

Rm 10:9 *"If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved."*

Take an empty cola bottle sometime and fill it half full of water. Then, take some vegetable oil and fill it the rest of the way. Then try to shake it with all you're might so it will become all mixed up. What happens? The moment you stop shaking, it begins to separate from one another, doesn't it? What is the moral? The moral is that, by their very nature, oil and water do not mix.

One might say the same is true with Godliness and worldliness, there is too much world in the church, because there is too much world in each of us. However you might say that we live here and we need to be in the world. We might need to be in the world... but does the world have to be in us?

**2 Co 5:20** tells us where we stand in relation to the world; *'We are therefore, Christ's Ambassadors – as though God were making His appeal through us.'*

**In Eph 2:19**, *"Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people and also members of his household,"* we are told that we are citizens and members of God's household. We are no longer citizens of this world... And since we belong to God; since we are citizens of heaven working as ambassadors here on earth; we need to focus more on God and less on the world, but to do so, we need to make sure that we really believe in God, and not just think we do.

**The law of the pendulum.** We all know what a pendulum is, right? It swings from side to side, and it always decreases in the length of its arc with every swing. A professor had nailed a rope to the wall just above the blackboard. To this rope, he had attached a baseball. He asked how many of his students really believed in the law of the pendulum and all raised our hands.

With that, he pulled the rope to one side and marked where it was on the board. Then he let go of it and every time it swung back to his side, he put another mark where it stopped. The end result was he had many marks, all closer to the center than the one before, proving the law was true. He asked again how many of his students really believed in the law, and again all raised their hands.

Then he took his students to the auditorium, where he had hung a thick nylon rope from the rafters just above the stage. Attached to this chord was a 100-pound steel weight. He asked for a volunteer. He had a chair sitting on the side of the stage and he had the student who volunteered sit in it. He then took the weight, which was hanging in the middle of the stage and carried it over to about an inch from the boy's face. He asked him if he believed in the law of the pendulum, and the boy, starting to get a little worried by now, said he did.

With that, the professor let go of the weight and it swung clear to the other side of the stage, and then began to come back. Never have you seen anyone move so fast as that young man trying to get out of the way. Did he believe, or did he just think he believed?

**DO YOU BELIEVE... OR .... DO YOU THINK YOU BELIEVE ... well...**

The first thing we need is a **Believing Heart**.

**Jn 1: 7** *He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe.* We are told that Jesus came so that all men might believe. That is how we believe; through Jesus Christ. Without Jesus there is no belief.

That is confirmed in **Jn 20: 31**, when it says that by believing in Jesus Christ, one may have life in His name.

In order to be a real Christian, and in order to receive eternal life, we must be **real believers**. We must have a burning in our hearts to be with Jesus; to know more about Him; and to know Him more.

Remember the story about the young man who sat on the chair waiting for the 100-pound weight to come back towards his face? There are many Christians who have the same type of faith in their belief in Jesus. They think they believe, and they say they believe, but when push comes to shove, they get out of the way as fast as they can.

Remember when Peter told Jesus that he would follow him into death if necessary? A few verses later, we see where Peter denied Jesus three times. Peter was like that young man on stage, too. He thought he believed, but when he was pushed, he collapsed like a house of cards. And we cannot have faith unless we really believe.

Everybody believes in something. What is it that you believe in? And how much do you really believe in it? It is very easy to think you believe when there is no risk involved. It is more difficult to truly believe when you risk losing something very important.

Just like the student, we need to know the basics of what is offered to us. He needed to know what the law of the pendulum was, and we need to know what the law of salvation is. It is eternal life in heaven, with God the creator.

Once we understand what is offered, we are ready to find out ... What it is we **really believe in**.

George Barna conducted a survey, and found that 51% of those surveyed said they believe that if a person is good, or does good things for other people, they will get their spot in heaven.

We see the fallacy of this in – Why? Because they pursued it, not by faith, but as if it were by works.’ The Bible tells us in **Rm 9: 30-32** *What then shall we say? That the Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, have obtained it, a righteousness that is by faith; but the people of Israel, who pursued the law as the way of righteousness, have not attained their goal. Why not? Because they pursued it not by faith but as if it were by works. They stumbled over the stumbling stone.*

In, we are told, **Isaiah 55: 8** *For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, declares the Lord.*

Why are we so intent on taking God’s word and trying to change it to fit our desires instead of just accepting His word as the law we should live by? But by our works is how we live, isn’t it? We must earn the respect of others and earn promotions at work. We can sing about the best things in life being free, but **when it comes to the things of this world, it all has to be earned. And that is how most people think about going to heaven; it must be earned by what we do.**

The Israelites had a believing heart, but what they believed in wasn’t helping them. They believed they had to follow all the laws of the Old Testament to get to heaven. They were just like the people today; good and earnest people who have it all wrong when thinking about their relationship to heaven.

