

THE GIFT OF *Doubt*

THE SKEPTIC'S GUIDE TO LIFE WITH GOD: ECCLESIASTES · ECCLESIASTES 2:1-11 · JANUARY 14, 2024 · PASTOR DAN RYAN

OUTLINE:

The Path of Ecclesiastes

- What is life about?
- Chapter 2 – seeking the meaning of life
- Existential wrestling, crisis, or angst – a unique form of doubt

Doubt as an Invitation

Doubt as a Companion

- The Teacher wrestles with meaninglessness & doubt his whole life
- How have we viewed doubt in our lives? Is it a sin?
- The doubt of Peter & Thomas, and Jesus' reaction
- Reframing doubt

Doubt as a Blessing

- Letting our doubt lead us back to God
- Nothing else can answer our deepest longing
- Do we view this kind of doubt as a gift? Can we?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. As you read through Ecclesiastes 2 and listened to the sermon, what are some initial thoughts or reactions that stuck out to you? How does that relate to the larger story of your life?
2. The two kinds of experiences were highlighted- Christians who have doubts at times, and those who do not. Do you relate to either group? What has your experience with doubt been?
3. Looking at Ecclesiastes 2, the Teacher asks the big question of life which is, “what is the meaning of life?” How have you answered that question either before/outside of faith or in your faith?
4. Even in a life of faith we can pursue activities and achievements instead of God. What areas of your experience with faith, religion, or Christianity have also proven to feel empty?
5. How would you put words to the way you experience the fullness and completeness that is only found in God? What spiritual pathways or disciplines help you abide in that fullness?
6. As you reflect on your own experience with both doubt and with God, how can you walk with others who are at different points on the journey towards God?

DIG DEEPER:

- Are you someone who doesn't experience doubt? Reflect on the ways you have viewed those who have doubts. If you have a friend who does, spend time with them and listen to their experience. Let God speak to you how you can walk with those you know who have doubts.
- If you are working through your own doubts, revisit books such as *Making Sense of God* by Tim Keller or *A Skeptics Guide to Faith* by Phillip Yancey.