



Inner Growth - Believe

Jesus answered them, Do ye now believe?

John 16:31

Behavior - Proverbs 3:5-6

Envision - Hebrews 11:1

Living - Psalms 116:9

Inside - Ephesians 3:16 Hannah

Eyes - Job 10:4

Voice - 1 Corinthians 14:10, Hebrews 3:7

Ears - Matthew 13:9

To believe or not to believe: That is the question everyone has to ask themselves when they confess that they do. Jesus asks the question to his disciples while conversing with them in the second part of chapter sixteen of John, verses seventeen until the end of thirty-three. Do you doubtlessly believe? The question put the disciples on a complete examination of their hearts. Though they were supposed to have unshaken faith - faith that would endure every trial in which he told them that they were about to go through scenes

that would test them and where they would need all their confidence in God. When we feel strong in the faith, we should examine ourselves. There may be deception: and God may even be preparing trials for us that will shake our faith to its foundation. Jesus answered them, do you now believe? Not as calling their faith in question, denying they had any, or despising it for the smallness of it, but reproving them for their security, vain confidence, and boasting: As if their faith was so strong that it would not be movable.

An example of believing or not is the situation with the demonic boy in Luke, the ninth chapter from thirty-seven through forty-five. The father brings his sick son to the disciples, but they do not cast the spirit out. Jesus responds, "O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you and suffer you?" At first, the words from the Son of God appear to be speaking only to the disciples. However, Jesus addresses his comment to the boy's father and those with him: with a particular view on the Scribes and Pharisees, who had been insulting the disciples, and triumphing over them, because of their inability to cast out the evil spirit.

To believe depends on the behavior. If an unclean spirit possessed your child, would you trust Jesus to heal him? The focus here is the father of the demonic boy. He brings his sick son to Jesus because no one else could not heal the boy. The father perseveres the experience of the deadliest kind of epileptic lunacy within his son.

The father was anxious for his son: the boy was all he had. In verse thirty-eight of chapter nine, the father cried out to Jesus from among the company of people that came with him. With the desire to preserve his life, the father, with all the faith he could muster, trusted in Jesus for healing. Christ knew and saw this. He commanded the evil spirit to come out of the child's body.

Our actions will be louder than words. Body language will define if we sincerely believe or not. It is easy to say but physically harder to follow through on what we said. The challenge comes when our backs are to the wall. We have to beware of not giving off unfavorable gestures to God, family, and within our environment. To believe is to visualize. A woman with an issue of blood for twelve years is in Matthew chapter nine, verse twenty. According to the circumstances of her disease, it was incurable by any human power, and she knew it to be so, having been afflicted with it for twelve years, and tried the skill of many physicians. However, in the following verse, the woman, having heard of Jesus and the miraculous cures, believed that his power was sufficient to heal her. She mindfully followed through publicly to pursue with activity.

Our perspective plays a role when believing in something that is yet visible. The expectation of receiving at some point must be consistent for it to come to fruition. Otherwise, our actions will not be persistent, making it highly unlikely to get them. The first half of Proverbs twenty-three seven states, "For as he thinketh in his heart, so *is* he." Our thoughts must be precise because, with God, all things are possible.

To believe is to walk before God. The understanding of an individual's walk is in their way of life. Some people live only in the sight of their own company, regarding only human judgment and opinion. However, the gracious believer considers the presence of God and acts under the influence of His all-observing eye. No one can walk alone when it comes to believing in something: everyone needs help from God.

A life of faith, hope, holy fear, and true holiness produces righteous living and walking before the Lord. The person is favored with divine deliverances in answer

to prayer finds their own experience the best reason for a holy life and the best assistance to his endeavors. We know that God is near his people: what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness? The position for believers is not to let the enemy or society dictate how we are supposed to live. James four seven states, "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."

To believe is by living free from doubt, fear, and worry, which is the opposite. There are things that the flesh tends to default to in an attempt to oppose the inner person, which is our spirit. To receive what we believe may be conditional. However, if we desire something that will eventually affect our relationship with God, we might not get it. Similar to a child that depends on their parents to keep them on the right path, God will do the same with His people.

Enoch, for example, walked with God, demonstrating how he was living. Enoch was the seventh of Adam. Godliness is walking with God: which shows reconciliation to God, for two cannot walk together unless they agree, which includes all the parts of a godly, righteous, and sober life. To walk with God is to always set God before us under his eye. To have constant care in all things to please God and in nothing to offend him. Enoch walking with God is an illustration of followers of him as dear children. He lived with his constant care and work; while others lived to themselves and the world, he lived to God. It was the joy of his life. Those who begin to walk with God very young may expect to walk with him long, comfortably, and usefully. Walking with God well agrees with cares, comforts, and duties in life.