**Those who believe in works** or some other way of getting to heaven besides believing in Jesus **are not bad people**. They are wonderful people who have the right heart, **but their heart is misdirected**. The trouble with works getting you to heaven is that you have to be in 100% compliance – in everything, all the time. That, in itself, is impossible for us to do. That is the same thing as saying you can never make any mistakes. None of us could live up to that expectation.

**Mark Twain once said that if doing good was what got us to heaven, you could not get in, but your dog could.**

The Bible is very clear in what we should believe in. It does not mince words and it uses no metaphors to explain it. Pure and simple, we need to believe that Jesus Christ is the **Son of God**, sent to be our **ONLY** way to heaven. He is our **Redeemer** and **our Savior**. He is **THE** path, not **ONE OF THE** paths.

So, we need a believing heart, and we need to realize just what we really believe in. Once we have these down pat, we are then ready to **STOP RUNNING AWAY**

The student sat in the chair, and when the weight started swinging back his way, he quickly jumped out of his chair and ran away. He believed, but he believed only until he had to risk losing something, like his head.

Many Christians are the same way, too. They go to church and do all the things, and they will continue to do that until a serious challenge comes along. With our finite minds, we must have certain **logical steps** to take us into Christian maturity. God knew this, so we find His **instructions** in the Bible.

In [MARK 9](#), we read where Jesus healed a demon-possessed boy and then the boy's father came up and said, *"I do believe, but help me overcome my unbelief."* We are much like that boy's father. **We all believe, but we also sometimes ... don't believe.** In other words, we believe with our intellect, but we do not believe with our heart. We need to do like the boy's father did and ask Jesus to help us have more belief.

We need to do the same thing Jesus told Thomas about the scars in His side. In the last part of [JOHN 20:27](#), Jesus said, *"Stop doubting and believe!"*

We have a natural tendency to run away before we commit. We see that all the time with people who say they are Christians, but will not go to anybody and tell them about Jesus. I truly believe that being non-committal towards Jesus is a sin. If we don't know Him here, He has promised to not know us there.

Let me ask you a question. Picture yourself at your wedding. You are standing there and the minister asks you if you will take your fiancé for better or worse, etc. What do you think would happen if you just looked around and said nothing? Do you think you would hurt your fiancé?

If the minister asked you if you took that person to be your spouse, what do you think the response would be if you were absolutely silent? Again, do you think you would hurt your fiancé? Do you think you would be helping yourself? No, you would be doing more damage to that person and to yourself than you could ever calculate.

That is the same with your relationship to Jesus. Many people freeze up when asked to state their relationship to Jesus. Many people would actually rather deny Him than take the risk of having somebody mock them by confessing Jesus. Isn't that what Peter did on the night they arrested Jesus?

**Romans 10: 9** promises us, *'... if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord", and believe in your heart that God raised Him, you will be saved.*

Now, before we go any further, let me say that we must believe in Him, and we must confess Him. And, if we confess Jesus is our Lord, and that we have Him in our hearts, doesn't it make sense that we would also be **striving to do what He wants us to do?**

In, **Acts 2:38** we are told to repent and be baptized. It means just that. Stop running! Get on B.A.S.E. with God. **BELIEVE - ADMIT - SURRENDOR - EXPRESS**

**Believe** that Jesus is Lord; **Admit** to yourself that He is your Savior; **Surrender** your heart to Him today; and **Express** **Him to others around you.**

The young man who sat in the chair on the stage had a decision to make. He could trust the truth, or he could run when it got uncomfortable. We have that same choice to make today.

We can choose to have a believing heart; then ponder and study what it is we actually believe; and then stop running long enough to cement our relationship with Christ, or we can run away.

The problem with running, is that one day you will have no other place to run to, and you will find yourself in that long line, waiting to be judged one-on-one with the Lord. When you find yourself standing there, what are you going to feel like when He looks directly at you and says, "NEXT"?