

VBS

JULY
12-16



KNOW the GOSPEL!

BELIEVE the GOSPEL!

SPREAD the GOSPEL!

1ST - 5TH GRADE

Day 5: Believing the Gospel

Believing the Gospel

The Objective is the key concept for this week's lesson. It should be the main focus of the study.

These are the key verses that you will find helpful in teaching your study this week. The "Main passage" is the basis of the study, where the other verses support the objective of the lesson.

There is a memory verse for the students that relates to every study. If a student can memorize the verse for the following week you may give them a prize from the "reward box" found on your cart.

An introductory activity or question that will settle the class, draw their attention to the study and prepare their hearts for God's Word.

Objective To teach the students the importance of believing in the Gospel for themselves through the story of Thomas.

Key Verses

John 20:19-31—Main Teaching Passage

2 Peter 3:9

John 3:16

Luke 18:31-33

Memory Verse - Mark 1:15

"The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel."

Hook

Review yesterday's memory verse, Mark 16:15.

Ask the kids how they what actions they would take in response to various news stories. What might they do if they heard it was going to be raining outside? What about a coming snowstorm? What if they heard a lion had escaped from the zoo and was on the loose in the neighborhood? They would dress a certain way, or make sure they had enough food, or stay indoors, etc.

But what do we do in response to the good news of Jesus? We need to do something. We're going to learn more about how we are supposed to respond to the Gospel in today's lesson.

What does the Bible say? This is where we will read a passage or series of passages that teach on the subject of the day.

BOOK

Our story today picks up on the third day after Jesus died on the cross. The past three days had, no doubt, been the worst three days of the disciples' lives. Jesus, the one they had spent the past three years following, living with, and learning from, had been captured by the Jewish leaders, falsely accused, and put to death on a cross by the Romans. One of the disciples (Judas) had betrayed Him, and the rest of his disciples had abandoned Him. Three days later, they were all in room together hiding from the Jewish leaders, fearing that they might be captured and possibly even killed for following Jesus. That night, everyone but Thomas was gathered together, and Jesus suddenly appeared in the middle of the room and said, "Peace be with you." The disciples saw His hands and His side and knew it could only be Jesus. They rejoiced that their Lord was alive!

When Thomas returned and heard that Jesus had appeared, he did not believe it was true. He said he would not believe unless he saw the marks of the nails on Jesus' hands and touched His hands and side. Eight days later, all the disciples, including Thomas, were gathered together again, and again Jesus appeared to them and said, "Peace to you." He then invited Thomas to touch His hands and side, saying, "Do not be unbelieving, but believing." To this, Thomas responded, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus answered, "Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed." John finishes the passage by saying that everything that he wrote about in the book of John was written that we would believe that Jesus is the Son of God and that in believing, we would have eternal life.

The interpretation/exegesis of the passage. What does this passage mean? How does this passage apply to my life?

LOOK

This week we have learned what the Gospel is and the importance of sharing it with others, not just through our words but through our actions, and not just to those who live near to us, but to the whole world! While those things are all very important, maybe you haven't stopped to ask the most important question: "Do I believe in the gospel?" You are here at VBS because someone you know believes in the good news of Jesus. Maybe that's a family member, a friend, or a neighbor. But what about you? Do you believe in the Gospel for yourself?

As we study today's passage of Scripture, let's look at and consider the example of Thomas. He was no stranger. He was one of Jesus' chosen apostles. He had walked with Jesus, he had been taught by Jesus, he had gone on missions for Jesus, and he had even heard Jesus say that He would be betrayed, killed, and rise the third day (Luke 18:31-33). But after all of that, and even after all his friends said they had seen the risen Lord, he refused to believe the good news in his own heart.

LOOK (Continued)

We can't judge Thomas too harshly for this. Thomas loved Jesus very much. Jesus was his best friend. He had put all his hope in Jesus, and Jesus had died. It was a very sad and discouraging time for him. He didn't remember what Jesus had said, and he didn't believe his friends. Maybe he didn't want to get his hopes up. After all, what if it wasn't true? What if Jesus wasn't really risen?

But that's the great thing about the good news of Jesus. It is still good news even when people don't believe it. No one can change it. No one can make it untrue. It will always be true and always be good. Jesus appeared to Thomas. He invited Thomas to touch His scars. Jesus wanted Thomas to believe in the Gospel. He wants you to believe in the Gospel too. In His Word, He has given you everything you need to believe in him and have everlasting life.

