

Believe!

One of the most difficult things for any human to do is believe in what they do not see. It is possible that children would not believe in the Easter Bunny or Santa Claus if they did not have that tangible character visible and enacted by someone in costume or culture maintaining the myth. There are many adults who do not believe there is a God. They consider themselves atheist or agnostic. Atheist do not believe the existence of God because one cannot tangibly touch, feel or see Him. An agnostic is someone who does not know, or believes that it is impossible to know, if a God exists, the reality of God is unknown.

We have read Hebrews 11:1, *“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”* For some, the concept is easier said than done. Belief in Jesus, Christ the Risen Lord and Savior is solidified as one lives a life committed to Him. This relationship is not determined by the circumstances of life. No, our relationship of faith is based on our belief, and knowledge of who Jesus is as the Son of God. Believing is a gift of grace. It is knowing that the story does not end with the crucifixion at Calvary. It does not end with the sealed tomb. It continues a new chapter with the resurrection of Jesus as the Christ from the dead. Believe!

The Gospel of John chapter 20 compels the follower of Jesus to believe. As a matter of fact the purpose for John’s writing is clearly stated, *“Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.”* (John 20:30-31)

Reflect on John’s record of Resurrection of Jesus.

John 20:19-31 New International Version (NIV)

Jesus Appears to His Disciples

¹⁹ *On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you!”* ²⁰ *After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord.*

²¹ *Again Jesus said, “Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.”* ²² *And with that he breathed on them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³ If you forgive anyone’s sins, their sins are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven.”*

Jesus Appears to Thomas

²⁴ Now Thomas (also known as Didymus^[a]), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. ²⁵ So the other disciples told him, “We have seen the Lord!”

But he said to them, “Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe.”

²⁶ A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you!” ²⁷ Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe.”

²⁸ Thomas said to him, “My Lord and my God!”

²⁹ Then Jesus told him, “Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”

The Purpose of John’s Gospel

³⁰ Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. ³¹ But these are written that you may believe^[b] that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

What are few things for the believer to take away from John’s record of the resurrection of Jesus?

1. Jesus IS alive. Not only is He physically alive, but he is spiritually alive because He is alive in us.
2. The ministry of Jesus did not end at Calvary. If anything, Calvary fueled the continued work of Jesus beyond the grave. He empowered the disciples through the gift of the Holy Spirit to continue the kingdom work. It is not over.
3. He is with us. The presence of Jesus in our lives sustains and guides in every aspect of life. He does what is necessary to prove who He is, even though He has not reason for proving anything to humanity.
4. Jesus Christ is the Son of God, the Messiah, Savior of the world. John’ objective for the Gospel is to verify that “Jesus of the Word become flesh,” “God with us.”