



“Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you...” Matthew 28:20

Church of Christ • 13800 S. 4080 Road • P.O. Box 527 • Oologah, Oklahoma 74053

“If Thou Believest with All Thine Heart...”

Chuck Northrop

The Spirit of God directed Philip, the evangelist, to preach Jesus to the Ethiopian eunuch, and as he explained a quote from Isaiah 53, the eunuch asked, “See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?” Philip responded, “If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God” (Acts 8:26-37). As a result, the eunuch was baptized into Christ.

A casual reading of the Bible reveals the need for all men to believe. The Scriptures are clear, but what must a person believe, and what does belief entail?

Because of current misconceptions, it is necessary to define what it means to believe. Many in the religious world say faith or belief is accepting something without evidence. However, a basic definition of biblical faith is “firm conviction based upon being persuaded.” Persuasion results from evidence and not simple acceptance. Also, sometimes people define faith and belief differently, but both are from the same Koine Greek word and therefore synonymous. They are only different in how they are employed within a sentence.

Faith and belief are used in three basic ways in the Bible. Sometimes the words are used in the sense of trust. After hearing Philip teach about what God said in prophecy, the eunuch trusted in God for his salvation. In addition, faith is used of fidelity which is demonstrated by loyalty and being true to God. The eunuch desired to know God’s will and showed good fidelity by obeying it. Faith and belief are also used in reference to what God teaches. In Acts

6:7 “a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.” In other words, they obeyed what God taught through the men appointed by the apostles as did the eunuch.

Believing in God is the most basic place to begin in answering the question, “What must a person believe?” Hebrews 11:6 states, “But without faith *it is* impossible to please *him*: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and *that* he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.” It would be foolish to think a person could approach God in prayer or worship if they do not believe in God. To believe God exists is fundamental for anyone to approach Him. It does not make sense for anyone to come to God if they do not believe in Him. Though “God is a Spirit” (John 4:24), and “no man hath seen God at any time” (John 1:18), yet He is real and has provided abundant evidence for His existence. In fact, so much evidence has been provided, men “are without excuse” (Romans 1:20).

Also notice in Hebrews 11:6, a person who comes to God must believe “He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.” Without the desire for the rewards God provides, there is no reason or motivation to seek Him. Please note this is not a casual seeking but an earnest effort in seeking God. As a result, God rewards all who “diligently seek Him” with a “great recompence of reward” (Hebrews 10:35), but He also rewards the disobedient with “a just recompence of reward” (Hebrews 2:2). The determination of which type of reward is each person’s choice. Let us determine to follow the example of Moses who “had respect unto the recompence of the reward” (Hebrews 11:26).

Another concept associated with belief and faith is knowing Jesus is the Christ. John in his gospel record clearly stated his purpose in writing: “that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name” (John 20:31). Throughout his gospel account, individuals came to believe through the signs and wonders Jesus did and John recorded (John 20:30). Often a careful reader can see the process of coming to believe in Jesus as the Christ of God.

From John 20:31, not only did John teach Jesus is the Christ, he taught men to believe Jesus is the Son of God. Because of the law of biogenesis, a son has the characteristics of his father. A human father has a human son. A Divine Father has a Divine Son. To believe Jesus is the Son of God is to believe Jesus is Divine. He is God. Paul stated, “For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily” (Colossians 2:9). Jesus is not partially God; He is fully and completely God. Jesus is the Word (John 1:14), “and the Word was God” (John 1:1). Jesus declared, “for if ye believe not that I am *he*, ye shall die in your sins” (John 8:24). Notice the “*he*” is in italics indicating it was supplied by the translators. What Jesus taught the Pharisees on that occasion is except you believe that I AM, you will die in your sins. “I AM” is a declaration of Deity. A person cannot be saved without believing in the Deity of Jesus.

Many in the denominational/sectarian world claim they “want to be saved like the thief on the cross” (Luke 23:41-43). However, the thief on the cross could not believe what is required of all men to believe under the New Testament age. The very passage “faith only”

advocates use to promote this false doctrine teaches belief in the resurrected Christ. How could the thief believe God raised Jesus from the dead since he died before His resurrection? In Romans 10:9-10 Paul exhorted, “That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.” The same is also taught in 1 Thessalonians 4:14 which says, “For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.”