To believe depends on the condition of the inner person. Inside our body is where the soul dwells and God is a spirit. Even though He made the earth and its physical

nature, God deals with the spiritual side of our being. God hears our prayer as the words go up to Him as a memorial.

Hannah is an example of looking to God and praying about her situation.

In First Samuel One, Hannah, one of two wives of Elkanah, was a barren woman with no children. In verse six, Hannah had to deal with provocation from Peninnah, also the wife of her husband, with her jealousy, grief, anger, and malice. Even though the pain for Hannah was deep, her honor for God was higher. The response from Hannah through her anguish was only to the Lord weeping bitterly. However, in verse thirteen, "Now Hannah, she spake in her heart; only her lips moved:" she spoke from the inside to God.

Hannah did as in James four seven which all believers should do: "Submit yourselves to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." She believes in not retaliating against Peninnah but responds by praying about the situation. In the fourteenth verse of the First Samuel, chapter one, her sincere petition comes with more negativity from the priest. "And Eli said unto her, How long wilt thou be drunken? Put away thy wine from thee." After returning home from this visit to Shiloh, Hannah receives an answer to her prayer the next day. Giving birth to Samuel is just part of her story. Remember the vow she made before the Lord in her initial appeal. Hannah had every intention of keeping it. From her son being born until he was detached, Hannah loved Samuel, preparing her heart for the big day. Being fulfilled as a mother and fulfilling her vow to God brought Hannah much joy.

To believe involves our senses: chiefly the following three, which are the eyes, the mouth, and the ears. First is the eyes in what we see. A common phrase well-known is "seeing is believing." If people don't see it, the chances are they will not believe it. However, in some

cases, that is not true. Physically there are things we don't see yet we believe.

Everyone listens to the news, especially the weather report. If the forecast calls for a rainstorm with high winds up to a hundred kilometers an hour, many will prepare ahead of time for the conditions: they are not sure it will be the case, but they still believe it. Another example is flying in an airplane. Most often, passengers do not get to see the pilot, but they know a person is flying the aircraft and depends on them to reach their destination safely with no problems.

As believers and followers of Christ, we must demonstrate our belief beyond these examples. The challenge that opposes our faith is the evil one that tries to destroy it. The enemy will tend to use our eyes to create some form of negativity in an attempt for us not to believe in something that we set out to achieve. The devil will try to project thoughts into our minds believing they will not work, and use others to participate to bring down our faith. Second Corinthians, chapter Ten, verse five states, "Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." We must reject them in Jesus' name.

Noah built an Ark in Genesis chapter Six, verses fourteen through twenty-two. He forms the Ark by following God's instructions. Noah brings male and female beasts of every kind, his family, and other siblings into the boat. There are no details about other people entering the Ark. However, verse twenty-three of the same chapter describes the destruction of other people with other living creatures. There is no telling the adverse opposition he faced when assembling the Ark with no rainstorm in sight.

The second sense is the mouth. The devil will try to use our mouths against us to bring down our faith in God. To confess is

to submit to the evil one instead of following the verse in James four seven. "Submit yourselves to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." Trusting in God, not ourselves: that He will work on our behalf.

The story of the ruler's daughter raised in chapter nine of Matthew is an example where a certain ruler spoke the word before witnessing any results. Verses eighteen to nineteen of the chapter states, "While he spake these things unto them, behold, there came a certain ruler, and worshipped him, saying, My daughter is even now dead: but come and lay thy hand upon her, and she shall live. And Jesus arose and followed him, and *so did* his disciples." The word from the ruler causes Jesus to act on his behalf. In verse twenty-three, Jesus comes into the house and heals the ruler's daughter in the twenty-fifth stanza.

The faith in the ruler's voice was operating. The situation was obvious. His daughter was initially dead, yet the ruler spoke the word that even got Jesus and the disciples to move to go to his house. Words carry a spirit, and they are life. To experience the results begins with what we say and react to a situation.

To believe involves our ears. Faith comes by hearing: and so does doubt as well. The importance of listening to God and His word as believers while surrounding ourselves with positively influential people. We must reject things that come to our ears to contaminate our inner person. When people hear bad news, it can hurt to the core of our inside, where our hearts and soul dwells.

To believe is to be careful what we let in through our ears. The environment we conform to will determine our destiny. How? Where we live, who we live with, and what we do initially comes from hearing about it. Do you believe that? The place we live right now. Someone had to hear about the place to live there: it did

not fall into our lap. The people we live with, spouses or relatives, that took some listening to agree, which changes the course of direction in our life. The job or business took some listening time before deciding to get involved. What our ears hear can affect what we believe, like our voice and eyes, which also play a role. To believe or not to believe: the answer depends on us. How we think, how we feel, what we say, what we do, play a part in the whole picture of us. Jesus said He would never leave or forsake us. Yet we do not believe His word, which would help our unbelief. Ask God for help in this area of our lives.