

Vs 41–44 • Jesus doesn't need glory from men

Vs 45–47 • Summary: the Pharisees don't believe MOSES!



## Midweek Study • John 4-5

Mt Lassen Community Church

January 22, 2026

How to best define the term “Believe” (as in John 3:16). Goal: We must strike the right balance between too “flimsy” and too “legalistic” in meaning.

1 • Too flimsy: *“Belief in belief” or “Faith in faith”*

2 • Too flimsy: *“Just pray the prayer and you are good for eternal life”*

3 • Just right: *Salvation is in belief alone, but “belief” means more in Greek than it does in English!*

**(a)** We must NEVER forget that Paul argues STRONGLY that we are saved by grace through faith ALONE without any works to our credit—only reckoned righteous by God based on belief in Him. (Romans 4, Galatians 1:6 & 2:16, Ephesians 2)

But even Paul shows us that “belief” means more than just a mental agreement → Romans 10:13 says *“Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved.”* This is a desperate need for salvation, recognizing you can't save yourself. It comes from deep within our heart.

“Pistis” (belief) in Greek means: **assurance, faith, trust**. It is not just mental belief but is much deeper. It is stepping out in trust onto what you believe in.

**(b)** James says faith without works is dead, and we aren't justified by faith alone. Does this conflict with Paul? No! Here's why:

James says Abraham was FIRST reckoned righteous by God as he believed in Him (James 2:23), but then his faith was *perfected* in his works as he offered up Isaac (12:23).

James' idea is this: *Don't claim to be saved, or believe that you are saved, unless you see the FRUIT of salvation (good works). Otherwise, your claim of faith is empty boasting (dead).* (James 1:14 & 18)

4 • Too legalistic: “Belief means ‘lordship’ or ‘discipleship’ or ‘obedience’”

This says you aren’t saved by believing in Jesus as your Substitute, but rather, you are saved by obedience to God, which is the essence of faith.

The PROBLEM is this view minimizes God’s GRACE.

And it forgets that REGENERATION comes FIRST.

This easily leads to LEGALISM—trying to produce fruit without the Spirit!

**EXAMPLE** → Jesus’ conversation with Nicodemus (John 3:14–16)

We must first be born again. This illustration is in Numbers 21—simply looking upon Moses’ bronze “snake-on-a-pole” in faith. No additional qualification were given. Looking upon Jesus in faith for salvation is the same!

But then, we are regenerated and we become new creations. Only then can we follow Christ as disciples, as we are daily conformed more and more into His image.

The process is—

(1) Hearing the life-giving Gospel Message →

(2) Responding in belief, calling on Jesus for salvation →

(3) Regeneration (being born again as a new creation in Christ) →

(4) Living a transformed life of obedience

**John 5:1–17 • Jesus heals the lame man at Bethesda**

5:1–3 • Background \_\_\_\_\_

Vs 3–4 • How to understand this weird parenthetical note \_\_\_\_\_

Vs 5 • No mercy in “The House of Mercy” \_\_\_\_\_

Vs 6–9 • Jesus heals instantaneously (Isaiah 35:6) \_\_\_\_\_

Vs 9–13 • Conflict with the Pharisees regarding the Sabbath (strike 1)

Vs 14–20 • Conflict over equating Himself with God (strike 2)

“My Father is working until now, and I Myself am working” • This is clearly a claim of divinity and equality with God. \_\_\_\_\_

21 • Jesus gives LIFE like the Father! \_\_\_\_\_

Vs 22–23 • The Father has given the Son all JUDGMENT \_\_\_\_\_

Vs 24 • Amazing Gospel invitation. \_\_\_\_\_

Vs 25–29 • Jesus’ voice brings RESURRECTION. (1) to sinners, making them born again (2) in the future resurrection from the grave

Vs 30–32 • Jesus gives WITNESSES to His claims

Vs 33–35 • John the Baptist

Vs 36 • Jesus’ WORKS

Vs 37–38 • God the FATHER

Vs 38–40 • God’s WORD (ie, “Moses”)