

Believing in Jesus Christ, Made Simple

By Marco Scouvert



“Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” That question may well be the most important one in the Bible. The Apostle Paul didn’t take a long time to answer the jailer in Philippi who asked it. His response was straightforward: “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved.”

God promises the greatest gifts to you if you will believe in him and in his Son, Jesus. You can be forgiven of all your sins, be put into a right relationship with God, be given a new heart, have your guilty conscience cleansed, be set free from the power of sin in your life, receive the Holy Spirit, be adopted into

God’s family and become his child, and can have the sure hope of being raised from the dead and living forever in God’s future kingdom, if you will just believe in Christ.

Believe. It sounds so simple. But what does it mean? If you have this question and are unsure how to answer it, you are not alone. This is a common question that many unbelievers have as they seriously consider their response to the gospel. Though you may be familiar with the biblical terminology of “belief” or “faith,” you do not know what believing in Jesus entails.

For some who sincerely desire to believe in and follow Jesus, they can become unhelpfully hung up on what “believing” means or how to do it. This can even keep them from moving forward in their life of faith in Christ, from confessing belief in him publicly through baptism in water, and from joining a local church. This is sad.

I imagine you are in a home with Christian parents who regularly plead with you to put your faith in Jesus. Or you are attending a Christian church where you often hear the call to believe in Christ. You understand the need and the importance of believing in Jesus but you have yet to do so. You are genuinely seeking to know what this act of faith involves.

To help you, I want to do two things: 1) look with you at a biblical example of faith; and 2) consider a historical illustration of faith.

Abraham the Believer

When the Apostle Paul wanted to provide a scriptural example of faith that puts someone in a right relationship with God, multiple times he pointed to Abraham. In fact, in Galatians 3:9 he refers to him as “Abraham the believer” (NASB), or more literally “believing Abraham.” His go-to text in the life of Abraham was Genesis 15:6: “And he [Abram] believed in Yahweh. And he credited it to him as righteousness.” Let’s go back there and consider the context so that we would learn from Abraham’s faith in Yahweh.

In the opening verses of Genesis 15, it has been about ten years since Abram had departed from Ur and had heard that initial promise from God to give him a multitude of descendants (Genesis 12:2;

13:16). At this point Abram was about 100 years old, his wife Sarai was about 90 years old, and up to now she had been unable to bear him any children!

So the Lord engages Abram in a conversation. In the midst of that, Abram asks in verse 2, “O Lord Yahweh, what will you give me, for I go childless and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus? He basically says to God, “Look at my situation. I’m getting older and closer to death, and I have no biological children of my own. How will I have a great number of descendants if I don’t even have one child of my own to start with?”

How does the Lord respond? Look at verses 4-5. “This man [Eliezer] will not be your heir; but your very own son shall be your heir.” Then he brought him outside and said, “Look toward heaven, and count the stars, if you are able to count them.” Then he said to him, “Your offspring will be like these stars.” God gives his word of promise again to Abram: that he will have a natural son of his own and he will have a great number of descendants. But this time he adds an unforgettable object lesson from the stars in the sky.

How does Abram respond now? Verse 6 — “And Abram believed Yahweh.” What was Abram doing when he believed Yahweh? We could say that he was *trusting God* to keep his promise. We could say that he was *placing his confidence in God*, the one who created the stars in the sky, to be able to do what he had said. We could say that he was *relying* on God to do for him what he and his wife could not do for themselves (in this case, produce children).

Like Abram, believing in Jesus involves trusting God to keep his promise that whoever believes in Christ will be saved. It entails placing your confidence in Christ, that he is able to rescue you from the condemnation of God and raise you from the dead. And it includes relying completely on Jesus alone to do this for you through his death and resurrection, something that you are totally unable to do for yourself.

Get in the Wheelbarrow!

Charles Blondin was a French tightrope walker and acrobat who was famous for high-wire performances in America. In 1859 he stretched a rope across the top of Niagara Falls and proceeded to traverse it. For one of his next feats he pushed a wheelbarrow across and back on the wire over the falls. At one point he announced that he was going to wheel a person in the wheelbarrow across the wire. It is said that a newspaper reporter came to interview Blondin about the proposed stunt. “Do you think I can do this great feat?” Blondin asked the reporter. “I really believe you can,” replied the reporter. “I think you are the greatest stunt artist of all time!” “You believe I can do it?” asked Blondin. “Well then, you get in the wheelbarrow!” In case you are wondering, the reporter never got in.

Like Blondin’s instruction to the reporter, believing in Jesus requires that we demonstrate our confidence in him to by getting into the wheelbarrow and relying on him to safely carry us through death and the judgment of God, and to bring us into his kingdom on the other side.

So, what are you waiting for? Get in the wheelbarrow!

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