

# John: Believe

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You might have noticed that it appears there is a lot different in John's gospel and the previous gospels. In fact, they to Matthew, Mark and Luke are the synoptic gospels; meaning they are very similar. It is almost as if you reading the same material. It's like John is the other guy. In fact, over 90% of John's material is completely unique to him. If Mark was the story teller, then John was definitely the theologian. He loves giving lengthy discourses about Jesus. He loves diving deeply into theology. John's gospel is very simplistic to understand the big picture. When you start digging into it, there are very, very deep things when it comes to John. Some of the other gospel writers would write about Jesus being God and King and would write it in somewhat of a mystery. You had to read into it to see the really big theme. John just comes right out and says it. Jesus is God who became a man and King. John's big message, what he really wants, is for us to believe in Jesus Christ as our God and our King. When reading some of the other gospels, you have to really dig out the theme. You read it and wonder what the theme is; what they really want you to see from it. With John, you don't have to wonder because right off the bat he tells us exactly what he is doing in his gospel. He tells us his purpose for writing his gospel. In John chapter 20:24-31, we see an encounter with Thomas and we will see the main point of John's gospel. It is after the resurrection and Jesus has already showed up to the apostles.

## Scripture

***"Now Thomas, one of the Twelve, called the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see in his hands the mark of the nails, and place my finger into the mark of the nails, and place my hand into his side, I will never believe." Eight days later, his disciples were inside again, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side. Do not disbelieve, but believe." Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed." Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name."***

Here is where we get John's point; the whole reason he wrote his gospel. He does it right after the account with Thomas. Jesus shows up to His disciples after the resurrection. He goes through a locked door and shows up as the risen Lord and Savior and they believed. Thomas was not there. They tell Thomas they had seen Jesus and He is the Lord. It isn't that Thomas doubts, Thomas doesn't believe! Thomas is a nonbeliever at this point. He denies it and said there is no way he will believe until he actually sees Jesus. Eight days later Jesus reveals himself to Thomas. He shows Himself, He shows the marks, and He proves He is the risen Lord and Savior. Jesus said, "Do not disbelieve, but believe." And Thomas said, "My Lord and my God." It like Thomas looks in the face of Jesus and says you are the Lord of the universe and you are also my God. Jesus doesn't rebuke him, but says, you see and believe, but there will people who don't see and will believe, and they are going to be blessed by believing. John is

the beloved disciple. He was in the inner circle with Jesus. And he says, here is my whole point in writing my book; to believe in Jesus. He wants us to be a believer. He goes further and says, I don't just want you to believe, but by believing, I want you to have life in His name.

When it comes to the gospel of John, we see three reactions to Jesus when He does something:

- 1. Unbelief**
- 2. Head Belief**
- 3. True Belief**

The unbelievers (mainly the Pharisees and the religious people) just don't believe in Jesus, they deny Him and want to kill Him. And they do kill Him. Then, there are those with 'head' belief. In the end of chapter 2, Jesus said, they believe in Me, but I will not entrust Myself to them because I know what is in them. In other words, they believe in Jesus, but they believe because of the signs. They don't have true belief. They don't have saving belief that leads to life in His name. They believe the signs of Jesus and certain things about Jesus, but they are not be true believers. John really wants us to see that there is a difference in believing in Jesus and being a true believer in Jesus. That takes us to the third reaction of true belief. When they believe in Christ, it leads to life in His name.

## **Saving Faith**

The purpose of John is to not just believe, but have saving belief that leads to life in Jesus' name. That verb, *pisteuo*, means faith. But the verb form means 'to believe,' and more than 98 times in John's gospel, more than all of the three synoptic gospels put together, he only uses the verb form. He wants us to know that he wants us to believe and wants our belief to be action in the Savior; to believe and have life in His name.