You may think you have reasons for not believing God's Gospel. Maybe things in your life have been very sad, maybe you don't think your sin is a big deal, maybe you think God doesn't care about you or that the good news isn't for you. Today, God wants to say to you, the good news of Jesus is for you. Jesus died and rose again for you. Jesus love you. He wants you. He knows that unless you believe in the Gospel of Jesus, you will be eternally separated from Him because of your sin, but that's not what He wants. He is not willing that any should perish, but desires that all should come to repentance (2 Peter 3:9).

Do you believe this? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe. And to all who have believed, one day we will see Him, face to face, and live with Him forever in a place that He is preparing for us, where there is no more sadness, tears, pain, or death. We can't do anything to earn it. It's a gift. We just have to believe.

What is my response to this passage of Scripture? How should my life change according to what this passage teaches me? What are the practical things I can do throughout the week to make this true in my life?

TOOK

As a class, memorize Mark 1:15.

Give the children an opportunity to respond to the Gospel. Fill out the yellow cards provided and give Bibles to those who don't have one.

Pray: Thank God for His good news. Thank Him for making a way for our sins to be forgiven and for us to live with Him forever in heaven.

Parent Question: Why do you believe in the Gospel?

FURTHER STUDY

Commentary on John 20:19-31 by David Guzik

C. The disciples meet the risen Jesus.

1. ([John 20:19](#)) Jesus appears in their midst.

Then, the same day at evening, being the first *day* of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them, “Peace *be* with you.”

a. **The same day at evening:** This took place on the same day that the tomb was found empty and Mary met the resurrected Jesus. We are told of five appearances of Jesus on the resurrection day.

- To Mary Magdalene ([John 20:11-18](#))
- To the other women ([Matthew 28:9-10](#))
- To the two on the road to Emmaus ([Mark 16:12-13](#), [Luke 24:13-32](#))
- To Peter ([Luke 24:33-35](#), [1 Corinthians 15:5](#))
- To ten of the disciples, Thomas being absent ([John 20:19-23](#))

b. **Where the disciples were assembled:** It was good that the disciples stayed together. Jesus told them that when He departed they must love one another, which assumes that they would stay together ([John 15:17](#)). He also prayed for their unity after their departure ([John 17:11](#)). This command was fulfilled and prayer was answered, at least in the days immediately after His crucifixion.

c. **When the doors were shut:** The sense is not only that the doors were **shut**, but secured and locked against any unwelcome entry. The idea is that the room was secure when suddenly **Jesus came and stood in the midst**. We aren't told *how* Jesus entered the room, but the sense is that it was not in any normal way and that He seemed to simply appear.

i. “When he tells us that the doors were ‘shut’ we should understand this to mean ‘locked’ as the following explanation, that this was due to fear of the Jews, shows.” (Morris)

ii. The doors were shut and locked so they wouldn't get hurt. Those shut and locked doors also shut out Jesus. Thankfully, Jesus was greater than the shut and locked doors, and made His way in despite them. Still, it's better to unlock and open the door for Jesus.

iii. “Afterwards, when the Spirit came down upon them, they not only set open the doors, but preached Christ boldly in the temple without dread of danger.” (Trapp)

iv. **Jesus came and stood:** “The word describes that *unseen arrival among them* which preceded His becoming visible to them.” (Alford)

v. This strange and miraculous appearance of Jesus apparently was to demonstrate that resurrection bodies are not subject to the same limitations as our present bodies. Since we will be raised in the same manner as Jesus ([Romans 6:4](#), [1 Corinthians 15:42-45](#)), this gives us some hint of the nature of our future body in the resurrection.

vi. "We can scarcely say more than that John wants us to see that the risen Jesus was not limited by closed doors. Miraculously He stood in their midst." (Morris)

vii. Jesus might have gone anywhere and done anything after His resurrection, but He wanted to be with His people. He sought out His people.

d. **Peace be with you:** After their desertion of Jesus on the day of His crucifixion, the disciples probably expected words of rebuke or blame. Instead, Jesus brought a word of **peace**, reconciling **peace**.

i. "Peace to you,' is an assurance that there is no cause to fear, and that all is well: for they ([Luke 24:36](#)) were alarmed by His manifestation." (Trench)

ii. "Our Master came to his cowardly, faithless disciples, and stood in the midst of them, uttering the cheering salutation, 'Peace be unto you!' My soul, why should he not come to thee, though thou be the most unworthy of all whom he has bought with his blood?" (Spurgeon)

2. ([Jhn 20:20-23](#)) The risen Jesus serves His disciples.

