



## Module 2: What It Means To Believe What do we mean when we say “I Believe?”

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# THE “I BELIEVE” BIBLE STUDY COURSE

## MODULE 2

### WHAT IT MEANS TO BELIEVE

We must have a belief system or something to set the parameters for what we believe. The Lord has graciously provided that for us by making available His Inspired Word in written form.

# 201 The Amazing Bible

## The Basis of Our Faith

### 1. The Amazing Bible – The Basis of our Faith

#### 1. The Amazing Bible

Emperors and Popes  
Kings and Priests  
Princes and Rulers  
Atheists and Unbelievers  
Emperor Diocletian AD 303  
18<sup>th</sup> Century French Atheist Voltaire

For centuries Emperors and Popes, kings and priest, princes and rulers, Atheists and Unbelievers have tried to destroy the Bible.

In the year AD 303, Emperor Diocletian decreed that all Bibles be burned. Within 25 years after his death, the next Emperor ordered 50 copies of the Bible to be printed at the government's expense.

Centuries later, the French atheist Voltaire declared the Bible would be forgotten and Christianity would cease to exist. He died in 1778 and within fifty years the Geneva Bible Society bought his house. They used it as a printing press for Bibles.

This inspired Book has been hated, vilified, attacked, abused, and burned. It has been, banished, criticized, despised, and misrepresented, but its message is still changing the lives of hundreds of thousands of believers. It is still the world's best seller.

H.L. Hastings said: "Infidels for 1800 years have been refuting and overthrowing this book, and yet it stands today as solid as a rock. Its circulation increases, and it is more loved and cherished and read today than ever before."

## The Original Manufacturer's Handbook

We take our motor vehicles to mechanics, our fridges to fridge repairmen, our computers to computer specialists. It is said, the last thing we read when we have an issue is the handbook.



The Original  
Manufacturer's  
Handbook



## The Importance of Bible Study

This special anointed Book we call the Bible was personally inspired by God. It is His Gift to us – the original Manufacturer's Handbook. It is the best source for knowledge of God, us, and the world.

*“Don't let others spoil your faith and joy with their philosophies, their wrong and shallow answers built on men's thoughts and ideas, instead of on what Christ has said” (Colossians 2:8 LB).*

This is why it is so important to study the Bible carefully.



## 202 What It Means to Believe

### The Importance of Knowing WHAT and WHY We Believe

What do we mean when we say, “I believe”? Especially when we say, “I believe in God.” How is that different from the viewpoint of other faiths and belief systems? What do *they* mean when they say, “We believe in God”? How does that differ from our declaration?

Many people and faiths declare they believe in God. Yet we know they do not believe the same way we believe. They use the same words but mean something completely different.

Some believe in God intellectually. They do not trust Him or love Him. They do not submit to Him or follow His ways. Some even hate Him. A good example of that is the demonic world.

*“You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble!”*  
*James 2:19.*

The demons KNOW God exists and they tremble. Believing in God without true faith makes no difference to the lives of people who have never experienced Him.

If satan and every demon believes God exists, mere mental, intellectual or emotional belief doesn’t mean much.



## 203 It is the Will of God for us to be grounded in the Faith

### The Reason for the Ministry Gifts

This is the reason God gave Ministry Gifts to the Church. These anointed men and women are to equip the saints and mature them in the faith.

*“And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ” (Ephesians 4:11-13).*

Their purpose is not to build big ministries for themselves, to be served, and to enrich themselves. As John the Baptist said: He must increase, and we must decrease.

### Unmoved by Winds of Doctrine

*“.. that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting” (Ephesians 4:14).*

### Established in the Faith

*“But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you” (1 Peter 5:10).*

- Perfect – mature.
- Establish – grounded.
- Strengthened in the Faith.
- Settled in what we believe.

### Continuing in the Faith

*“.. if indeed you continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel which you heard, which was preached to every creature under heaven, of which I, Paul, became a minister” (Colossians 1:23).*

It is so important for us to be grounded in the faith in these Last Days. Steadfast, not easily moved away from the Gospel according to the Scriptures. We need to beware of so-called “new revelations” and strange doctrines taught by those who lack a basic knowledge of the Scriptures.

# 204 The Inspiration of the Scriptures

## From Genesis to Revelation

### All Scripture is Inspired by God

*"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (2 Timothy 3:16).*

The Bible teaches us about God (doctrine). It guides us (reproof, correction). It teaches how to live a holy lifestyle (instruction in righteousness). But it is only profitable if we read and obey what God says. What we believe affects how we behave.

### We Must Read the Whole Bible

Many Christians ignore the Old Testament to their detriment. Some read just selected verses from the Psalms and the New Testament. We must read the whole Bible to be able to "rightly divide the Word of Truth."