So what does it mean to believe, and what does it mean to really believe? There are some who believe, but who have false belief. It is not a saving belief; it is not a saving faith. What is the difference? I was reading one of

Charles Spurgeon sermons and I really like the illustration he gave. He uses a Puritan definition of belief. He said there are three things you have to have to be a believer in Christ:

1. Knowledge
2. Belief
3. Trust

In other words, you have to actually trust in what you believe. Spurgeon gives the illustration of a little boy on the third floor of a burning building. The little boy has the knowledge that there is a problem; the building is on fire. Now you have a strong man who comes, stands under the window, and tells the little boy to jump into his arms. Now, this little boy on the third floor becomes a believer. He believes he is in trouble and he believes that the strong man down below can save him if he will only jump. At this point, he is believing. He believes he is in trouble and that the man can save him. But if the little boy stops there, he will die in the fire because he just believe the facts; he can't just believe the strong man will save him. What does he actually have to do? He has to jump out the window and have his only hope in the person who is going to catch him below. That is saving faith. It is not just believing Jesus is God, He is Lord, He will catch me, He will save me; I believe all of that. No, it is you actually jumping out of the window into your Savior's arms and trusting Him to save you as your only hope for salvation. That is what true faith is; it leads to life change.

The majority of America believes in God, yet we would say the American culture is not Christian. There is a gap between belief and true faith; true following after Jesus. Hopefully, some of you will see through John's gospel that though you believe, you do not have life in His name. You can't just say you believe, but you have to actually jump out of the window into the Savior's arms. Trust in the living Savior, and have that same declaration that He is your God and your Savior and you are believing in Him.

The first thing that John makes no bones about is in the prologue in chapter 1:1, and that is Jesus is God. He is God who became a man. Now,

'Newsweek' recently came out with a thirty page article called The Bible: So Misunderstood It's a Sin. One of the critiques from the writer was that one of the things so called Fundamentalist Christians believe is that Jesus is God, yet the Bible never says that. He said that there is no verse in all of Scripture that says Jesus is God, or this thought of the trinity. Our culture at large, especially the elites, want to say the Bible never says Jesus is God; it is just something we just sort of made up. Think about that perspective as we dive into John, because I would argue that the whole gospel of John makes no sense if Jesus is not God. It makes no sense whatsoever. John doesn't want to hide it or have mystery to the end, so right off the bat, he says that Jesus is God, Savior and King. He says in verse 1-5, "*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.*" John is taking the Jewish audience back to Genesis, "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth." What John is saying is that in the beginning, "*...the Word;*" he is putting the Word as God. But then, he makes it even more explicit. He says the Word was with God, so He is face to face with God, He is in relation with God, and He is distinct from God. But then comes that really weighted line, and the Word was God. John is claiming that the Word, the **logos**, (who we see is a person because he says *he*) was "with God" and He "was God." But to keep us from suspense, he tells us in verse 14, "*And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us. We have seen His glory, glory as of the only son from the Father, full of grace and truth.*" Who is the Word? The Word is Jesus. He is saying that Jesus was with God in the beginning. He was face to face in a relationship with God, and here comes the kicker; He was God. Jesus was with God and Jesus is God. We understand this by the Doctrine of the Trinity. God is Three in One; Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The Three are equally Deity; equally, the One true Living God. He goes even further in verse 18, saying, "*No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, He has made Him*

*known.*" So John actually calls Jesus the only God, who is at God the Father's right hand side, has made Him known. So Jesus, who is God, has come to make God the Father known to us. It is very explicit what John believes, without a doubt, is what Thomas declared at the end of the book: *"My Lord and my God."* Jesus is not just a good guy, a good teacher, a great prophet, or some guy who did some good stuff. He is Lord and He is God.

But He is not only God, He is Savior. Because John tells us that the first thing that John the Baptist says about Jesus when he sees Him is, *"Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world."* So Jesus is God, but he is also the Lamb. He is the Savior who is going to take away the sins of the world.

Then we see followers begin to follow Jesus with Andrew, Peter, and Phillip. They confess he is the Messiah, but Nathanael doesn't quite believe Him. So Jesus shows up to Nathanael and Nathanael confesses that He is the Son of God and the King of the Jews.