When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. So Jesus said to them again, "Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you." And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

a. **He showed them His hands and His side:** Jesus *assured* them He was actually Jesus of Nazareth and that He was really raised from the dead. Jesus did this for more than the 10 disciples present; Luke mentioned this gathering as including not only the disciples but also *those who were with them gathered together* ([Luke 24:33](#)) and that Jesus invited them to actually touch His body to see that it was real ([Luke 24:39-40](#)).

i. "Jesus did not come into their midst to show them a new thought, a philosophic discovery, or even a deep doctrine, or a profound mystery, or indeed anything but *himself*. He was a sacred egoist that day, for what he spake of was himself; and what he revealed was himself." (Spurgeon)

b. **Peace to you!** Jesus just gave them the blessing of His peace ([John 20:19](#)). Perhaps the emphasis there was to calm their fear and shock at the moment ([Luke 24:36](#)). The repetition of this promise makes this gift of **peace** much larger and more significant. *The resurrected Jesus brings peace.*

i. "He had faced and defeated all the forces which destroy the peace of man. As He said, 'Peace be unto you,' He was doing infinitely more than expressing a wish. He was making a declaration. He was bestowing a benediction. He was imparting a blessing." (Morgan)

- My sins are forgiven – peace
- The slavery to sin is broken – peace
- My Savior takes my fears and cares – peace
- My life is settled for eternity – peace

ii. "We must ourselves have peace both inwardly and outwardly, before we can effectively preach the gospel of peace to others." (Boice)

c. **As the Father has sent Me, I also send you:** Jesus gave His disciples a *mission*, to continue His work on this earth. This was the commission to do what Jesus had already prayed for in [John 17:18](#): *As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world.*

i. This means that both then and now, disciples are sent after the pattern of the Father's sending of the Son. As previously observed on [John 17:18](#), this means that disciples are *sent ones* – missionaries, after the Latin verb "to send."

ii. [Luke 24:33](#) described this meeting on the evening of Resurrection Sunday and is important: *the eleven and those who were with them gathered together*. It means that it was not only the 10 disciples (lacking Judas and Thomas) who received from Jesus the Holy Spirit and this commission. It means that Jesus sends *every* believer into the world on mission.

iii. As with [John 17:18](#), we think of how Jesus was sent and connect it with the truth, **I also send you**. We are sent the same way Jesus was.

- Jesus was not sent as a philosopher like Plato or Aristotle, though He knew higher philosophy than them all
- Jesus was not sent as an inventor or a discoverer, though He could have invented new things and discovered new lands
- Jesus was not sent as a conqueror, though He was mightier than Alexander or Caesar
- Jesus was sent to teach
- Jesus was sent to live among us
- Jesus was sent to suffer for truth and righteousness
- Jesus was sent to rescue men

d. **Receive the Holy Spirit:** Jesus gave His disciples the *Holy Spirit*, bringing new life and the ability to carry out their mission. It seems John noted a deliberate connection between this breathing on the disciples and when at creation God breathed life into man. This was a work of re-creation, even as God breathed life into the first man. This is where the disciples were born again.

i. "Intimating, by this, that they were to be made *new* men, in order to be properly qualified for the work to which he had called them; for in this breathing he evidently alluded to the first *creation of man*, when God breathed into him the breath of lives." (Clarke)

ii. "The Greek word is the same as used by the LXX in those two pregnant phrases of the O.T., viz. [Genesis 2:7](#), 'the Lord God *breathed into* man's nostrils the breath (or The Spirit) of Life'; and [Ezekiel 37:9](#), 'breathe in- to these slain and they shall live' (the vision of the Dry Bones)." (Trench)

iii. "At an earlier stage in Jesus' ministry the evangelist had said, 'the Spirit was not yet present, because Jesus had not yet been glorified' ([John 7:39](#)): now the time for imparting the Spirit has come." (Bruce)

iv. They received the *same* Holy Spirit that was in Jesus; the same Spirit that empowered and enabled all His words and works. "The breathing upon them was meant to convey the impression that His very own Spirit was imparted to them." (Dods)

e. **If you forgive the sins of any:** Jesus gave His disciples *authority* to announce forgiveness and to warn of guilt, as authorized by the Holy Spirit. We can say that Peter's preaching on Pentecost ([Acts 2:38](#)) was an exercise of this promised power to announce forgiveness of sins.

i. The connection with the reception of the Holy Spirit is important. "The words of Jesus emphasize that the Holy Spirit is not bestowed on the church as an ornament but to empower an effective application of the work of Christ to all men." (Tenney)

- ii. This lays down the duty of the church to proclaim forgiveness to the repentant believer, and the duty of the church to warn the unbeliever that they are in danger of forfeiting the mercy of God. We don't create the forgiveness or deny it; we announce it according to God's word and the wisdom of the Spirit.
 - iii. "The Church collectively declares the conditions on which sins are remitted, and with the plenary powers of an ambassador pronounces their remission or their retention." (Trench)
 - iv. "He is saying that the Spirit-filled church has the authority to declare which are the sins that are forgiven and which are the sins that are retained. This accords with the Rabbinical teaching which spoke of certain sins as 'bound' and others as 'loosed'." (Morris)
 - v. The work of Jesus for His disciples on resurrection Sunday gives an ongoing pattern for His work among His people. Jesus wants to continue this fourfold ministry of *assurance*, *mission*, the *Holy Spirit* and *authority* to His people today.
3. ([Jhn 20:24-25](#)) The skepticism of Thomas, the absent disciples.