*"Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15).*

### The Bible is the Source of Truth

*"Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth" – John 17:17*

Here is the Source of Truth from the heart of the God Who is Truth. Our culture and personal beliefs must bow to the Truth God presents us. Real truth is found only in the inspired Word of God.

### The Bible is the Source of Truth

*"Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth."  
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### Difficult Passages

*"...as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which untaught and unstable people twist to their own destruction, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures" (2 Peter 3:16).*

There are some things in the Bible that are difficult to understand without serious study. There is “milk” and there is “meat” in the Word. Concentrate on what we do understand and we will grow into the rest.

Our faith is firmly based on a solid, well-laid foundation – The Word of God. Christians are required to read the Bible, think about and meditate on its great truths and apply them in our lives. A firm, unshakeable faith will be the result, causing us to become PILLARS in the Temple of our God.

A tree that is constantly being replanted never thrives. “He can no more grow in Godliness, who is unsettled, than a bone can grow in a body out of joint” – Matthew Henry.

The Bible is our anchor, our lamp, and powerful armor to protect us against the deceitful doctrines of demons. It tells us the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth about God.

## **We Must Worship His Way**

*“For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food”  
(Hebrews 5:12).*

The Lord will only accept worship that is in accord with His Will and Word. Read the story of David and the Ark in 2 Samuel 6:6,7 (compare 1 Chronicles 13:9,10). God said: “Do not touch the Ark”. It seemed like the right thing to do in the circumstances, but it was not acceptable to God. We must believe what God says about Himself and about His Will. We do not have to understand, only believe and obey. We must never allow “teachers” to unsettle our faith.





## 205 “I Believe” is Personal

### It is a Statement of Personal Faith

#### “I Believe” is Personal

“I Believe” is more than a statement of faith, it is a statement of PERSONAL faith. It is “I” who believe. My parents cannot believe for me or believe on my behalf. My minister or friends cannot believe for me. This is a strictly personal statement of faith. Someone else may care for me, but it is I who must believe. It concerns my personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. It is the essential difference between “knowing” the Lord and “knowing about” Him.

#### Everyone Must Come to Christ Individually

Many people believe they are Christians because they were born into a Christian environment, or they are involved in a Christian ministry or lifestyle. Nicodemus was challenged by Jesus. He told this religious ruler, a good and pious man, it was not possible to enter the Kingdom of God without personal faith in Christ. We must be “born again” into the Family of God.

*“Jesus answered and said to him, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God” (John 3:3).*

#### Jesus is the Only Way

In our world of Interfaith we are taught each one reaches God via their own journey of faith. It does not matter what we believe so long as we are sincere. But we can be sincerely wrong. When I say, “I believe” then I accept the teaching of Scripture:

*“Jesus said to him, ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me’ (John 14:6).*

*“But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name” (John 1:12).*

*“And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life” (1 John 5:12).*

## Real “believing” always involves personal faith.

*“Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me” (Revelation 3:20).*

Personal faith is the essence of what it means to be a Christian – to believe. Someone is not a Christian because they come from a Christian background or tradition or were born into a Christian family. A person born in a biscuit tin is not automatically a biscuit. Even Christian education produces only “educated devils” unless true faith is awoken in an individual’s heart.

## Church Membership does not make us members of the Body of Christ

*“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” (John 3:16).*

Some believe “going to church” is evidence they are Christians, but to genuinely believe is not a matter of religion. Every religious person is not necessarily a Christian or a true believer. True believers are found in the church, but not every church member or leader may be a Christian. Faith is strictly a personal matter. “I” believe.

- Every dog is not a basset hound, but every basset hound is a dog.
- Every religious person or church member is not a Christian, but true Christians are found in the local church.
- Faith is strictly a personal matter – “I” believe.



To believe in God is not mere mental assent. It is the difference between “heart” faith and “head” faith or “knowing about” and actually “knowing” Christ.

## Believing is more than mental assent

Even demons believe in God, but it does them no spiritual good.

*“You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe; and tremble!” (James 2:19).*



## 206 Definition of “Believe”

### What Does It Mean to Believe?

The Amplified Bible defines “believe” as:

- Trust
- Clings to
- Relies on

It is an act of faith affecting our entire lifestyle. Our walk as well as our talk – from Sunday to Sunday, every day of the week, every hour of the day, every minute and second. Whether we are at home, in the office, at church or on holiday – wherever we go – our lives are evidence that “we believe.”

Believing is not an intellectual exercise. It is not commitment to an UNKNOWN GOD. Faith is always linked to revelation and believing involves REVELATION-KNOWLEDGE of God. God reveals Himself in Christ – and we believe. Believing is our response to His revelation. It is an act that involves every part of our being – our reason, our will and our emotions.

