

Me, Myself & Doubt by Laura L. Shaw

“When they saw Him, they worshiped Him; but some doubted.”

Matthew 28:17 (NIV)

Is it possible to believe and doubt at the same time? NO!!! I mean, YES!!! Absolutely not! It is, too! If two people were having this conversation, it would be tense...If this were a conversation between me, myself and I...well, that's just scary! Yet, how often do we find ourselves in this actual predicament. We put our eyes on Him, He shows himself to us, and at the same time we're wondering if that was actually Him or not.

The above verse from Matthew occurs *AFTER* Jesus' ministry on earth, *AFTER* He has died, *AFTER* he has been risen from the dead, and *AFTER* others said He had appeared to them and was still alive. The "they" in the verse refers to the eleven that had been with Him the whole time. Now, if it's possible for 11 men to see everything in person that Jesus had done and still have some doubts afterwards, then how much more true is that for us as His disciples today.

This is no surprise to God. He knows us intimately, and He knows we are going to doubt Him from time to time. How faithful He was to give us His Word to remind us that He is God, that He is faithful, that He listens to our prayers, and on and on. This is where our faith in Him kicks in...it is even modeled for us in Scripture. In Mark 9:14 (NIV) and following, a father comes to Jesus and wants Him to heal his son who has an evil spirit. The dad says, "...IF you can do anything, take pity on us and help us." Jesus corrects him, ***"If I can? Everything is possible for him who believes."*** The father's response back is what I can relate to... ***"I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!"*** The passage says that the dad exclaimed this! Exclamation point!!!!

Notice in this last emphatic statement that, even though it is an oxymoron, it is also ***not*** an oxymoron. "I do believe," the dad exclaims. This shows his limited belief, the kind we can do on our own. Then he says, "help me overcome my unbelief." This puts the emphasis back on God to do the work in us. We can muster up all the belief in our heart, soul and mind, but without God's help to do so, it will never be enough. This desperate dad gets it! God wants us to get it, too. I suspect that's why He put it in Scripture.

At the end of Luke 24, it goes into the same story that Matthew was telling about the disciples, only it adds more of the details. AS they were walking along discussing their doubts about whether Jesus had been resurrected or not, Jesus appears to them and asks them why they are doubting. See, even though He knew their doubts, He didn't want them to stay there. So Jesus continues this process patiently with them and begins to show them His hands and feet and "prove" to them that He is alive. THEN, the next verse is the key: After all of this conversation, in verse 45 it says, ***"Then He opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures."*** Jesus gave them instructions and His blessing after that and was taken up to heaven. This was their life changing moment. AFTER He opened their minds, they understood. Once again, it was His power, not their ability to believe on their own. It says at the end of the verse that ***"then they worshiped Him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy. And they stayed continually at the temple, praising God."***

How cool! Before Jesus opened their minds, they half-worshiped, half-doubted. After He opened their minds, they had great joy and continually praised Him! Let's enjoy the latter! Let's stop trying to believe on our own with what little we have...let's ask Him to show us how to truly believe, to open our minds so that we can experience Him to the full. When we sense Him asking us why we are doubting, let's ask for His help. He will help us overcome our unbelief! **EXCLAMATION POINT!**