

Ridin' High Cowboy Church

8771 FM 35

Union Valley/Royse City, TX

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Things people have told you about God that caused you to doubt – and they even quoted scripture to prove they were right...

Body guard God

Only good things happen to Christians. If something bad happens to a good person, God must not be real. If God is a good God, then only good things should happen to us. Not taught in the Bible that Christianity started when a terrible thing happened to a perfect person. All the people of the New Testament were treated terribly for their faith in God through Jesus. Many were taught that God will protect people from bad things.

On Demand God

Your faith gets shaken when God does not respond to reasonable request when you think he should, “I don’t want to change the world I just want a date, or I just want a job...”

Boy Friend God

You should always FEEL God’s presence. Since I don’t feel God here with me, he must not be here (have you ever been around people who really feel God?)

“The things that are the most constant are the things we are least aware of...Illus: Nobody ever says, “Man, the temperature feels perfect in here!”

Psalms 91:4 He will cover you with his feathers and under his wings you find refuge. (Hug)

Guilt God

If you enjoy it, you shouldn’t do it. God love you but he doesn’t like you and life is not supposed to be fun.

Acts 9:16 I will show him how much he must suffer for my names sake.

Herod Archeleus and Herod Phillip – the business guy married his niece, Herodias. Herod Antipas convinced Herodius to leave with him; he married his niece who was also his sister-in-law, by stealing his brother’s wife, normal in some states. All this is very offensive to the Jews.

John – often used Herod as a sermon illustration. He was the first to baptize anyone. One sermon – Repent (“cut that crap out!”) The Messiah is coming so get right with God and you will know him when he comes. He was a fearless speaker and he called out Herod Antipas for his sin in public. John was a force to be reckoned with. First to recognize Jesus for who He was and his job was to tell everyone. Herod loved to listen to John the Baptist but Herodias hated him.

Mark 6:17-20

17 For Herod himself had given orders to have John arrested, and he had him bound and put in prison. He did this because of Herodias, his brother Philip’s wife, whom he had married. 18 For John had been saying to Herod (when he rode down the street in a parade), “It is not lawful for you to have your brother’s wife.” 19 So Herodias nursed a grudge against John and wanted to kill him. But she was not able to, 20 because Herod feared John and protected him, knowing him to be a righteous and holy man (he thought it was kind of funny, Herod would bring John up and listen to what he said).

Herodias finally nagged Herod enough to arrest John (you know about that, right guys?) she would say are you gonna let that guy talk about your wife like that ... you don’t love me!

This is where it gets practical for us. John was big and loud and he would call it like it is.

When John was in prison some of his disciples began to follow Jesus. They had been baptizing and they were gaining momentum and now it’s all over for him. He is in jail and begins to doubt. John was the last one anybody thought would ever doubt.

Matthew 11:2-6 2 When John, who was in prison, heard about the deeds of the Messiah, he sent his disciples 3 to ask him, “Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else?”

John’s disciples must have been taken back at this question. John, you’re the one who said he was the one for years, that was your job on earth, John. It’s because of you everyone thinks Jesus is the one (I prepare the way the one who is to come), but John in this uncomfortable environment began to question and doubt. John’s followers were going to have to interrupt a miracle to ask Jesus this question.

This helps me. At some point there is a situation or environment that you could get in that could make you begin to question God. When everything we are accustomed to is different, when things don’t go like we think they should, when everything we believe gets challenged.

Outside the comforts of home things may begin to become not so clear.

Sometimes I want to say to people but it would seem insensitive, so I'll say it all of you at one time ... there is something self-centered about most of our doubts.

If I'm honest, I lose faith when God seems absent in MY life not yours.

What Jesus did not say to John.

He did not tell him what was happening or what his plan was. Jesus did not tell John's disciples they were gonna bust him out of prison tonight. If John knew prison was part of the plan, it would have helped, "God just tell me what's going on!"

Listen to this ... **4 Jesus replied, "Go back and report to John what you hear and see.** John can't see or hear past the prison walls.

5 The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor. (that's it? You're not going to tell us if you're the one?)

Jesus was saying I want John's faith anchored to what God is doing around him, not what is happening to him.

When John realizes what is going on around him, he will find that I am up to something and his faith and his faith in the prison cell ...

Jesus did not answer the question, he changed John's focus.

- Look back - at all the things he has done in the past, answered prayers, Salvation, think about how God has worked personally in Your life,
- Look around - at what God is doing around you. He may not be doing Anything for me right now, but he is doing things for others around me.
- Look ahead - prophecies coming true all around you. The Bible says Things will get bad here on earth, but that steps up the Work of God here

6 Blessed is anyone who does not stumble on account of me."

You get extra credit for not doubting because of the things I do, don't get tripped up by the things that don't make sense. God says things will happen in your Christian life that will make you wonder. God has a bigger plan.

Blessed is John the Baptist because he won't lose faith based on something I have done for him.

Skip down to verse **11 truly among those born of women** (and that's everybody) **there is no one greater than John the Baptist** (wait, but he's a doubter)...God says I don't care.

John was going to be in prison no matter how much faith he had or how obedient he was.

Your personal circumstances do not necessarily coincide with how God feels about you.

How the story ends...

Herodias' daughter dances for Herod Antipas and his friends, (it wasn't ballet). He promises her anything, mom tells her she wants the head of John the Baptist on a silver platter tonight.

In the middle of those circumstances God did not move one inch of his throne. And he was still a God who could be trusted, and today we are still talking about a risen savior and the courage of John the Baptist.

**Even though your circumstances don't change, you can keep your faith.
Know God loves you and His will for you is perfect.**