

So What About...? 2026

Part 1: Why Do You Believe What You Believe?

Jude 22; James 1:5; Proverbs 18:2

Summary: Examining your beliefs can transform your faith, deepen your relationship with Jesus, and help you live a life that actually works.

Main Ideas:

Most of our beliefs weren't chosen... they were inherited.

Our beliefs shape our lives.

A faith you never question... is a faith that never grows.

Barrier #1: I don't think I'm allowed to ask that.

- Questions aren't a threat to faith... They are the starting point.

Barrier #2: I'm afraid of what I might find.

- A faith that avoids hard questions doesn't become stronger... It becomes more fragile.

Barrier #3 I Already Know What I Believe.

- The moment you think you've arrived... is usually the moment you stop growing.

When you come across a belief, ask three things:

- Why do I believe this?
- Is this actually true?
- What kind of life is this producing?

If a belief makes you more like Jesus... hold onto it. If it makes you less like Jesus... question it.

Invitation:

Notice: Pay attention to a strong reaction you have

Trace it: Ask "What belief is underneath this?"

Question it: "Why do I believe this?" "Is this actually true?" "Does this look like Jesus?"

Transcript:

IN: Let me start with a question... What's something you believe... that you've never actually questioned?

Here's another one... Why do you believe what you believe... really?

- Have you ever stopped to think... where did these beliefs come from?

Because if we're honest, most of us didn't sit down one day and carefully choose what we believe

- We didn't research it. We didn't wrestle with it. We didn't test it

We just picked it up.... **Most of our beliefs weren't chosen... they were inherited.**

- From our parents, church, culture, or somewhere online.
- It made sense at the time, so we went with it...
- And then we built our lives on it.

And here's what's a little unsettling:

- Some of what you believe is true.
- Some of it is almost true.
- And some of it... might not be true at all.

And this isn't just theoretical... This shows up in our lives every single day.

Because **our beliefs shape our lives.**

- They shape how you treat people.
- How you handle conflict.
- What you fear.
- What you hope for.
- What you think God is like.

I went into adulthood (and even being a full-time pastor) with beliefs I had inherited.

And if I'm honest...

- I didn't just believe them. I defended them.
- I argued about them.
- I pushed people away over them.

And it took years... and some really patient, gentle voices in my life...

- To help me realize... some of what I believed wasn't actually producing the kind of life I wanted.
- It wasn't making me more like Jesus.

I'm still learning... But now I know why I believe what I believe.

- I'm more willing to listen, engage, question, and evaluate when needed.

See, if what you believe is off...

- It's not just your thinking that's off... your life will start to feel off.

And Jesus didn't come to give us a list of better beliefs to argue about...

- He came to transform our lives now and forever.

So over the next few weeks, we're not just asking: "What do you believe?"

- We're asking: "Why do you believe it?"

Because if we don't ask why...

- We can spend our whole lives believing something we've never actually examined.
- And eventually... we just get stuck.
- With beliefs we've never questioned... trying to build a life that actually works.

And over time, our faith just stops growing.

- Because **a faith you never question... is a faith that never grows.**

But before we go there... we need to be honest about something.

- This sounds good...but it's not easy.

Because most people don't question their beliefs...

- Not because they don't care and not because they are lazy...
- But because there are real barriers.

So let's talk about them.

BODY: Barrier #1: I don't think I'm allowed to ask that.

For many of us, somewhere along the way, we had a question...

- Maybe about God, or the Bible, or something we heard...

And we brought it up... asked a real, genuine question.

- And the response wasn't thoughtful conversation...
- It was a feeling (maybe subtle maybe not) of "don't go there."
- "Just have faith."
- "That's just something you're SUPPOSED to believe."

I remember having real questions about hell... and being told by other pastors "you have to believe a certain way, otherwise you're not a real Christian."

And over time you learn... There are some questions you're not supposed to ask.

- Especially if you want to be accepted.

Maybe no one said it out loud... but you felt it.

So you stopped asking...

- Maybe you left.
- Or maybe you stayed but just kept it on the surface.

And underneath the questions are still there.

And for some of you... that's why your faith feels stuck.

- Not because you don't care
- And not because you don't want to grow

But because somewhere along the way, you learned that questions are a problem.

But the truth is... **Questions aren't a threat to faith... They are the starting point.**

Jude, Jesus' little brother, wrote... **Jude 22 NIV Be merciful to those who doubt.**

Think about that... Not correct them, not shut them down

Be merciful...

- Why? Because doubt isn't the opposite of faith... Sometimes it's what leads to a deeper one.

So let me just say this clearly: You are allowed to ask hard questions here.

