

## **WHY DO YOU BELIEVE ?**

### **Int.**

1. Aim: To show that we must have correct attitudes in serving God !!
2. Why do you believe?
  - a. 1Tim. 4:12 - is an example of "believe" being used to refer to a Christian.
  - b. Why are you a Christian?
  - c. Why do you believe the Bible and obey it?
  - d. Why do you believe there is a God?
  - e. Why do you believe that Jesus is the Son of God ?
3. Peter tells us to be ready to give an answer - 1 Pet. 3:15 "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear;" "Be ready at any time when you are questioned about the hope which is in you." BBE
  - a. Context - Verses 13-17 He was teaching how to endure persecution
  - b. There were 3 things for us to do !!
    - (1) Don't be afraid
    - (2) Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts
    - (3) Be ready to give an answer
  - c. Sanctify = set him above everything and everybody
  - d. Be ready to answer = explain why you have this hope
4. Why do you believe?

## Discussion

### I. FEAR OR LOVE

#### A. Fear

1. Rom. 13:7 "Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute [is due]; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour."
  - a. Fear which arises from the dread of punishment
  - b. Dread, terror, slavish fear, such as is characteristic of a slave in the presence of a cruel and heartless master
2. 2 Tim. 1:7 "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. "
  - a. The words denote cowardice and timidity and is never used in a good sense
  - b. N.I.V. "Spirit of Timidity"
3. Some are believers only because of the fear of punishment in hell
  - a. This will be the person who obeys out of necessity, grudgingly
  - b. He will never put the kingdom first in his life
  - c. He will not deny himself
  - d. Fear dies out after a short time

#### B. Holy Fear

1. Ec. 12:13 "Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man."
  - a. Reverence and respect for God's authority
  - b. This holy fear is nearly the same thing as love
2. Paul was beginning his sermon and he said, "Men of Israel, and ye that fear God, give audience." Acts 13:16

C. Love Not Fear is the proper motive for believing !

1. 1 John 4:18 "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love."
2. Fear is absent in love
  - a. Fear = dread of chastisement which comes to the disobedient
  - b. It hath torment - worry about punishment is punishment
3. Perfect love
  - a. Mature love casts out fear
  - b. Where there is genuine love, fear cannot exist
  - c. Love puts out dread and puts in joy in service to God!
4. Those who are believers because they love God will:
  - a. Obey with love - Jn. 14:15
  - b. Put the kingdom first in life
  - c. Deny himself and make sacrifices for Christ
5. Fear grows smaller while love increases!!
6. Why do you believe? Fear or Love ?

## II. FAD OR CONVICTION ?

### A. Fad

1. Fad = "A practice or interest followed for a time with exaggerated zeal"
2. Examples - clothing, hair styles
3. This sometimes is true in religion
  - a. Obey because many others are obeying - that is not wrong
  - b. These will follow Christ with great zeal for a time
  - c. Then when the next fad comes along he drops Christ!!
4. Rom. 10:2 "zeal without knowledge"
  - a. Many suppose that as long as they are sincere and zealous in religion then God will be pleased
  - b. Enthusiasm, not guided by God's word, often leads to persecution.
  - c. John 16:2 "...yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service."
  - d. Jesus people movement - zeal without knowledge

### B. CONVICTION

1. Conviction = "A strong, persuasion or believe" - Web. P. 183
2. II Tim. 1:12 \_ Paul had conviction
  - a. Persuade - "A bringing about a change of mind by the influence of reason or moral considerations." [V.E.D.NT. P. 179]
  - b. Paul had conviction
    - (1) He, like Abraham, was fully persuaded - Rm. 4:21 - "And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform. "

- (2) He loved Christ
- (3) Nothing could move him
  - (a) Rom. 8:35-39
  - (b) I I Cor. 11:23-278
- 3. Many today who are believers do not have this conviction
  - a. They were not fully persuaded and have left their first love
  - b. Most anything can move them from Christ:
    - (1) Hardships
    - (2) Ridicule and persecution
    - (3) Worldly interest
    - (4) Family or friends
- 4. Are you a believer because it is the latest fad or are you fully persuaded ????

### **III. FAKE OR SINCERITY ?**

#### A. Fake

- 1. Fake = simulate, counterfeit, preened, imitation, impostor, worthless imitation passed off as genuine - hypocrite
- 2. Some are faking their belief
  - a. They are not sincere!
  - b. They obeyed to please some other person, husband or wife, parents, another person
  - c. They obey for the gain that would come to them in their business

3. Jesus calls this type of person a hypocrite
  - a. Mt. 23 - seven times he says "woe unto you, scribes and pharisee, hypocrites"
  - b. Hypocrite - play acting, pretense
  - c. A hypocrite deliberately and as a habit professes to be good when he is aware that he is not
  - d. A hypocrite does not intend to be what he pretends to be
4. One who is faking their belief will:
  - a. Sneak around to do things that are wrong!!
  - b. Never get involved - it is foolishness to them!!

## B. Sincerity

1. Phil. 1:10 "That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ;"
  - a. In v. 9 he prayed for an increase in their love
  - b. This could only come with more knowledge of God's word
  - c. Then we will approve, or try, those things that are excellent.
  - d. Sincere — pure, no double mindedness or deceit!!
2. A sincere Christian is truly converted - he is always what he professes to be!
  - a. His motives are pure
  - b. His conduct is not hypocritical
  - c. His character can be held up to the light without discovering any impurity or sin

3. Eph. 6:24 " Grace [be] with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen."
  - a. ASV "with a love incorruptible"
  - b. You cannot love Christ when you are not sincere.

#### C. You cannot fake religion

1. God knows - He cannot be deceived — Gal. 6:7 "Not mocked"
2. Sooner or later you'll reveal your true character

### IV. FAITH OR DOUBT ??

#### A. Doubt

1. Doubt = uncertainty, distrust, lack of confidence
2. The believer who has doubts will:
  - a. Believe part of the truth - only those parts which he likes
  - b. Disregard those commands of god they feel are not necessary, and of course they are the judge of that!
  - c. Be careless with their life and morals
  - d. Not really believe God will punish him for his sin
3. Jas. 1:6 ASV ----- One moment he feels God will keep his promise and at another moment he feels that he will not James 1:6 (ASV) " But let him ask in faith, nothing doubting: for he that doubteth is like the surge of the sea driven by the wind and tossed."

## B. Faith

1. Heb. 11:6
2. Faith = trust in God, believing he will save us if we obey him
3. Mt. 14:31 Peter had "Little faith"
  - a. His faith became weak
  - b. Then the fear turned it into doubt
4. It takes real faith to serve and follow God

## **CONCLUSION**

1. Why do you believe?

FEAR      FAD      FAKE      DOUBT

2. Or is it:

LOVE      CONVICTION      SINCERITY      FAITH

3. It's necessary to serve God for the right purpose!!!

4. 2 Cor. 13:5 (ASV) "Try your own selves, whether ye are in the faith; prove your own selves.

Or know ye not as to your own selves, that Jesus Christ is in you? unless indeed ye be reprobate."

- a. Examine
- b. To see if you are in the faith