

## Searching for Answers | Week 1 - Can Faith & Doubt Coexist

### Message Big Idea

Living in the “and” means choosing faith even with your doubts.

### Scripture

Mark 9:14-27

### Points to Keep In Mind

1. Throughout this discussion, let people struggle with the different aspects of this passage, from the disciples to the crowd to the man and his son to Jesus himself. If people struggle with the second question about the nature of faith and doubt, point them to Jesus. Remind them that Jesus didn't expect full faith before healing the boy. Use the example of the man sharing his doubt with Jesus to lead you into the next section, where we tackle group members' specific doubts.
2. Ensure you have established an environment of welcome before you press in too much on people's doubts. It could be helpful at the beginning to remind everyone that no one here has all the answers, nor is it useful to suggest ways to 'fix' someone else's doubts. This is a time of sharing and vulnerability. Unless someone specifically asks for help or wisdom, this might be considered a circle of sharing and trust. It could also be helpful to highlight that some doubts are more intellectual while others function as doubts of action (knowing what you should do but not doing it because you don't believe the action would be effective- like forgiveness or healing). Thinking of it this way could help people who think one type of doubt is more complex, troubling, or less important than another.
3. If your group is comfortable with each other, you might divide people into pairs or smaller groups to pray specifically for people's doubts. Again, not to 'fix' anyone, but as a way to connect over the fact that every person living has doubts. We wouldn't be human otherwise. Close by encouraging them to pray one or more of the dangerous prayers from this series this week. A
4. These are some great statements about doubt you might share with the group:

“Doubts are ants in the pants of faith; they keep it awake and moving.” –Frederick Beuchner

“A faith without some doubts is like a human body without any antibodies in it. People who blithely go through life too busy or indifferent to ask hard questions about why they believe as they do will find themselves defenseless against either the experience of tragedy or the probing questions of a smart skeptic. A person's faith can collapse almost overnight if she has failed over the years to listen patiently to her own doubts, which should only be discarded after long reflection. -Tim Keller, The Reason for God

### Next Steps

1. Where do you see God at work in your life right now?
2. What next steps do you feel called to take in your YOU+ journey? Check out [communitychristian.org/you](http://communitychristian.org/you)
3. Have you considered getting baptized? Learn more at [communitychristian.org/baptism](http://communitychristian.org/baptism)
4. If anyone in your small group is seeking professional counseling, you can always refer them to our resource page: [communitychristian.org/mentalhealth](http://communitychristian.org/mentalhealth)