So right in the first chapter, we see that John is packing it full. He says Jesus is God, He is Savior, and He is King. The rest of the book is written to show us that He is those things. John wants us to see and believe who Jesus is. So how is he going to do this? Primarily, he does this by giving us seven signs and seven "I am" statements that show what Jesus did and who Jesus said He was.

## **Seven Signs**

### **1. Jesus Changes Water into Wine**

In chapter 2, Jesus goes to a wedding in Cana and He changes water into wine. I don't know if you have ever tried this before, but it doesn't work. Go home and try it, you can't do this. You can pray over it, but you can't do it. That is the point, only the God-man can do this. The reason He did this was to show His glory to His followers.

Immediately after that, he goes to the temple. A lot of us say that He cleansed the temple, when really, He condemned the temple. He tells them there is a new temple, and you are going to destroy it and it will be raised again. He is speaking of His body. There is a new meeting place between God and man; that is Himself, the God-man, Jesus Christ. After that, because of the sign of water to wine, there are many who believe in Him. They believe in His name. But in verse 23, John said, "*But Jesus on His part did not entrust Himself to them, because He knew all people and needed no one to bear witness about man, for He Himself knew what was in man.*" So they believed, but Jesus didn't entrust Himself to them because they didn't have saving faith, they didn't have true faith. They didn't really believe in Him as Lord and God and 'jump off the building' into the Saviors arms.

In chapter the last verse of chapter 2, it says Jesus didn't trust them because He knew what was in man. But notice in chapter 3, it says, "*Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus.*" I am thinking, ok, so He knows what is in man, so maybe there is a problem with man. And then John goes directly to Nicodemus; there was a man named Nicodemus. Why does he do that? I believe it was to show that Nicodemus is the one guy who is righteous, the one guy who has it all together. In other words, if there is one man who should get it, it is Nicodemus. He is like the good guy, the righteous guy. Nicodemus said, you're a teacher, you're a great guy, and I want to learn from you. Jesus said, look, you must be born again to see the kingdom of God. So right off the bat, we have the best man on the scene, and Jesus told him that even though everyone assumes you are ok, and you assume you are ok, there is a fundamental thing that is wrong with you. It is not about what you have done, it is about who you are. You have a wrong birth. You were born into the wrong kingdom. In order to see the Kingdom of God, you need a new birth. You see, it is not just what you have done, but it is how you were born. We were born into the wrong kingdom. Trying harder is not what we need. What we need is a new birth. There is a fundamental problem within us, we need a new birth.

How do we get a new birth? Jesus tells Nicodemus. He said, I will be lifted up, and you need to look and believe in me, in fact, "*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.*" Jesus tells him, you need to believe in Me, Nicodemus. Those who believe in Me are saved; those who don't believe in Me, the wrath of God remains on them.

Next he goes into chapter 4 to a sinful Samaritan woman. So you go from a man, a Pharisee who is supposedly righteous, to a woman from Samaria who is sinful. Not only do we have a wrong birth, but we have distorted desires that come from that wrong birth. Jesus shows up to this woman and engages her in conversation; hey, can I have something to drink. Of course she is taken aback because Jesus shouldn't be talking to her. There are cultural differences there, and she was lower than him on a cultural level. Jesus said, look, if you knew My gift, if you knew who I was, you would ask water from Me, and I would give you Living Water. If you drank of this water, you would never thirst again. What is Jesus telling her? You have thirst and your thirst isn't getting quenched. Then, He brings up her past. He asks about her husbands. She told him she didn't have one. Jesus said, you are right, you have actually had five husbands and the guy you are living with right now isn't your husband. What He is saying that you have had desires that have led to relationships to try to quench those desires. It has led you to a lifestyle of sin. Now you are living with a man in a sinful lifestyle and you still aren't being quenched. You still have to come and get more water. He is using her physical thirst to point to her deep spiritual need. She has desires, and she is trying to fulfil those desires. The problem is that she can't have them quenched in sin, because sin can never satisfy her soul. Her soul was meant for the One she is looking at right now. Her soul was meant to find her thirst quenched in the Lord Jesus Christ. The same is true with us. We are born with wrong desires. We want all those longings in our heart to be quenched. We want to be satisfied. We want to be happy. We want to have pleasure. We want to have joy. We run into all kinds of broken cisterns that can't hold water. But



Jesus is saying I am Living Water; come to Me and drink, and I will fill all of your thirst. So we see Nicodemus has a wrong birth. We have wrong desires. Our desires are supposed to be pointing us to the Lord Jesus.

