



John 1:6-18 What is Biblical Belief?

Many think *BIBLICAL BELIEF* is nothing more than simply believing Jesus existed, died for sin, & rose from the dead.

Today we discover why belief in Jesus is so much more!

John 1:6-8 (CSB) ⁶ There was **a man sent from God** whose name was **John**. ⁷ He came as a witness to testify about the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸ He was not the light, but **he came to testify about the light**.

John - was a man sent from God. John, mentioned here, is NOT the author of this text, but is referring to John 'the baptist'. John had an important task that others didn't have - a forerunner to announce the coming King.

"**He was not the light**", but was sent from God to point others to **the light**.

🌑 John was a lot like *the moon*, having no light in and of itself but simply reflecting the light from the sun. So John the baptist **was not the light**, but he came to reflect 'the light'.

John's purpose was to point others to **the light, so that all might believe through him**.

🔍 **Believe** is **used 98 times in John's Gospel** (compared to 241 times in the entire New Testament). The term for **believe** (Greek *pisteuō*) = TOTAL TRUST. John has come to point people to **the light**, to **BELIEVE** in him.

John 1:9-11 (CSB) ⁹ The **true light** that gives light to everyone, **was coming into the world**. ¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world was created through him, and yet the world did not recognize him. ¹¹ He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him.

When Jesus, **the true light** (aka "the Word") came to the world **HE created**, the world (people on the planet) **did not recognize him**. And even though his own Jewish people were actively looking for their Messiah, they **did not receive him**.

- **This is the first time this gospel mentions His rejection**, but it will not be the last, (John shows Jesus being rejected by many of his own Jewish people over and over again.)
- Thankfully, that's not true of all Jewish people. This 2000 year old text from 6000 miles away, now in your language, is because some of **his own DID** receive Jesus. We should be grateful for the faithful Jewish folks who helped bring US the message!

John 1:12-13 (CSB) ¹² But to all who did receive him, **he gave them the right to be children of God**, to **those who believe in his name**, ¹³ who were born, not of natural descent, or of the will of the flesh, or of the will of man, but of God.

How does one become a child of God? Some say ALL people are "children of God". But this is EXACTLY what John says is NOT the case. A person is NOT a child of God because they are born physically.

From a biblical point of view, *while all people ARE God's Creation, but not all are God's Children*. (See John 3 - we are not BORN as children of God, but we are REBORN or BORN AGAIN as children of God.)

How does one become a CHILD of God? Those who will **believe in his name** (Jesus), are **given the right to be children of God**. To believe in his name means to trust in Him and His authority - WHO He is and WHAT He says.

- Sadly, many Christians have made this out to be nothing more than simply believing Jesus existed and that he died on a cross to pay for our sins, but it doesn't lead to obedience & life transformation.

BIBLICAL BELIEF = TRUST & OBEY

If you do not obey, you do not truly Biblically BELIEVE.

If you BELIEVE, you TRUST, and if you TRUST, then you OBEY what God says.

YOUR NOTES

Look how John notes in another letter he wrote.

1 John 3:10 (NET) ¹⁰ By this the **children of God** and the children of the devil are revealed [NAS *obvious*]: Everyone who does not practice righteousness—the one who does not love his fellow Christian—is not of God.

🔄 **SELF-TEST:** *Are you a **CHILD of GOD**?* Do you really BELIEVE?

BIBLICAL BELIEF = TRUST & OBEY

John has kept his audience in suspense long enough. It is time for the big reveal!

John 1:14 (CSB) **The Word became flesh and dwelt among us...**

Luke 2:11 (CSB) Today in the city of David a **Savior** was born for you, who is the **Messiah, the Lord**.

THE BIG REVEAL

John 1:14-18 (CSB) ¹⁴ **The Word became flesh and dwelt among us.** We observed his glory, the glory as the one and **only Son from the Father**, full of grace and truth. ¹⁵ (John testified concerning him and exclaimed, "This was the one of whom I said, 'The one coming after me ranks ahead of me, because he existed before me.' ") ¹⁶ Indeed, we have all received grace upon grace from his fullness, ¹⁷ for the law was given through Moses; **grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.** ¹⁸ No one has ever seen God. **The one and only Son, who is himself God and is at the Father's side—he has revealed him.**

You might remember that John the baptist was a cousin of Jesus - born 6 months before Jesus was born (Luke 1:36). Yet John declares that Jesus "**ranks ahead of me, because he existed before me.**" How could THAT be?

"The Word," "the Light," the Creator of all things, "the only Son from the Father"....is **Jesus Christ** (Christ means 'messiah' - Hebrew term for 'anointed').

THIS is the ONE who came from heaven, was BORN and grew up as a human child, who has **revealed** God's **grace and truth** to us. THAT is why Jesus came to earth and THAT is what Christmas is all about.

THIS is the ONE that John the apostle was writing about and the ONE whom John the baptist was heralding - ***that we might believe in Jesus the Messiah!*** And...

BIBLICAL BELIEF = TRUST & OBEY

An Old Hymn. In 1886 when the composer of the music, Daniel B. Towner (1850-1919), was the music leader during one of Dwight L. Moody's famous revivals.

*"One night a young man rose in a testimony meeting and said, 'I am not quite sure—but I am going to trust, and I am going to obey.'"*⁷

TRUST & OBEY (by John H. Sammis, 1887)

Trust and obey, for there's no other way
To be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey.

FEET2FAITH

- When you are tempted to do wrong...will you TRUST & OBEY?
- When you are tempted to bypass doing what is right...will you TRUST & OBEY?
- Will you **READ the letter of 1 John** sometime during this Christmas break (maybe several times)?

* **Want to talk further?** Please contact **Jackie** (850-673-1582), **Justin** (704-618-6144), or another follower of Jesus soon! Or call our **deacons & wives:** Fain & Linda Poppell, Tom & Martha Waddail, Steve & Debbie Bass, Freddy & Joyce Howard, Jere & Darlene Burnette, Alan & Christy Androski, Willy & Melissa Gamalero.

YOUR NOTES

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What challenged or encouraged you from today's teaching?
2. **Read John 1:6-8.** How does thinking of John the Baptist being like the moon, and Jesus as the sun, help you to appreciate what John came to do? What are some practical ways that WE can point others to the LIGHT of Jesus in our daily practices?
3. **Read John 1:9-11.** How is it that many of the Jewish people did NOT recognize Jesus as Messiah? What are some preconceived ideas WE might have that keep us from trusting Jesus of the Scriptures as well?
4. What would you say to the person who says, "The Jewish people missed their Messiah," and blames the Jewish people for Jesus' death? (Remember that the 1st followers of Jesus were all Jewish.)
5. **Read John 1:12-13 and 1 John 3:10.** How would you respond to a person who tries to justify a sinful life yet says, "*All I have to do to go to heaven is BELIEVE in Jesus?*" How do the Scriptures (based on today's BIG TRUTH - *Biblical Belief = Trust & Obey*), help you better answer someone like this?
6. **Read John 1:14-18** and discuss the incredible claims about WHO Jesus is.
7. Consider reading 1 chapter from 1 John (another of John's letters near the end of the New Testament) everyday, and then contact a same-sex Christian to discuss what questions you have or insights you have gained.
8. Share any prayer needs and PRAY TOGETHER!