

# Prescription for Doubt

by Chaplain Frank Wm. Nagy

Our spiritual life is in trouble when *doubt* seems natural.

## Let's Take Our Medicine from the Word of God:

When any of you needs wisdom to know what you should do, ask God. He will give you wisdom. For God is generous to all. He doesn't find fault. 6 But when you ask, don't have any *doubts*. A person who has *doubts* is like a wave blown by the wind and tossed by the sea. 7 A person with *doubts* shouldn't expect to receive anything from the Lord. -- James 1:5-7

When I finally understood what James was saying in this passage, its impact was devastating. He had described me. I was that man of *doubt*! I could not expect any answer to my prayers, as my faith always seemed mixed with *doubts*. It was clear I was no man of faith and power. I cried out for God's unmerited favor much like Paul did in Romans 7:24, "O wretched man I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

We would do well to cry out to God for his prescription for *doubt*!

Jesus knew the debilitating power of *doubt*. In Mark 9:17 ff, we see how he dealt with a man trapped in that unstable condition:

"Teacher, I brought you my son, who is possessed by a spirit that has robbed him of speech. 18 Whenever it seizes him, it throws him to the ground. He foams at the mouth, gnashes his teeth and becomes rigid. I asked your disciples to drive out the devil, but they could not.... 22 It has often thrown him into fire or water to kill him. But if you can do anything, take pity on us and help us."

23 "If you can?" said Jesus. "Everything is possible for him who *believes*."

24 Right then the boy's father exclaimed, crying out with tears, "I *believe*. Help me overcome *my unbelief*!"

Jesus commanded. The devil convulsed and came out. Jesus then took the boy by the hand and lifted him to his feet.

## Jesus Says: Change Your Attitude

Before Jesus helped the boy, Jesus took aim at the greater problem in the boy's father.

Having struggled with this problem for years, the father begged for mercy. "If you can do anything, take pity on us and help us."

"If you can?" Jesus challenged. "Everything is possible for him, who *believes*."

In desperation, the boy's father exclaimed, "I *believe*. Help me overcome my *unbelief*!"

Sounds a lot like us doesn't it?

In the depths of our troubles, Jesus gave the man and us a bitter pill to swallow. We must believe enough in God's good graces to expect Jesus' undeserved help in our struggles with *unbelief*.

The Apostle Paul echoed Jesus' response: "Whatever is not of *faith* is *sin*," says Romans 14:23.

We're supposed to find comfort in that?

Yes. We draw closer to the remedy:

### **Paul's Definition of Sin Hints at God's Prescription to Fix Our Faith**

Rom 14:23 ...Whatever is not of *faith* is *sin*.

St. Paul's words diagnose our problem. When Paul says, "anything less than *faith* is *sin*," Paul pronounces our *doubt* CURE-ABLE! He directs us TO BE FORGIVEN OF *DOUBT* as a *sin*. This is the treatment Jesus offered by confronting the man in Mark 9. The demoniac's father had to turn from his own ways that had not helped him or his son.

One more ingredient will speed God's cure on its way. 1 John 1:9, in combination with what Paul said, shows we can confess our *doubt* like any other *sin*.

"If we confess our sins, *He is faithful* and just to forgive us and cleanse us from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9)."

God forgives. And beyond that, He faithfully cleanses us from all of *doubt's* unsettling side effects. As we cling to God for forgiveness, He will further establish our *faith*.

Now, if we haven't followed our Divine Physician's orders, what shall we call that? "Whoever knows what is right and fails to do it, *sins*," says James 4:17.

Again, we are not far from recovery. As we confess our failings, God renews us totally.

### **This Cure Works**

When you find yourself *doubting*, stop. Turn around. Ask **forgiveness**. Expect God to give you a healthy life in the Spirit.

I have experienced this cure firsthand. Now, when I catch myself succumbing to this disease, I quickly repent and ask forgiveness. Since I started making this a practice, I have found God laying brick upon brick of *faith* upon the foundation Christ has laid in my life. I have seen my *faith* grow. He builds me up each time I rely on his forgiveness and cleansing from all the effects of my unrighteous *doubting*.

This is medicine from God's word. Please take it and experience his cure for yourself.

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His ministry and Bible support materials he has developed are offered FREE FOR THE ASKING.

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