

WHY BELIEVE?

August 21, 2022

Introduction

Why do you or don't you believe in Jesus?

Believe: trust, understand; more than just believe...to be persuaded (in vs 31, verb tense indicates continuous or repeated action—believing must continue, not a one-time event)

We see here 12 people who believed, but for different reasons...

- 1) John: believed at empty tomb
- 2) Mary Magdelene: Jesus called her by name
- 3) (John among them): Jesus came to them (25)
- 4) Thomas: refused until he saw Jesus (no one has such proof today)

Main Idea

God persuades people to believe in Jesus and keep believing. Which of these 5 has He used in your life?

- 1) First, events (1-8)... John at empty tomb
 - a) a variety: ranging from supernatural to “coincidental”
 - b) usually by themselves not enough
 - i) Many say, “If God would ____, I would believe.”
 - c) open to interpretation (vs 13 “they have taken away...”)
 - i) People raised from the dead... “not really dead”

Illustration

Andree Seu Peterson

- 2) Second, the direct drawing of God (16) ...Mary called by name
 - a) God deals "directly" with some
EX: Muslims who have dream of Jesus
EX: "urge" to go to church, hear evangelist, or contact a Christian
 - b) the person may be unaware that it is God
 - c) the Father draws (John 6:44)

Illustration

- 3) Third, testimony (18, 25)
 - a) sharing about an experience with Jesus (18, 25)
 - b) the most common sign
 - i) compelled by the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8)
 - ii) part of discipleship (Matt. 28:19)
 - c) people can refuse to be persuaded by (25)

Illustration

- 4) Fourth, the Holy Spirit (22)
 - a) here: receiving the Spirit when we choose to believe
 - b) provides inner witness we are His children (Rom. 8:16), deepening our belief but not guaranteeing our continued belief (Heb. 6:4-6)
 - c) Holy Spirit gifts can be a sign (1Cor. 14:22, 24 tongues, prophecy may be a sign to unbeliever)

Illustration

- 5) Finally, Scripture (31)
 - a) given so people might believe (be persuaded)

Romans 10:17, MEV: faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

- b) conviction grows as we experience the Bible “come alive”
- c) one reason people try so hard to discredit the Bible

Conclusion

me: sermon on mount, healing from cold, Barbers, I am being even more persuaded...healings, salvations, freedom.

What has persuaded you? What has God used to try to persuade you? What do you see God using to try to persuade someone else? There is no irrefutable proof, nothing concrete that removes our need to choose to believe.

Altar

Salvation, come to worship and give thanks for the signs. God has used to persuade you, to intercede for someone to believe