## **2. Jesus Heals the Officer's Son**

### **3. Jesus Heal the Paralytic**

Then he shows us two more signs, and I want to put them together. The first sign Jesus heals an official's son. The second sign is Jesus heals a man who has been paralyzed, an invalid for 38 years; he is in a bad state. Look at the difference in these two. The official has power, resources, and able to do things for himself. Then you have a 38 year invalid who can do nothing on his own; he has no power or authority. What we see in the declaration is that both of them, equally, need to trust and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. The official, no matter how powerful he is, has to believe in Jesus to get his son healed. So no matter how powerful you are, no matter how many resources you have, your only hope is Christ. Then on the other spectrum, a person who is absolutely hopeless. So no matter how down and out you are, you are in the exact same position as the official. You must also believe in the Lord Jesus Christ in order to be healed.

Then, of course, this causes all kinds of panic. The Pharisees panic because Jesus heals on the Sabbath and they call Him out on it. Jesus said, look, my Father works on the Sabbath so I also work on the Sabbath. The Jews actually accuse Jesus of making himself equal to God. The Jews look at Him and say, you are calling yourself God! Then, Jesus has a lengthy discourse to say that is exactly right. He goes into His relationship with the Father. They both share deity, they both have life in Themselves, they both judge, and they both give life. If you honor the Father, you must also honor the Son. Believing in the Son means crossing over from death to life. Jesus makes no bones about it. They accuse Him of saying that He is God, and He said, that is exactly right, and let Me give you some more details about what that means.

Then He tells the Pharisees their big problem. You search the Scriptures because you think that in them, there is eternal life. You think in religion, there is eternal life. Instead, the Scriptures point to Me, and in Me is where life is truly found. So you see, no matter how powerful or how helpless you are your only hope is in the God-man, Jesus Christ. Believing in Him is how you are going to be saved and healed forever more.

**4. Jesus Feeds 5000**

**5. Jesus Walks on Water**

Then we see two more signs. Jesus feeds 5000 people with a little boy's lunch box. Then, Jesus walks on water some four miles. These are also two things that only God can do. This is a God thing, and He is doing it in Himself. He is the God-man; He is proving that by what He does.

**6. Jesus Heals the Blind Man**

**7. Jesus Raises Lazarus from the Dead**

(We will discuss the last two signs in the next section)

## **Seven "I Am" Statements**

**1. I Am The Bread of Life**

At the feeding of the 5000, we get our first "I am" statement. In chapter 6, Jesus said, "I am the Bread of Life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger..." Jesus said this because when He goes across the sea, those 5000 He fed got hungry again, so they seek after Jesus. Imagine this, 5000 people seeking after Jesus. That is good news, right...They are seeking after Jesus. They come to Jesus. They want Jesus. They say, Jesus, we are here for You, we are seeking You. But Jesus said, you are not seeking Me; all you want is more bread because your belly is hungry. He calls them out. What He is saying is, you want your bellies to be full. But what I want you to get is that I am here to fill your hearts; I am here to fill your soul. You want more physical bread; I am the Bread of Life. If you will come to Me,

