

## Except You Believe That I AM John 8:24

### I. What must we believe?

- A. Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God (Matthew 16:16).
  - 1. Jesus is more than just a prophet. He is more than just a good man or some teacher.
    - a. If Jesus were not the Son of God, He would be a liar (not a good man).
    - b. If Jesus were not the Son of God, His teachings would violate the volume of Scripture.
  - 2. Jesus is the prophet like unto Moses (Deuteronomy 18:15-18). This prophesy refers to Jesus (Acts 3:22 & 7:37).
- B. Proof texts of the Deity of Jesus
  - 1. John 1:1, 14
  - 2. John 3:2
  - 3. John 5:17, 18
  - 4. John 10:30
- C. "In reality, early Christians overwhelmingly worshipped Jesus Christ as their risen Savior and Lord."<sup>1</sup>
  - 1. The term Lord (*Kyrios* in the Greek) was used by the Greeks to denote divinity.
    - a. This word was used in the Septuagint (Greek translation of the Old Testament) as the preferred substitution for "*Jahweh*," the Holy name of God.
    - b. Romans used it to denote the divinity of the emperor, but Josephus tells of the Jews refusal to use it of the emperor. (Only Christ was *Kyrios*.)
  - 2. As our Lord, Jesus rules us (2 Corinthians 10:5 & Colossians 3:23). Many want a Savior; few desire a Lord.
- D. In addition to the deity of Christ, there are some fundamental doctrines that one needs to believe. They include, but are not limited to, the following.
  - 1. The inspiration of the Scriptures-2 Samuel 23:2 & 2 Timothy 3:16
  - 2. The sinfulness of denominationalism-John 17:20ff
  - 3. God's Law regarding Marriage-Matthew 19:9
  - 4. The sinfulness of instrumental music in worship-Ephesians 5:19 & Colossians 3:16
  - 5. The eternal existence of Heaven and Hell-Matthew 25:46
  - 6. The truth on the Holy Spirit
  - 7. The resurrection | Simon Greenleaf, Professor of Law at Harvard University, declared it was "impossible that they [the apostles] could have persisted in affirming the truths they have narrated, had not Jesus actually risen from the dead, and had they not known this fact as certainly as they knew any other fact" (christiancourier.com).

### II. How must we believe?

- A. Actively (Numbers 20:12; John 14:15): "Faith" is a joyful trust conjoined with obedience (Thayer). See John 3:36 in the ASV.
- B. Genuinely (not hypocritically): read Matthew 23.
- C. Completely
  - 1. "People report that it is very important for them to consistently commit to whatever individual practice they have chosen. The regular involvement in a chosen practice appears to be the best way to deepen one's spirituality. When leaders faithfully commit to a particular spiritual practice they are calmer, more creative, more in tune with employees and customers, and more compassionate" (*Spirituality in the Workplace* in Human Relations in Organizations by Robert N. Lussier).
  - 2. Early childhood involvement is key! George Barna says a person's moral foundations are generally in place by age nine; that the majority of people come to a lasting determination of the significance of Christ's death and resurrection by age 12; that in

<sup>1</sup> *Breaking The Da Vinci Code*, Collin Hansen, 11/07/2003 (online)

most cases, people's spiritual beliefs are "irrevocably formed" when in the pre-teen years.

## **ARE YOU SURE YOU'RE SAVED?**

Neil Richey  
Lynchburg, VA

If life's final curtain were to drop, would you go to heaven? Are you sure? The Judgment Day will be a day of surprise to a lot of people, but it does not have to be (cf. Matt. 7:21-23). With God, we will either give Him all or nothing at all. Someone has expressed it this way, "Some people have just enough religion to make them miserable and not enough to make them happy." Some come to "Sunday Service" and that is it. Godly living during the week is non-existent. "Are you sure you're saved?"

**You cannot be sure unless you have faith.** The Hebrews writer penned that "...without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Heb. 11:6).

**You cannot be sure unless you have repented of your sins.** Luke recorded these words, "I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke 13:3). Repentance is "more than an ice-melting affair, it is an ice-breaking affair." Repentance is not "your heart being broken for sin, but it is your heart being broken from sin."

**You cannot be sure unless you have confessed the name of Christ,** with your mouth and continue to do so with your life. Jesus said, "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 10:32-33; cf. Rom. 10: 10).

**You cannot be sure unless you have been born anew.** Jesus told Nicodemus, "...Except one be born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God ... Except one be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3:3-5 - ASV; cf. Acts 2:38). Yes, baptism is essential to salvation (1 Peter 3:21).

**You cannot be sure unless you are in the Lord's church.** In order to be saved, you must be where the saved are. Luke wrote, "praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to them [the church] day by day those that were saved" (Acts 2:47 - ASV; cf. Col. 1:18; Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 1:18-19).

**You cannot be sure unless you are worshipping God correctly.** Jesus said, "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit [right attitude] and in truth (New Testament authority)" (John 4:24). To add to, or to deviate from authorized worship, is to transgress the doctrine of Christ (2 John 9).

**You cannot be sure unless you are living a holy life.** Paul wrote, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service (Rom. 12:1).

Are you really sure you are saved? Are you giving the Lord your all? You see, "you do not value God at all if you do not value Him above all." The Judgment Day does not have to be a day of surprise for you. Do not be like Felix who said, "When I have a convenient season." Do not make light of the opportunity you have this day to obey the Lord. We are never promised a second opportunity. Your opportunity may very well either be now, . . . *or never.*