### **To believe involves Knowledge, Acceptance, Trust, Commitment, and Obedience.**

**KNOWLEDGE.** The Bible testifies of Him. It is the revelation of God in Christ Jesus. God does not expect us to commit ourselves to an Unknown Being. Knowledge is involved in our commitment to believe.

**ACCEPTANCE.** Knowledge must move from head to heart faith. There is no value in knowing the Bible intellectually but remaining uninvolved and unchanged by its message. We must appropriate our salvation. Israel’s history is a warning to us. Few of the people, for example, who left Egypt in the great Exodus entered the Promised Land (Numbers 32:11). I must personally accept the message that Christ died for me to bring me into a right relationship with God.

**TRUST.** Having accepted the revelation-knowledge, we are required to trust that God will do as He promises. Faith is an essential element of believing. We may trust Him for forgiveness of sins, Provision, healing, and every need. If can trust Him for eternity, why not for time?

COMMITMENT. Commitment is my response to His invitation to believe. Many people claim to “believe” but never commit themselves fully to the Lord.

The story is told of Houdini and his wheelbarrow stunt. He strung a line across the Niagara Falls and walked across while the crowds watched. Then he pushed an empty wheelbarrow across. “How many believe,” he asked, “that is possible for me to put a bag of cement in this wheelbarrow and wheel it across?” The crowds cheered and encouraged him to do it. On his return he asked the sixty-thousand-dollar question. “How many believe I can put a man in this wheelbarrow and push him across? Are there any volunteers?” The crowd was silent. No one offered.

That is the difference between “head” faith and “heart” faith.

## **To “believe” leads to full surrender and complete commitment**

*“.. and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again” (2 Corinthians 5:15).*

To have an effective ministry as we share the knowledge of God with others, we must know how to lead people into genuine, life-changing faith. Religious faith is not enough. God gave His Son, and in so doing, gave Himself for us. It cost Jesus everything, including contempt, mockery, rejection, death on a cross, disdain of own, and alienation from the Father as He became sin for us. The Lord of Glory became a servant; the Judge, condemned; Holy, became sin; God took on human likeness; Rich, became poor. Who can believe this and not be moved?

To believe means to put our lives at His service – because He put His life at ours. It means to live for Him alone, to obey Him as a lifestyle. We belong to the Lord and He has the right to our entire lives. Salvation is not just an insurance policy against the fires of hell, but a change of heart and mind, resulting in a changed lifestyle. To believe means that I freely give Him my heart AND my hands, feet, eyes, brain, finance – my whole life.

It is the realization that I – a lost sinner without Christ – come to Him on His terms because of His Grace and Mercy. As a sinner, we have no claim to His love, but He freely pours it out upon us as we enjoy His grace and mercy. Grace means receiving what I do not deserve. Mercy means not receiving what I do deserve.

When I say “I believe”, I am talking about being in a committed relationship with the Lord – being INVOLVED with God. If He is not LORD OF ALL, then He is not LORD at all.

James said: “But someone will say, ‘You have faith, and I have works.’ Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works.” – James 2:18.

Consider the following scripture carefully in this regard – Matthew 7:21-23.

As a well-known hymn says, “Love so amazing, so divine, demands my life, my soul, my all.

## **The Bible and Faith**

The Bible tells me what I believe. When I say “I believe” I am responding to God’s revelation of Himself.

I believe:

- The God of the Bible.
- His revelation of Himself in Jesus Christ.

- That Jesus Christ has reconciled me to God,
- Forgiven my sins,
- Made me part of His Church,
- And given me eternal life.

## 207 The Community of Believers

### The Church is a Community of Believers

*“Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us” (Hebrews 12:1).*

*“For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named...”  
-- Ephesians 3:14-15*

- The Church believes.
- Christianity is a “we-faith” – no one believes in isolation.
- That is why the Lord taught us to pray, “Our Father.”
- The host of believers all over the world believes.
- The millions who live on all the continents of the world believe.
- “We are not divided, all one body we. One in faith, and doctrine, one in charity.” (From the hymn “Onward Christian Soldiers”).
- The many millions who have died believe.
- The many millions who have still to be born will believe.
- There is a tremendous multitude who believe.

We need each other – a body, God’s building – growing together, strengthening one another.

An individual may be persecuted for his faith, or feel isolated in his family, but he is a member of a great company who believe.

We believe.

There are many of us – and JESUS IS OUR KING.

## Conclusion: I BELIEVE

1. It is the Will of God for us to be grounded in the faith.
2. The Apostles Creed is an Early Church statement of faith penned for that purpose.
3. To “believe” involves personal faith.
4. It embraces trusting, clinging to, and relying on God.
5. It involves knowledge, acceptance, trust, commitment and obedience.
6. It leads to full surrender and complete commitment expressed in a holy lifestyle.
7. It is a community faith – we believe – involving the whole Body of Christ in Heaven and on earth.

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Thank you so much.