experience Me, and take part in Me, you will never be hungry again! Those deep longings of your soul, that you have been trying to quench your whole life, they will be satisfied because I am the Bread of Life. This caused all kinds of confusion among the people. He said, look, here is the deal; unless God draws you to Me, you can't come. Salvation is a God thing. John is absolutely clear about that. Then Jesus starts saying some really hard things. He said, look, if you don't eat My flesh and drink My blood, you can have no part of Me. You have 5000 people who were seeking Jesus that now turned and walk the other way. Jesus loses a crowd of 5000 people! He doesn't seem to be a good evangelist. They all leave, and it is just the twelve left. Jesus looks at Peter and asks, why are you still here? Don't you want to go with them? I love what Peter said! He said, we have nowhere else to go. You have the words of eternal life. You are the Son of God. You see, they had temporal belief in a person who was making them bread. What Peter had was true faith in the Bread of Life, in the Son of God. Therefore, he stayed when all of them left. See Jesus is telling us he is something more than just someone who is going to fix our physical problems or our physical needs. He is God, the Bread of Life, who will fill all the longings of our souls.

## **2. I Am The Light of the World**

The next "I am" statement we see is in chapter 8. Jesus said, "*I am the Light of the World. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.*" Think about that. "Light," it implies that there is darkness. In fact, one of the themes in John is that the world is in darkness; we are in darkness, and we need the light. We need Jesus, we need to see Him, and then we will see clearly. Again, this causes panic among the Pharisees. They began to question what this mean. Why is He saying He is the Light of the World? They begin to say that He is falsely testifying about Himself. So Jesus has a discourse with the Pharisees and basically, He says, hey Pharisees, you are blind. I am light, you're blind, and you don't see Me. And unless you believe, you will die in your sins. Then He tells them they are a slave to sin, and that their father is not

Abraham, not God, but is, indeed, Satan. Of course, this caused a lot of panic! They didn't like Him calling them sons of Satan.

So they get really mad at Jesus and asked Jesus questions. Jesus said, look, Abraham saw My day and he rejoiced in Me. They are like, what, how can you say that? You are not even 50 years old, Abraham has been dead a long time, so how can You say that Abraham saw You? (Notice, he saw Him.) The Pharisees are blind; they are not seeing the light. Abraham saw Jesus, He spoke of Jesus. Then Jesus said, "*Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am.*" It is a direct quote from the Old Testament when God showed up in the burning bush to Moses saying, "I am who I am." Here is Jesus looking at the Pharisees, and said, "...before Abraham was, (that was thousands of years before) I am." Jesus clearly and explicitly says, I am the "I am." I am God, who was before Abraham. Just in case 'Newsweek' missed it, just in case we miss it, the Pharisees didn't miss it; they knew what Jesus was saying. Just look at the next line, "So they picked up stones to throw at Him..." This was not a confusing statement. Jesus explicitly says I am God, and the Pharisees knew that was blasphemy so they tried to kill Him. All throughout John's gospel, Jesus explicitly says I am God, by His words and His deeds.

After that, I want you to notice the sixth sign that John tells us about is the man born blind. It is a parable here. Here are the Pharisees, they think they see, but they don't see, in fact, they are really blind. So we go to Jesus healing a man who was born blind. This man has been blind his whole life and Jesus causes him to see. And there is a lengthy discourse between the Pharisees and this blind man because they were troubled. The blind man talks to the Pharisees and said, Jesus opened my eyes, and they wondered how this could be. Jesus goes back to the blind man and asks if he believes in the Son of Man. The blind man said, who is He? Jesus said, you see Him. Think about the irony there, a blind man seeing Jesus. Then, the blind man worships Jesus! You have to picture this. Here are the Pharisees who have the Law, they have religion, they have all the resources, and a blind man is now worshipping and seeing Jesus when the

Pharisees are completely blind to the fact that the Messiah is right in front of them. He heals a blind man to show the Pharisees they were really the ones who were blind and they didn't see. Then, Jesus actually says, I came so that the blind, those who know they're in darkness, will see. Those who think they see, think they are in the light, they will actually become blind. It is an indictment on the Pharisees who assume they didn't have a problem.

What does this say about us? In order to see Jesus, we have to understand that we are blind. We have to understand we are in darkness. We have to understand that we need Him to open our eyes. We have to understand our problem before He can meet our need.

