

## “Christianity Explained: How Do You Become A Christian? (Part 3a) [Believe]”

Here's today's emphasis: *a person becomes a Christian by believing in Jesus*. There are many Scriptures that describe the importance and necessity of believing faith, but let's look at these Scriptures from John 3 and Ephesians 2. In His conversation with Nicodemus, Jesus Himself said in John 3:14-18: “*And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, <sup>15</sup> that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. <sup>16</sup> For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. <sup>17</sup> For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. <sup>18</sup> He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.*” A few verses later John the Baptist said in John 3:35-36: “*The Father loves the Son, and has given all things into His hand. <sup>36</sup> He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.*” The Apostle Paul penned these words in Ephesians 2:8-10: “*For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, <sup>9</sup> not of works, lest anyone should boast. <sup>10</sup> For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.*”

Believing in Jesus means:

- Believing with all your heart that God is as Jesus declared Him to be;
- You believe Jesus knew what He was talking about, and He has told us the truth;
- You are willing stake everything on the fact that what Jesus says is true. You will do whatever He says; you will obey His commands;
- You turn to God with a sense of need, weakness and emptiness, with an eager willingness to receive the Lord Himself and all that He offers;
- You are using faith as a key to gain access to all that has already been accomplished by God in Christ.

Part of believing in Jesus means:

- You are persuaded that the Bible's description, portrayal and characterization of Jesus is absolutely true;
- You believe the Bible truths about Jesus, not the false assertions made by so many in the world;
- You're putting all your eggs in one basket by relying only on Jesus for salvation, and to get you through this life and into eternal life;
- It's a belief that changes everything, and that causes you to stake your entire future and well-being on a new way of living. You believe in Jesus so strongly that it shows up in your behavior, your thinking, and in every area of your life.

Here are some important truths that need to be established about believing in Jesus:

- You can't get it wrong about Jesus – you must declare and believe who Jesus truly is. This true teaching about Jesus comes only from the Holy Bible;
- You must believe IN Jesus. Don't put your faith in other people, or even in the church—put your faith IN Jesus. Jesus will never disappoint you;
- You must believe the Gospel. You can't ignore or alter what the Scriptures say. You must heed the Christian Gospel's account of sin, salvation, God, humans, life and eternity.

A contrast of two Old Testament characters can benefit our understanding of faith. Abraham believed God, which led him to obey everything God asked of him. Even though he didn't understand everything God was asking of him, when he believed and obeyed God allowed him to see things more from His perspective. On the other hand, the unbelieving hearts of the Exodus generation manifested itself in their stubborn refusal to obey God. This study in comparisons really boils down to this: if you believe God you'll obey Him, and it will show up in your actions; if you don't believe God you won't obey Him (and that also will show up in your actions).

Consider these sundry explanations of true faith:

- True faith is an all-or-nothing proposal;
- True faith means relying only on Jesus. It's "Jesus alone," not "Jesus and";
- True faith means that you have decided that God can be trusted;
- True faith means you are certain that the Lord can be counted on;
- True faith is a response to God Himself;
- True faith takes the Lord at His Word;
- True faith takes God into account when facing life's challenges and difficulties.

## **Discussion Guide/Action Steps**

1. Have you ever allowed mistreatment from other people or bad experiences in the church to hinder or block your relationship with Jesus?
2. Do you believe in Jesus? Is your faith in Jesus an "all-in" and "willingness-to-risk-it all" proposition?