To be sure these five concepts of belief (God is; God rewards; Jesus is Christ; Jesus is Deity; Jesus arose) compliment and explain each other. Jesus said, “ye believe in God, believe also in me” (John 14:1). One evidence Jesus is “declared to be the Son of God” is “the resurrection from the dead” (Romans 1:4). Since He arose, then all men can be assured He is the Christ, the Son of God. Do you believe?

Within Scripture there are two types of belief. One type of belief is that of the devils or demons (James 2:19). They clearly believe and because they are spirit-beings probably have a better understanding of these concepts. However, they do not act upon their belief by submitting to the will of God. Instead, they rebel against God, and thereby tremble in their dead faith. The other type of belief is the faith of Abraham and Rahab who acted upon their faith by submission to God (James 2:21-26). The first type of faith, the devils’ faith, does not save, but the type of faith Abraham and Rahab had saves because it is a living faith and complies with what is required of men.

Which type of faith do you have? It is a choice only you can make. Do you want to have a faith like the devils or do you want to have a faith like Abraham? If like Abraham, then act upon your faith as Abraham acted upon his faith by conforming to God’s will. Please be assured, only the latter type of faith come with the promise of eternal life. Jesus said, “He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him” (John 3:36).

Interesting Quote from the forefathers of the United States:

“In answer to a letter of inquiry whether he was the author of the following sentiment: ‘That I am a firm believer in the religion of Jesus Christ and the Holy Scriptures as the Word of God, is not a virtue of mine. I imbibed it at my mother’s breast and can no more divest myself of it than I can of my nature,’ he writes: ‘The statement which you say you have seen credited to be

(the above), and which you copy, is not, I think, any reproduction of anything I have ever said, and yet all that it implies as to religious impressions derived from a faithful Christian mother is true.” – Benjamin Harrison, twenty-third President of the United States. (Page 216; S.A. Northrop)

Observations and Concerns

November 23, 2022

Welcome Visitors! It is our pleasure and honor to welcome you.

“Praise the LORD; for the LORD *is* good: sing praises unto his name; for *it is* pleasant” (Psalm 135:3).

Expression of Gratitude: “Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Ephesians 5:20).

Just a reminder: The fifth Wednesday evening *Singing* in next Wednesday, November 30.

Remember in Prayer:

- ▶ *Bill Dilks* has finished his cancer treatments. His blood counts are very low, and he is not permitted to have visitors at this time.
- ▶ *Ed Dindy*, father of Tia Swearingen, has been diagnosed with cancer.
- ▶ *Amanda Georgakis*, friend of Sherry Carmona, has breast cancer, and it has metastasized to her spine.



We hope and pray everyone has a safe and enjoyable *Thanksgiving* with family and friends. It is truly a wonderful and blessed holiday to be with loved ones of the present and to remember loved ones of the past. We have much for which to be thankful. Though we celebrate Thanksgiving once a year, God’s people ought always to be thankful for His bountifully rich provisions. We are thankful for each one of you. – CN

Schedule of Services	Assignments		
	Wednesday, Nov. 23	Sunday, Nov. 27 AM	Sunday, Nov. 27 PM
Sundays			
Announcements	Russ Earl	Chris Nelson	Chuck Northrop
Bible Classes. . . 9:30 AM			
Song Leader	Doyle Jackson	Ross Swearingen	Doyle Jackson
Worship 10:30 AM			
Prayer	Chuck Northrop	Chuck Northrop	Russ Earl
Worship 5:00 PM			
Lord’s Supper (speaker)		Doyle Jackson	Paul Praschnik
Wednesdays			
Lord’s Supper		Chris Nelson	
Bible Classes. . . 7:00 PM			
Lesson	Chris Nelson	Russ Earl	Chris Nelson
Website: oologahcofc.org			
	Prayer / Door Attendant	Ross Swearingen	Paul Praschnik
			Ross Swearingen