

## Belief in Christ – John 20:24–21:25



MEMORY VERSE: Now Jesus did many other signs... 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. John 20:30-31

### DAY 1 JOHN 20:24-29 — Seeing and Believing

1. What did Thomas declare when the disciples told him they had seen the Lord? What do you think he meant by his declaration? vv.24-25
2. What had the other disciples recently experienced without Thomas? vv. 20:19-23
3. Does Thomas' disbelief seem reasonable or unreasonable to you?
4. What do you learn about Jesus and about Thomas in this exchange? vv.26-29
5. God wants us to be discerning about what we see or hear, but what point is Jesus making about belief and disbelief that is vital to our faith? vv.27,29

### LEARN THE TRUTH

Some form of the word, "belief" is used over 100 times in the Gospel of John. What we believe determines our actions and attitudes. As we wrap up our study of the gospel of John, may you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, believe in everything He says in His Word, and truly live for Him and glorify Him.

### DAY 2 JOHN 20:30-21:3 — The Reality of Believing in Christ

6. What did John say about his gospel? vv.30-31
7. The disciples had seen their risen Lord and had been given the Holy Spirit. What might they have expected compared to what actually happened as they fished all night? vv.1-3

8. Can you think of a time you had great hopes for effective work in ministry or relationships but basically “caught nothing,” in spite of your prayers and efforts and even what you saw as God’s promises?
9. Define these words and explain how you think they are inter-related.

Belief

Unbelief

Doubt

Faith

Trust

10. What does Hebrews 11, known as “the hall of faith,” tell you about the reality of belief in Christ?

### DAY 3 JOHN 21:4-14 — The Blessing of Believing in Christ

11. What happened when morning finally arrived after a long night of unsuccessful fishing? vv.4-14
12. What did Peter and John each do that gives you a glimpse into their relationship with Jesus?  
vv.7-8
13. How would you describe the interaction between God and the disciples that resulted in the the huge catch of fish?

14. Why do you think we sometimes have unfulfilled expectations while other times God wildly exceeds our greatest expectations?
15. How do these verses encourage you about what you can do and what you can expect God to do?
- Psalm 31:19-24  
We do:
- God does:
- Psalm 33:18-22  
We do:
- God does:
- Psalm 37:1-8  
We do:
- God does:
- Proverbs 3:5-12  
We do:
- God does:
- Proverbs 8:32-36  
We do:
- God does:
- Proverbs 16:3,7  
We do:
- God does:

#### **DAY 4** JOHN 21:15-19 — The Mission of Belief in Christ

16. What might Jesus have meant when He asked Peter, “Do you love me more than these?”
- John 12:25-26
17. Why do you think Jesus asked Peter 3 times if he loved Him?
18. Do you see any distinctions between Jesus’ 3 exhortations: “feed my lambs,” “tend my sheep,” and “feed my sheep?”

19. Even as Jesus told Peter to feed His sheep, what lay ahead for Peter? vv.18-19

20. Peter went on to lead the church in Rome and wrote letters to suffering believers, the second from prison while awaiting his execution. What did he teach about what it means to be a shepherd?  
1 Peter 5:1-3

2 Peter 1:12-15

## DAY 5 JOHN 21:20-25 — The Cost of Belief in Christ

21. What important truth did Jesus impart to Peter when he asked about John's future? vv.20-23

22. How does Jesus' answer to Peter help you as you watch other believers in action?

Hebrews 12:1-2

23. Why do you think comparing ourselves with other believers is a dangerous trap?

24. What did John claim in verses 24-25?

25. Some of the "many other things that Jesus did," include His work in your own life. What truths from the Gospel of John have especially impacted you?

### LOVE THE TRUTH

We are each running a race in this life, but not against one another. Ours is an endurance race run for God's glory, the prize being souls won to faith, and reward in Heaven. He has chosen us to be on His team, with His training and equipping. Throw off anything that hinders you so you can run a good race!

## John 20:24–21:25

### Belief in Christ

Thomas is to be admired for wanting to verify truth. He asked questions of Jesus while others remained silent. He wanted to see Jesus' wounds before he would believe, which is understandable, if not ideal. Jesus gave him the proof of His resurrection, while telling him not to disbelieve as those who believe without seeing are blessed. Obviously it's important to be discerning, alert to false teaching and deception, but Thomas' problem was that he put conditions on Jesus before he would believe what he should have known was true, as Jesus had said He would come back to life. Doubts and uncertainty can cross over into unbelief if we aren't careful, so we must take our doubts and questions to the Lord with our Bibles and our hearts open, seeking truth. Every follower of Christ will face times when we wish we had immediate hard core evidence, but if we believe what we KNOW is true, we will be blessed.

Life for those who believe in Christ will include times of wonder but also times of suffering. Jesus suffered and so will we. The disciples witnessed miracles, made mistakes, lacked understanding, forgot what Jesus said, but experienced His abundant mercy, provision and protection. The reality of our belief means that God loves us too much to let us remain as we are, so He will discipline us to re-direct us, or prune us so that we can bear even more fruit than we thought possible.

In the beginning of Jesus ministry, He first appeared to Simon after a long night of unsuccessful fishing. He told him to push his boat and cast his nets. Simon obeyed and caught so many fish that two boats nearly sank. Simon fell down at Jesus' feet and said, "Depart from me for I am a sinful man, O Lord." Jesus replied, "Do not be afraid, from now on you will be catching men." Simon, Andrew, James and John all left and followed Jesus. (Luke 5:1-11) The Lord did the same again, after His resurrection and again the disciples would not have had such a remarkable catch if they

had relied on their fishing skills, and refused to cast their nets on the other side of the boat when Jesus told them to. Their obedience brought blessing.

Before the crucifixion, Peter failed miserably right after Jesus warned him that he would deny Him 3 times. But that glorious morning on the beach, after the big catch, Jesus restored Peter with mercy and grace. He asked him 3 times if he loved Jesus, and with each affirmation of love, Jesus gave Peter the charge to feed, teach or bring up the young and naive lambs; to tend or lead and guide His mature sheep; and to "feed" or protect, teach wisdom and guidance for His whole flock.

### WALK IN TRUTH



If you are a believer in Jesus Christ the Son of God, our Father has a purpose and mission for you. He sends His children out to catch people for Him. It is by His power and for His glory, but our blessing to be part of His work. It is costly to believe in Christ. Jesus told Peter that he would die a similar death to His own crucifixion. We too will suffer, but our suffering is nothing compared to the reward that lies ahead. We can't afford not to believe in Him and in His power and promises. The blessings of believing in Him are too many to count, but the immediate blessing is that we can trust in God's goodness and provision. We may not understand the big picture of what He is doing, but we know he has the big picture and we are part of it. We must recall what He has said in His Word and remember what we know is true, and trust in the One who is truth. We believe God, no matter what we see. All the books in the world will not be able to contain all that Christ will do through those, including us, who trust and believe in Him.

## Notes