

Faith.

Week 7 of 8 : StartingPointGroup.org

INTRODUCTION

The ability to *believe* is the most powerful force at mankind's disposal. Everything that has been done, for good or bad, was done because someone believed it could be or should be done. Every problem that has been solved was solved because someone believed it could be or should be solved.

We constantly look for evidence to support what we believe is true.

In the case of religious belief, that means if you believe deeply enough any religious system becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. If that's true, isn't it possible that Christianity is just an example of groupthink on a massive scale?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Did you find parts of this message disturbing? If so, which parts and why?
2. In the message, Andy said . . . *"Faith is the most confused, misused, and abused concept in religion."* Respond to that statement. Do you agree? Why or why not?
3. Think of a belief you hold - religious, political, economic - that has a major influence on the way you live your life. In what ways do you look for evidence to support that belief? In what ways do you filter out evidence that contradicts that belief?
4. The gospels record that when Jesus died, his disciples' faith died. But when they finally came out of hiding, their messages wasn't, *"Believe what Jesus taught."* It was, *"You killed him. God raised him. We've seen him. Say you're sorry."*

In what ways do the disciples' behavior and message challenge your assumptions about Christianity?

5. Read Acts 17:31. Do you agree that the "proof" of Jesus' resurrection is a compelling basis for personal faith? Why or why not?
6. When you think about Jesus, do you tend to focus on his teachings or his death and resurrection? How does that focus influence the way you answer the question, *"Who is Jesus?"*

MOVING FORWARD

*Christians believe that when you place your faith in Christ's death, that single act of faith leads to forgiveness of sin. And that is why we said from the very beginning that the starting point for the Christian faith is a question: "**Who Is Jesus?**"*

A single event - the resurrection - changed how those closest to Jesus answered that question. In a moment, they went from unbelief to belief . . . the moment they saw him risen.

CHANGING YOUR MIND

Acts 17:31 - "He has given proof of this to everyone by raising him from the dead."