### **3. I Am the Door of the Sheep**

### **4. I Am the Good Shepherd**

Then right after this he gives the discourse about the sheep and the shepherd. We see two "I am" statements in chapter 10. Jesus said, I am the door of the sheep, whoever comes through Me is saved, and he finds pasture and salvation. Jesus said, I am the Good Shepherd; I die for My sheep. He is actually talking about the gospel, to die for His sheep. The reason we bring up this talk about the sheep is because when He is telling the Pharisees is the reason you really don't come to Me is because you are not My sheep. My sheep hear My voice. When I speak they come to Me; they know Me. You are not part of My flock. Their resistance is because they are blind, they are not part of His flock, and that is why they are not coming to Jesus. He said, those who come to Me, those who are My sheep, I have them in My hand, the Father has them in His hand, and they are forever protected in My eternal salvation. I am the Shepherd who absolutely loves, and even dies, for the sheep.

## 5. I Am the Resurrection and the Life

In chapter 11, we see the seventh sign. He raises Lazarus from the dead. This is kind of a crazy story. Lazarus is sick, (who Jesus really does love) the sisters come to Jesus, and say, hey, come save him. Jesus said, nope, I am going to wait. He tells His disciples the reason He waited is because I wanted him to die. Jesus doesn't come because He wants him to die! That sounds kind of mean! But He said, the reason I want him to die is because this whole situation is for the glory of God. How in the world is this for the glory of God? So He meets Mary and Martha on the street, and he said these words, "*I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in Me, though he die, yet shall he live, and whoever live and believes in Me shall never die.*" Lazarus is dead. He is in a tomb and Jesus is looking at his sisters and saying, I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever died and believes in me will live forever more. We have this tension; there is this dead man, and Jesus is claiming to be the resurrection from the dead. Then Jesus goes to the tomb and speaks. He said, "*Lazarus, come out,*" and Lazarus rises from the dead and walks out a new man.

Why the sign and why the statement? Jesus is telling us is the problem. We are dead. What we need is a resurrection from the dead. We also must believe in Christ. In believing in Christ; we are raised from the dead, and whoever believes in Him, though he dies, he will live forever more and reign with Christ, because Jesus is the resurrection and He is the life. In John's gospel, Jesus is doing things so He can show who He is. So He can show His glory, He allows Lazarus to die so He can tell everyone I am the life giver. If you believe in Me, you will not have eternal death, but eternal life. John is trying to get you at this point to start believing in Christ. He really wants you to believe in Christ because he knows everyone is going to die; he knows that! But even though you die, he wants you to live forever. And that will happen only through believing in the One who is the resurrection and who is the life.

## 6. I Am the Way, the Truth, and the Life

Then Jesus says I am going away, I am going to Heaven; I am going back to the Father. The disciples are like, where are you going? How do we get there? How do we find you? How can we also go to the Father? Jesus makes this bold "I am" statement in chapter 14, "*I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.*" So the disciples are panicked, and say, how do we get to Heaven, as well? Jesus said, you know the way. They say, no we don't! We have no idea. We have never been there. My GPS doesn't coordinate that; Heaven, God, no...map quest doesn't have it! Jesus said, you are looking at Him. I am the way, I am the truth, and I am the life.

Jesus is saying there is the problem. You are separated from God the Father. You are not with Him, but I am the way back to Him. I am the way back to reconciliation with God the Father, forever. Notice what He said next. You see, our culture would love this statement if we said Jesus was a way of many. We live in a pluralistic culture. We love all religions. We think all ones are equally valid. Whatever plan you have, whatever plan I have; we are all going to get to the same place. That is true by the way; it is just going to be very different when we all get there, because we will all stand before the righteous Judge and only those in Jesus will enter into God's presence. But Jesus did not say, I am a way, He said, "*I am the way, the truth, and the life.*" It is exclusive. If that is not enough, He actually goes on, "*No one comes to the Father except through Me.*" No one, no matter how deeply religious you are, how deeply secular you are, how deeply sinful, or good, there is only one way to God the Father, and that is through Jesus Christ. This is why we give to missions. This is why we send people to preach the gospel to every tribe and every tongue. Because in their native religion, they will die and go to Hell. They need Christ. It is only through Christ that they will be in the presence of the Father, and the same is true for you. Your church attendance will do nothing; it is only

Christ. Are you in Him? Do you truly believe in Him? Do you have life in His name?

