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#### Service Times

##### Sunday

Bible Class: 9:30 A.M.  
Worship: 10:30 A.M. & 5 P.M.  
Sonshiners: 4:45pm

##### Wednesday

Bible Study: 7 P.M.

##### Preacher:

Russ Earl

##### AM Sermon:

Construction of a Christian- part 4  
(Acts 16:25-34)

##### PM Sermon

Jeremiahs' Cry (Jeremiah 2)

##### Sunday AM Bible Class:

Nehemiah – R. Earl

##### Wednesday Bible Class:

Nahum - R. Earl

##### The Gospel of Christ TV Program

on Saturday @ 7:30am on Channel 53

##### BibleWayMediaMedia.org

Daily podcasts available on our website  
& mobile app

The Oologah church of Christ only uses  
the **KJV, NKJV or ASV** translation of  
the Bible in classes & sermons.

## The Oologah Informer

### September 6<sup>th</sup>

#### Thoughts from the Preacher

##### **“Hoarder of Feelings”**

Life has many challenges, to say the least. One of those challenges is letting go of feelings caused by unsavory events in the past. Letting go of the hurt and hard feeling is difficult to do. However, by holding on to such feeling's life will be full of pain and sadness. If you want to have a better life one must learn not to be a hoarder of feelings.

#### **“Believing” in John 3:16**

##### **Part 6 of 6**

By Eric Lyons

#### **A CRITICAL FIGURE OF SPEECH TO CONSIDER**

If Bible students fail to recognize the inspired writers' use of various figures of speech, it will be impossible to correctly understand many sections of Scripture. Just as English-speaking Americans are expected to properly interpret metaphors (“Life is a rollercoaster”), sarcasm (“You don’t say”), and hyperbolic expressions (“I’m so hungry I could eat a horse”), Bible students must also be aware that Scripture contains many figures of speech—“They’re everywhere!”

One common figure of speech (which has a not-so-common name) is known as synecdoche: where a part is put for the whole, or the whole for the part. A person showing off his car might say, “Check out my wheels.” “Wheels” are relatively small parts of the car yet the term is used to refer to the entire car. A military leader might refer to how many “boots they have on the ground,” when he is actually emphasizing the soldiers in the boots.

Bible writers also used synecdoche. For example, to “break bread” was a common, ancient synecdoche where “bread” (“a part”) was put for all of the food and drink that would be consumed at a common meal (“the whole”). After the establishment of the Church, “the breaking of bread” also came to stand for the entirety of the Lord’s Supper (where consumption of both the unleavened bread and the fruit of the vine is actually meant—Acts 2:42; 20:7).

So what does all of this have to do with “believing”? Simply that the verb “believe” and the nouns “belief” and “believer” are often used as synecdoches. A real, saving faith certainly begins with the critically important step of coming to “to consider” or “to think” (i.e., “to believe”) Jesus is truly the Son of God, but a biblical, God-approved complete “belief” in Jesus means so much more than merely coming to the mental conclusion that Jesus is the Divine Savior. A biblical believer confesses His belief in Jesus (Romans 10:9-10; 1 John 4:15). He repents of His sins (Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38; 22:16). He is baptized into Christ (John 3:5; Acts 2:38; 22:16). A real believer “obeys”—both on his way to becoming a complete “believer” (i.e., a Christian) and after he

becomes a child of God (John 3:36; Hebrews 5:9; 11:6; 1 John 2:3-5; 5:1-5; Revelation 2:10). Though all these elements are involved in faithfully following Jesus, true followers of Christ are often referred to as just “believers.”

When thousands of non-Christians in Acts 2 heard the Gospel preached by the apostles and were “cut to the heart,” they asked, “Men and brethren, what shall we do?” (Acts 2:37). “Then Peter said to them, ‘Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins’” (vs. 38). “Then those who gladly received his word were baptized.... And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers” (2:41-42). What word did the Bible writer use to describe these who (a) repented, (b) were baptized, and (c) continued in the apostles doctrine, etc.? What were these obedient followers of Christ called? They are referred to as those “who believed” (2:44). Were they mere “consenters” to Christ? No. They became “believers,” and were “continuing” to remain “believers” (2:42-47). That is, they were actively following Christ. They were obedient to Him.

When a pagan Philippian jailor once asked Paul and Silas, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” (Acts 16:30), God’s spokesmen replied: “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household” (vs. 31). Is coming to “believe” (i.e., “know about”) Jesus necessary? Absolutely. Nothing else matters if a person doesn’t first come to recognize Who Jesus is and what He has done for him. Thus, the apostles then “spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house” (vs. 32). Then, “he and all his family were baptized” (v. 33). Interestingly, as in Acts 2, the Bible does not refer to them as actually “having believed in God” until after they were baptized (vs. 34).

A synecdoche is a very real figure of speech that has been used throughout history, including in Bible times. The fact is, regarding the salvation of sinners, the sum total of the God-given conditions to be saved are oftentimes indicated by the use of one or two. And, as D.R. Dungan noted, “Generally the first is mentioned—that of faith—because without it nothing else could follow.” The Bible writers could have referred to God’s children as “repenters,” “confessors,” or “immersed ones,” but much of the time they reasonably referred to them simply as those who “believed.”

## **CONCLUSION**

In one respect—in the preliminary sense of the word—to “believe” in Jesus means to mentally acknowledge that He is the Son of God and man’s one and only Savior. A John 3:16-type of saving-faith certainly includes this sense of believing, but it also comprises much more. It includes trusting in the lifted-up Savior (3:14-15), rejecting darkness, coming to the light, and doing deeds of truth (3:19-21), being “born again...of water and the Spirit” (3:3,5), and obeying the Son (3:36). Becoming a “believer” in the full sense of the word is to completely put one’s trust in the Savior: not merely to “acknowledge” Him, but to follow Him wherever He leads—including to confess Him publicly, to repent of sin, to be immersed in water, and then to live daily as an obedient servant of the King, “even to the point of death” (Revelation 2:10, NIV). As Jesus said in John 12:25-26: “He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also. If anyone serves Me, him My Father will honor.”