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PART 7: FAITH

For many of us, our religious beliefs were not so much chosen as they were inherited—passed down to us when we were children by trusted adults. We take our beliefs about faith by faith. But, is that all faith is? Can faith—specifically the Christian faith—stand up to investigation?

CONNECT

1. Have you ever changed your mind about something major? What happened to make you think differently?
2. How has your environment, family, and friends impacted what you believe?

DISCUSS THE PODCAST EPISODE

1. In the podcast episode, Andy talked about how faith is not simply a religious concept. Just about everything humankind has accomplished for good or bad started as an act of faith—the belief that something could be, or even should be, different than it is.

How is this everyday faith or belief similar or dissimilar to religious faith?

2. Every religion has, as Andy puts it, some list of “believe that’s...” but Christianity is different. What makes it different?
3. Right after Jesus died, no one—not even his closest friends and family—believed he was the Son of God. Yet only days later, they would share that very message with everyone, even though doing so put them in danger.

What could have happened to explain this kind of change?

LEARN

Watch the short video.



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APPLY

After giving your group members an opportunity to share what stood out from the video, discuss the following questions as a group:

1. In the video, Rahul gave several compelling reasons we can trust the Gospels as real eyewitness accounts.
 - We have detailed background information included in the accounts.
 - Most scholars agree that the documents in the New Testament were written over a span of several decades in the first century.
 - There are less-than flattering stories about the disciples themselves.
 - The accounts point to women as being the first witnesses of the resurrection.

Have you heard these examples before? How do they affect your confidence in your faith?

2. What does the fact that the disciples were willing to die say about what they thought about Jesus?
3. How important is the validity of the resurrection for your own belief in Jesus?

BEFORE NEXT TIME

Christianity is different from other religions because it is not simply about having faith in a list of teachings, but in a person. That is why the most important question for those investigating faith is: Who Is Jesus? For those who were close to him, their answer totally changed after one significant event—the resurrection.

Be sure to listen to the “Invitation” episode of *The Starting Point Podcast*.

PRAY

Take some time to pray as a group, thanking God for the hope we have in the resurrection of Jesus and the testimonies of those earliest eyewitnesses that have brought it to us. Ask him to help to continue to build your confidence in him.