- More than that... We want you to.
- Because honest questions are often the beginning of real faith.

Barrier #2: I'm afraid of what I might find.

For a lot of us, it's not that we can't ask questions... It's that we're not sure we want to.

Because once you start asking real questions... you don't know where it's going to lead.

Have you ever had that moment?

- Where a thought slips in... "What if I've been wrong about this?"

And instead of following it... you just move on.

- You scroll. You distract yourself. You change the subject.

Because pulling that thread feels risky.

- What if it changes something?
- What if it costs you something?

So we stay safe.

- We stick with what we know.
- And avoid the questions that feel a little too close to the edge.

And on the outside... everything looks solid.

- But underneath... There's uncertainty we've never dealt with.

But then someone (maybe kids) ask a similar question...

- And the response is defensive... maybe even frustrated.
- Because you don't want to go there.

But let me ask you something... Is avoiding the question actually making your faith stronger?

- Or just... quieter?

Because... **A faith that avoids hard questions doesn't become stronger... It becomes more fragile.**

- More dependent on everything staying comfortable.

And eventually... it can't hold up under real life.

But here's what many people discover

- When they finally get the courage to really search for truth... They don't lose their faith. They refine it.
- It becomes more honest. More grounded. More resilient.

James, another of Jesus' brothers, wrote... **James 1:5 NLT** *If you need wisdom, ask our generous God, and he will give it to you. He will not rebuke you for asking.*

Not "don't ask." Not "just accept it."

- Ask.

That's been my experience.

- There were questions I was afraid to ask.
- But once I finally did... I didn't lose my faith. I found something deeper.

God isn't afraid of your questions.

- So maybe the question isn't: "Is it safe to ask?"
- Maybe the better question is: "Am I willing to follow the truth... wherever it leads?"

Barrier #3 I Already Know What I Believe.

This one is subtle.

- It doesn't feel like a barrier
- It feels like confidence and strong faith.
- I already know what I believe / I've heard this before / I've got all my answers

So we stop asking questions. We stop exploring. We stop listening.

- Not because we're against growth...but because we feel like we've already arrived.

And if we're honest sometimes we don't want a better answer.

- We just want to feel right about the one we already have.

So we stay in our echo chambers.

- We read what confirms us... listen to voices that agree... and avoid what challenges us.

But certainty and truth are not the same thing.

- You can be very confident and still be very wrong.

There's an ancient Jewish proverb that says... **Proverbs 18:2 NLT** *Fools have no interest in understanding; they only want to air their own opinions.*

And when that happens... we stop being formed by the truth... and we start forming the truth around us.

But if we really want to know Jesus... We have to stay open. Curious.

- Humble enough to say... "Maybe there's more for me to learn."

Because **the moment you think you've arrived... is usually the moment you stop growing.**

YOU: So how do we actually do this?

How do we question our beliefs without losing our minds or throwing everything out?

Here's a simple way to start...

When you come across a belief, ask three things:

1. Why do I believe this?

- Where did it come from?

2. Is this actually true?

- Or just what I've always assumed?

3. What kind of life is this producing?

This is the best filter...

If a belief makes you more like Jesus... hold onto it.

If it makes you less like Jesus... question it.

You don't need all the answers.

- This isn't about having everything figured out

But if you want to grow... you can start asking better questions.

So this week I have a challenge for you...

- Notice: Pay attention to a strong reaction you have

- Frustration, anxiety, judgment, fear

- Trace it: Ask "What belief is underneath this?"

- Question it: "Why do I believe this?" "Is this actually true?" "Does this look like Jesus?"

That's it... Just start the process.

WE: Let's bring this all together...

Every one of us is building our life on something we believe.

- About God, ourselves, and what really matters.

And some of those beliefs, we didn't choose... We inherited them.

But at some point... you have to decide:

- Am I going to keep living off beliefs I've never examined...
- Or am I going to start pursuing what's actually true?

Because those two paths lead to very different lives.

- One leads to a faith that feels thin and easily shaken
- The other leads to a faith that is tested... refined... and strong enough for real life.

And for many of us... It's not that you don't care. It's not that you don't want to grow.

It's that somewhere along the way... you stopped asking.

But what if this is the moment... where that changes?

- Not where you figure everything out.

But where you decide: "I'm not going to settle for a faith I've never wrestled with."

Because following Jesus was never meant to be... just agreeing with the right ideas.

It's about becoming the kind of person... who actually lives like Him.

And that kind of life doesn't come from beliefs you inherited.

It comes from beliefs you've wrestled with... questioned... and chosen.

Because... a faith you never question... is a faith that never grows.