## **7. I Am the Vine**

In the last "I am" statement His disciples, Jesus said, I am the vine, apart from Me, you can do nothing. He is saying that if you are a believer in Me, if you are following Me, then it means you are abiding in Me. You can't just believe in Me and then leave Me. No, your whole life is lived through Me.

In chapter 17 Jesus has this huge prayer for Himself, the apostles, and for us. But in His prayer, it is very self-centered in the beginning. He actually said, Father, restore the glory that I had with You before the world existed. No one can claim that except a God-man! That is only a claim God can make for Himself. But Jesus prayed, more than for your happiness, and your health, and your prosperity, He prays for Himself to be glorified. Why would that be? Because more than you having a good life, you need to see Jesus in His glory. It is only Jesus in His glory that will fulfill the longings of your soul. You need to see Christ in all of His glory.

Then John takes us to the cross. Though there are some more details, Jesus said, "*It is finished;*" your salvation is dealt with. John records the soldiers piercing Him in the side; blood and water spilling out, just in case someone doesn't believe Jesus really died on the cross, so John clarified it. Then, Peter and John go to the empty tomb, they saw and believed. In the upper room, the disciples see and believe. Then, we have the famous Thomas account we read. In the very end of the book, Thomas said, "*My Lord and my God.*"

Notice how the book ends. At the very beginning of John, we meet a guy named Nathanael who doubted. He did not believe until Jesus showed up and revealed Himself to him. Then he said, Son of God; King of the Jews. Now you have Thomas at the end of the book. He doesn't believe until Jesus shows up and reveals Himself to him, and then Thomas says, "*My Lord and my God.*" John is saying that you are not going to believe in



Christ until He shows up and reveals Himself to you. That is why John is writing his gospel, because he wants you to see Jesus.

This is why I am preaching John's gospel. I want you to see Jesus. I pray that Jesus actually shows up and reveals Himself to you by what He has done and who He is, and right now you are saying amen, I believe! He also is my Lord and my God, and by believing, you have life in His name. What does having life in His name actually look like? You see, John does something different that the other gospel writers don't do. He records the disciples going fishing after He reveals Himself to them. I mean, after everything that happens, they just go back fishing! And after His resurrection, Jesus comes up and basically says, what are you doing? Why are you fishing? Do you love these more than Me? He has this discord with Peter and said, if you really love Me, here is what you will do. You will feed My sheep.

## **Jump!**

If you have life in Christ, if you have true saving faith, it will lead you to love your Savior, just like Peter loved the Savior. It also leads you to serve your Savior, just like Peter will soon serve His Savior. Then, twice at the end, he tells Peter, follow Me; follow Me. Here is how you know if your belief has led to life in Jesus; you have love for Jesus, you serve Jesus and His people, and you follow after Jesus. If those things are missing in your life; you might believe, but you don't have life in His name. The whole reason that John is writing this gospel is not just that you believe, but by believing you might have life in His name. You are like that little boy on the third floor of the building. You know it is on fire, you know Jesus is the Savior, but you are still haven't jumped. You have belief, but you don't have trust. You have never actually put that into action and jumped into the arms of the Savior. You have never really seen that He is your only hope and it is only in Him that you can have eternal life. John has composed this whole gospel, and the whole point is so that you would believe. Jesus said to Thomas, "*Do not disbelieve, but believe.*" Thomas

said, "*My Lord and my God!*" I want you to be all in. I want you to jump into the Savior's arms. I want you to commit your entire life to Him. Be born again and be made new.