even Peter and he had denied Jesus 3 times.
He may not have been there because he didn't expect Jesus to show up.*

Jesus had died and been laid in a tomb. Jesus had told the disciples over and over that He was going to die and rise again. But when it happened they were all shocked.

Thomas wasn't with the others when Jesus showed up.

- *He was having some doubts*
- *And it's something all of us have to deal with from time to time*

I. _____ GOD

Hebrews 11:6 (NKJV) But without faith it is impossible to please Him...

A. SOME PEOPLE FEEL GOD IS ALMOST _____

1. God isn't just a _____
 - a. A lot of people feel God is almost impossible to please
 - b. That no matter how hard we try, He will always find fault
 - c. We need to understand that fault finding isn't His nature
2. _____ is something all of us can do
 - a. We can believe because God Himself enables us to

Romans 12:3 (NKJV) For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, ***as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.***

- b. God doesn't make it hard for us to believe and then berate us for not having more faith
- c. He gives us faith and then simply wants us to use it

Mark 9:23-24 (NKJV)

23 Jesus said to him, "If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes."

24 Immediately the father of the child cried out and said with tears, "Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!"

II. _____ DOUBTS

A. DOUBTS CAN BE _____

1. We pick this up from _____
 - a. There was an assertiveness or aggressiveness to his doubts

John 20:25 (NKJV) The other disciples therefore said to him, "We have seen the Lord." So he said to them, "Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe."

- *If we give into doubt, it can take on a momentum all its own*

2. And that's why we are _____ against it

Hebrews 4:11 (KJV) Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.

- *Now while we are warned against the dangers of doubting it doesn't mean God is uncompassionate or that He turns away from us*
- *Thomas wanted to believe. And the next time Jesus showed up Thomas was there. It was 8 days later!*

John 20:26-28 (NKJV)

26 And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, "Peace to you!"

27 Then He said to Thomas, "Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing."

28 And Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!"

- a. Jesus was direct but compassionate!
- b. God knows we have trouble with doubt and thankfully He doesn't get mad, irritated, frustrated, or give up on us

Hebrews 11:6 (NKJV) But 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 diligently seek Him.

B. THERE ARE _____ LISTED HERE THAT TELL US THE KIND OF FAITH THAT PLEASES GOD

- *They also will help us get over our doubts*

1. The first thing of these is we have to _____

Hebrews 11:6 (NKJV) ...for he who comes to God...

Matthew 11:28 (NIV) "**Come to me**, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.

a. Jesus didn't say , "*Come to me, all you who have your act together...*"

- *He called the weak and struggling; the weary and burdened*

Luke 5:31 (NCV) Jesus answered them, "It is not the healthy people who need a doctor, but the sick.

b. One of the ways to overcome our doubts is simply to keep coming to church

Matthew 18:20 (NKJV) For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them."

- *Jesus said where 2 or 3 are gathered in my name, I'll show up!*

John 20:26 (NKJV) And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, "Peace to you!"

ex. *The first time Jesus appeared, Thomas wasn't there. But the next time, even though he had some doubts, he was there and Jesus showed up!*

- c. We can't get everything we need from God's word by ourselves
- d. We need to read and study the Bible at home but we also need to hear it preached, or presented

Titus 1:2-3 (NKJV)

2 in hope of eternal life which God, who cannot lie, promised before time began,

3 but has in due time **manifested His word through preaching**, which was committed to me according to the commandment of God our Savior.

Romans 10:17 (NKJV) So then **faith comes by hearing**, and hearing by the word of God.

- *There is an added dimension of Jesus' presence when we gather together*
- *When we hear the word of God, faith comes and doubt goes!*

2. The second thing we need to do is believe that _____

Hebrews 11:6 (NKJV) But 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 diligently seek Him.

- a. Our faith isn't just in a teaching, doctrine, or system of beliefs
 - b. Our belief isn't in a religion, it's in a Person
- "for he who comes to God **must believe that He is...**"

John 20:28-29 (NKJV)

28 And Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!"

29 Jesus said to him, "Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. **Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.**"

ex. *When God told Moses to go to back to Egypt and the Hebrews he was there to lead them out, Moses asked who shall I say has sent me?"*

Exodus 3:14 (NIV) God said to Moses, "**I AM WHO I AM**. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: '**I AM** has sent me to you.'"

- c. Faith that pleases God believes He is!
- d. It's a persuasion about who God is

Romans 8:38-39 (NKJV)

38 For **I am persuaded** that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come,

39 nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

2 Timothy 1:12 (NKJV) For this reason I also suffer these things; nevertheless I am not ashamed, for **I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able** to keep what I have committed to Him until that Day.

- *When Paul says he is persuaded it literally means after giving it a lot of thought, thinking it through, and weighing the evidence*
- *"After thinking it through I am persuaded that nothing shall separate us from the love of God; that He is able to keep us!"*

- *The focus isn't just on what we believe but in Whom we believe!*
- *Our belief isn't just in rules, regulations, or do's and don'ts*
- *We believe in a God who loved us and gave Himself for us!*
- *Faith that pleases God believes **that He is***

ex. *"God I don't know how You're going to do it, I've got a lot of stuff working against me right now, BUT I BELIEVE YOU ARE!"*

"I've thought it through and I believe You are my Savior, my healer, my provider, my Helper..."

"I am persuaded you are God to me!"

- *That pleases God. Especially when we're going through a time of doubt; "God, I believe You are!"*

3. Finally, we must believe God is a _____

Hebrews 11:6 (NKJV) But 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 diligently seek Him.***

- a. We only overcome an aggressive doubt with an aggressive faith (...*those who diligently seek Him.*)
- b. It means we come to Him and keep on coming to Him because we believe He has the answer

- *This is a "my mind is made up" kind of believing*
- *I believe God over my doubts!*

- *He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him*
- *What that means is He will continue to come through for us!*

Ephesians 3:20 (NKJV) Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us.

PRAYER AND CONFESSION: *Thank You Jesus, for continuing to help me even though I sometimes struggle with doubts. I will continue to come to You in those times. I believe that You are God. You are my Savior, Healer, Provider, and Strength. I believe that You are, and that You are a my rewarder as I continue to come to You; in Jesus' name, Amen.*

FILL IN THE BLANKS FROM LESSON #1

I. ____ (PLEASING) GOD

A. SOME PEOPLE FEEL GOD IS ALMOST ____ (IMPOSSIBLE TO PLEASE)

1. God isn't just a ____ (**fault finder**)
2. ____ (**Believing**) is something all of us can do

II. ____ (OVERCOMING) DOUBTS

A. DOUBTS CAN BE _____ (VERY AGGRESSIVE)

1. We pick this up from _____ (Thomas)
2. And that's why we are _____ (warned) against it

B. THERE ARE _____ (3 THINGS) LISTED HERE THAT TELL US THE KIND OF FAITH THAT PLEASURES GOD

1. The first thing of these is we have to _____ (keep on coming to God)
2. The second thing we need to do is believe that _____ (He is)
3. Finally, we must believe God is a _____ (rewarder)