

## The Doubts We Have #2 - Is Christianity the 'Right' Religion?

### Icebreaker Question

Josh shared about a boy who just blurted out how the Mutter house smelled, to point out how many of us usually do try to filter our thoughts, often to protect a relationship. Can you share about a time when either you held your tongue about something you really wanted to say, or when you've went ahead and said something you probably shouldn't have? (Or maybe, how did your Thanksgiving dinner conversations go this year?)

### Sermon Discussion

Have you had interactions with people of other faiths (or no faith) that get you thinking about the validity of your beliefs?

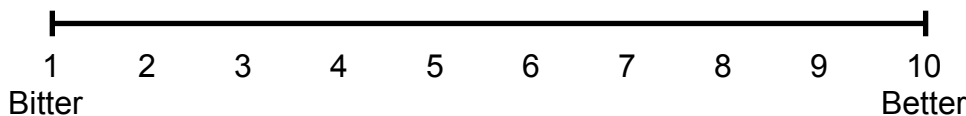
How would you answer a child who asked "How can we know that what we believe about God is true?" Have you asked yourself that question? How deeply did you dig into it?

Discuss Pastor Josh's statement that "the ultimate test of a system of belief is how livable it is".

Where do you think the majority of people today find meaning for their lives? Or do they even worry about finding meaning?

Josh said: **there is lots of evidence that the modern, post-religious, western world is less equipped to handle suffering.** What would be the evidence for that? (he mentioned avoidance, obsession with comfort, and being traumatized by minor hardships) - do you think our modern approach to death would be an example?

Think of a situation where you have suffered hardship or difficulty in your life. Looking back would you say they made you better, or bitter? On a scale of 1 to 10, where 1=bitter and 10=better, where would you place yourself? (this can be for personal reflection or sharing with the group)



Would you agree with Josh's statement that "Only when our meaning is rooted in something outside of this world, will we be equipped to handle life inside this world." How do you think a secular or non-religious person would respond to, or push back on this?

Read John 11:17-26 & 32-35

Can you recall the 4 points that Pastor Josh gleaned from this passage?

- Jesus shows us that God is with us in our experience of suffering.
- Jesus shows us that it is okay to feel all of the emotions.
- Jesus gives us hope that goes beyond our experience of hardship.
- Jesus shows us that suffering can be purposeful.

Which of these 4 statements means the most to you (and why)?

Where does love fit into the above passage/story? Note that in verse 3 of John 11 the sisters sent word to Jesus, saying "the one you **love** is sick". Earlier Josh spoke of the philosophy of Stoicism, which places less value on feelings like love. Which perhaps leads to the bigger question: **What role does love play in distinguishing Christianity from other philosophies or religions?** What difference has God's love made in your own life?