

Deepening our Relationship with God

Day 9

“For I have given them the words that you gave me, . . .and they have believed that you sent me” John 17:8

“I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me Through their word, that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me” John 17:20-21

Key Thought: God has given us Words we are to BELIEVE in!

Our beliefs have a dramatic impact on our lives. We hold a belief when we are convinced that something is true or right. Our beliefs determine how we interact with and experience reality. For example, what we believe about gravity dramatically impacts whether we are willing to walk off the edge of a cliff or not. This example reveals that our beliefs, whether true and right or false and wrong, have very different consequences and outcomes. Therefore, it is important that all, or as many of our beliefs as possible, align with what is true and right in reality.

The word BELIEVE is arguably the most important word in the Bible. The Greek word πιστις, translated as a verb “believe” and as a noun “faith” means to “accept”, to be “assured”, or to “trust” completely that something is “true.” According to John 17:20-21 Jesus Christ asked the Father, “that the whole world may believe that (He) had sent (Him).” To Jesus, what people in the world believed about Him was imperative. Why?

Our ability to have a relationship with God is based solely on what we believe. God lives in perfect righteousness in relationship toward us. In order for us to be in relationship with God we must be righteous as well. The bad news is, none of us is righteous. So, how does unrighteous humanity obtain righteousness? The exact same way Abraham did! Genesis 15:6 says that “(Abraham) **believed the Lord**, and He counted it to him as righteousness.” The foundation of Abraham’s relationship with God was his belief, his acceptance, his assurance, his complete trust in God.

In most areas of life we receive what is due for our work. We are due a paycheck based on the hours of work we do at a job. We are due a grade based on the work we put into studying for a test. In contrast, according to Romans 4:5, in our relationship with God we “do NOT work but **believe in**

Him who justifies the ungodly” in order to be counted as “righteous.” Righteousness can only be obtained from God as a gift as a result of our belief in Jesus’ work on the cross. Romans 3:22 says, “the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe.” Jesus Christ has done all the work necessary for us to be in relationship with God! And just like Abraham, at the moment we believe, righteousness is “counted” to us (Romans 4:22-25).

One of the most popular uses of the word BELIEVE is found in John 3:16 where Jesus said, “For God so love the world, that He gave His only Son, that ***whoever believes in Him*** should not perish but have eternal life.” This verse is profound because it so simply communicates what is required to have a right relationship with God. What “truth” do we need to believe? To accept? To be assured of? To trust completely? We must . . . 1) Believe that God EXISTS, LOVES us, and wants a RELATIONSHIP with us, 2) Believe that our SIN destroys our relationship with Him, 3) Believe that Jesus Christ was born as a man, lived a sinless (righteous) life, was crucified and died on the cross to pay the penalty for our sins, was buried in a tomb for 3 days, resurrected back to life, and ascended into heaven, 4) Believe that Jesus death provides FORGIVENESS for our sin and restores RIGHT RELATIONSHIP with Him.

By sending Jesus Christ, God has done all that is necessary for you to be in a relationship with Him, now it’s up to you to BELIEVE!

Questions to Ponder

1. What are some obstacles that prevent you from believing in Jesus?
2. What are some ways people try to earn a right relationship with God rather than simply believe?

Possible Prayer Points

1. Thank God for sending Jesus Christ to do all the work necessary for you to have a relationship with Him.
2. Express to God your belief in who Jesus Christ is and what He has done for you.

How do you think you should relate with God as a result of Him trying to relate to you in this way?