

Belief
(John 3:16)

Introduction:

1. In this verse Jesus made several comments about God as well as people.
2. In relation to God, Jesus mentioned:
 - a. His love -- He "*so loved the world*"
 - b. His gift -- He "*gave His only begotten Son*"
 - c. His blessing -- "*everlasting life.*"
3. In relation to people, Jesus mentioned our responsibility to "believe in Him."
 - a. Belief in Christ is our response to God's love and His gift.
 - b. Belief in Christ is our requirement for receiving God's blessing.
4. We conclude from this verse that belief is an important responsibility.
5. In our lesson we are covering a number of passages that emphasize the importance of "belief."
6. The first point we need to make is that . . .

Discussion:

- I. "BELIEF" IS AN ESSENTIAL PART OF THE PLAN OF SALVATION
 - A. In John 3, Jesus taught very clearly that "belief" is essential.
 1. According to vs.14-16, those who believe in Jesus will be blessed with eternal life.
 2. Jesus continued in vs.18 by showing that unbelief will result in condemnation (see John 8:24).
 - B. Jesus included "belief" in the Great Commission (Mark 16:15-16).
 - C. Paul told the jailer in Philippi to believe on Jesus to be saved (Acts 16:30-34).
 - D. Paul also connected "belief" and salvation in Romans 10:9-11.
 - E. Now that we know that "belief" is a requirement for salvation, let us turn our attention to . . .
- II. WHAT THE LORD REQUIRES US TO BELIEVE
 - A. In Acts 8:35-38, the eunuch's conversion shows that we are to "*believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.*"
 - B. This is implied in the meaning of the word translated "believe" [Thayer: "A conviction, full of joyful trust, that Jesus is the Messiah - the divinely appointed author of eternal salvation in the kingdom of God, conjoined with obedience to Christ"].
 - C. Now that we know what we are to believe, let us consider some . . .
- III. EVIDENCE THAT LEADS US TO BELIEVE THAT JESUS IS GOD'S SON
 - A. The testimony of God
 1. God identified Jesus as His Son at His baptism (Matthew 3:16-17).
 2. God also identified Jesus as His Son at His transfiguration (Matthew 17:5).
 - B. The Scriptures (John 5:39)
 - C. The miracles of Jesus (John 20:30-31; 2:23; 3:2)
 - D. The testimony of John (John 1:32-34)
 - E. The testimony of many other people; including:
 1. Nathanael (John 1:45-49)
 2. Peter (John 6:68-69; Matthew 16:15-16)
 3. Martha (John 11:27)
 - F. The resurrection of Jesus (Romans 1:3-4)
- IV. BELIEVING IN CHRIST ALSO RELATES TO HIS FOLLOWERS
 - A. Believing in Christ is a great source of comfort (John 14:1).
 - B. Those who believe on Jesus enjoy special blessings (1 John 3:22-24; 5:5, 13).

Conclusion:

1. According to Acts 4:12, salvation is only found in the name of Christ.
2. Christ wants everyone to believe on Him (Matthew 11:28-30).
3. Have you accepted His invitation?