

I BELIEVE

The first step to a life filled with God is to believe.

KEY POINTS

- ❖ Can we have faith when we don't fully understand? There are many things we don't understand, and yet they are real, functioning parts of our lives – like 5G technology. But we still use our phones. And if I call you, I believe that the person I hear on the other end *is* you, even if you are on the other side of the world.
 - ❖ Hebrews 11:3 tells us there's a kind of understanding that is enabled by faith.
 - ❖ Hebrews 11:3 was written a long time before it could be proven to be true – before people knew about atoms, the "building blocks" of all life. People had to just believe it, or not. We have the same choice.
 - ❖ Believing is initiated by the drawing of the Spirit of God. Many of us can remember those first times when we were aware of God as a child and felt drawn into His presence.
 - ❖ To come to God, we have to believe that He is; that He wants us to know and experience Him; that He rewards those who diligently seek Him.
 - ❖ Being open and willing to believe is a necessary condition of the mind without which it's impossible to approach any kind of dealing with God. "He that cometh to God must believe that He is" (v. 6).
 - ❖ It is also crucial to believe in God's positive intent toward you, personally. Without that, you'd have a potentially malevolent being who might not be acting in your best interest, about whom you might retain doubts and suspicions.
 - ❖ If you choose to believe Genesis 3:1-6, then let's journey back to the garden of Eden, as a serpent is talking with Eve, one of the first humans.
 - ❖ The serpent did not attack the existence of God, the wisdom of God, or the power of God. He attacked the *character* of God. This new narrative, this insinuation, was that God wants what's best *for God*. *Not* what's best *for you*. God wants to keep you down, not to be like Him.
 - ❖ Meanwhile, the opposite was and is true. God wants to lift us up and, in fact, created us to be living expressions of His being.
- Since Eve and Adam could evidently serve their own interests better than *God* would (have you ever believed that?), they bit the bait and they ate. Their actions showed what they believed.

KEY SCRIPTURE: Hebrews 11:3, 6, 13 & 16

- ❖ Reading on to v.13 of Hebrews 11 could stop a person in their tracks: "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth."
- ❖ What?! And verse 16: "But now they desire a better...a heavenly country. Therefore, God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared for them a city."
- ❖ We prefer what we pray about, what we believe God for, to be resolved today or tomorrow, next week. Or *at least* within our lifetime. Yet this chapter of Hebrews tells us it might not be so. Our belief in God might not be proven out while we are still on this earth. Are we ok with that? Can you still say "I Believe"?
- ❖ In I Corinthians 15:19 the apostle Paul said, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable." If we are going to believe in God and in what God is doing, we can't limit the scope of our belief to a year, or a lifetime, or a locality.
- ❖ Romans 10:8-11 gives these directions: Believe in your heart. Confess with your mouth.
- ❖ Can we do that? Are you ready to do that? Today, right now, let God do a spiritual work in you. Let God activate His word down deep inside you through an operation of His Spirit. Believe in your heart, confess it with your mouth, demonstrate it by baptism, live it with your life, live it strong, live it on into glory.
- ❖ I Believe!

DISCUSSION/REFLECTION TOOLS

1. What are some absolutes that you believe about God from His word? Share and exhort one another to have/demonstrate faith.
2. Romans 4:3 says, "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." What do Hebrews 11:8-10 and Genesis 12:1-5 teach us about how faith looks/acts?
3. How long are you (should you be) willing to wait for your faith to be answered by visible results? Share/Discuss.

PRAYER TIME

Lord, I believe. Help my unbelief and help me to be patient in faith. In Jesus' name, amen.

Start-up: Have you ever had to depend on someone you had mistreated in the past? If you had to, would you be able to trust them? Why or why not?

WEEK OF SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 2022

NOTES

Meditate as you read through/listen to this week's message. If it helps, use symbols for your notes.

✓ (Reminds me/Confirms) 💡 (New idea) ☁️ (Think about)

! (Do this) ❤️ (Speaks to my heart) ↔️ (Must share)

PRAYER NEEDS/THANKSGIVINGS

Go deeper with your Life Group family.
CONNECT-REFLECT-DISSECT THE WORD
Your Life Group ~ Your Lifeline