

## 2nd Sunday after Pentecost, June 2, Study Guide

### *Can the Bible be Trusted?*



### Key Themes

*Wresting with Doubt, Finding Faith:* The role of doubt in the spiritual life is an important motivator.

*The Bible:* Inspired writings by flawed human beings. Interpretation matters. The overarching themes of the history of salvation are central.

*Danger of Proof-Texting:* Using selective texts to support pre-existing opinions while ignoring others.

*Walter Brueggemann's Insight:* The Bible speaks in many voices, sometimes with selective emphasis on exclusion.

### Scripture Reading

Isaiah 56:4-7: Inclusion and honor for eunuchs who follow God's ways.

Matthew 11:28-30: Jesus' invitation to all who struggle.

### Case Study: Eunuchs and LGBTQ+ Inclusion

Texts that exclude (e.g., Deut 23:1, Lev 18:22, Lev 20:13).

Texts that welcome: Jesus' inclusive message (e.g., Matt 11:28-30) and Paul's radical welcome (e.g., Gal 3:28).

### Historical Context of Exclusion

Gentiles and Kosher Laws: Early church struggled with excluding Gentiles who didn't follow kosher laws, i.e. Lev 11:10.

Acts 10:15: Peter's vision and realization of God's inclusivity.

### Discussion Questions

- *How has doubt played a role in your spiritual journey?*
- *In what ways can doubt be a tool for deeper faith?*
- *How have your own experiences and contexts shaped your understanding of Scripture.*
- *How do you reconcile contradictory messages in the Bible?*
- *What does it mean to trust the Bible in light of its diverse voices and historical contexts?*
- *How can the stories of exclusion and welcome in the Bible inform our understanding of inclusion today?*