Now Thomas, called the Twin, one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples therefore said to him, "We have seen the Lord." So he said to them, "Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe."

- a. **Thomas...was not with them when Jesus came:** We are not told why Thomas was not with them and Thomas was not criticized for his absence.
 - b. **We have seen the Lord:** Thomas was not criticized for his absence, but he still missed out. There was a blessing for those present that Thomas did not receive.
 - i. "Thomas did the very worst thing that a melancholy man can do, went away to brood in a corner by himself, and so to exaggerate all his idiosyncrasies, to distort the proportion of the truth, and hug his despair, by separating himself from his fellows. Therefore he lost what they got, the sight of the Lord." (Maclaren)
 - c. **Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe:** Thomas is often known as *Doubting Thomas*, a title that misstates his error and ignores what became of him. Here we could say that Thomas didn't doubt; he plainly and strongly *refused* to believe.
 - Thomas refused to believe the testimony of *many* witnesses and *reliable* witnesses
 - Thomas made an extreme demand for evidence; evidence of not only *sight* but of *touch*, and to *repeatedly* touch the multiple wounds of Jesus
 - Thomas steadfastly refused to believe unless these conditions were met (**I will not believe**)
- i. "Normally this is taken to indicate that Thomas was of a more skeptical turn of mind than the others, and, of course, he may have been. But another possibility should not be overlooked, namely that he was so shocked by the tragedy of the crucifixion that he did not find it easy to think of its consequences as being annulled." (Morris)
 - ii. "Perhaps he had abandoned hope; – the strong evidence of his senses having finally convinced him that the pierced side and wounded hands betokened such a death that revivification was impossible." (Alford)
 - iii. Adam Clarke called Thomas' unbelief *unreasonable*, *obstinate*, *prejudiced*, *presumptuous*, and *insolent*. Still, it was good and significant that Thomas still wanted to be around those who believed.

iv. The unbelief of Thomas was strong, but honestly spoken. It was good that he refused to *pretend* to believe when he did not believe.

v. Some find it interesting that Thomas made no mention of wounds in the *feet* of Jesus. “There is no mention in this Gospel, or in Matthew or Luke, of the piercing of the feet. That the feet of Jesus may have been nailed to the cross, rather than fastened with a rope, which was the common practice, is an inference from [Luke 24:39](#).” (Tasker)

4. ([Jhn 20:26-27](#)) One week later, Jesus speaks to the skeptic Thomas.

And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, “Peace to you!” Then He said to Thomas, “Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand *here*, and put *it* into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing.”

a. **After eight days:** The idea is that Jesus had this meeting with the disciples now including Thomas on the following Sunday. Jesus entered the room in the same mysterious and remarkable way (**the doors being shut, and stood in the midst**). Jesus also gave the same greeting (**Peace to you!**).

i. The locked doors of their meeting room show that though they believed Jesus to be raised from the dead, that truth had yet to work its meaning and significance into every area of their thinking and actions.

ii. There is significance in that these two important meetings with Jesus and His assembled disciples took place on Sundays; this is the first indication we have of Sunday meetings of the disciples. “The memory of this coming of the Lord to his disciples may well have something to do with the church’s early practice of meeting together on the evening of the first day of the week and bespeaking his presence with them in the words *Marana tha*, ‘Our Lord, come!’” (Bruce)

b. **Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side:** Jesus granted Thomas the evidence he demanded. We suppose that Jesus was not *obligated* to do this; He could have rightly demanded faith from Thomas on the basis of the reliable evidence from others. Yet in mercy and kindness, Jesus gave Thomas what he asked for.

i. It must have been a surprise to Thomas that Jesus repeated back to him just what he said to the other disciples ([John 20:25](#)). *Jesus knew the demands and unbelief of Thomas*.

ii. “There is no surer way of making a good man ashamed of his wild words than just to say them over again to him when he is calm and cool.” (Maclaren)

iii. Jesus’ interaction with Thomas shows that the resurrected Jesus is full of love and graciousness and gentleness to His people. That didn’t change. “The whole conversation was indeed a rebuke, but so veiled with love that Thomas could scarcely think it so.” (Spurgeon)

iv. There is a clear lesson: When you want assurance, look to the wounds of Jesus. They are evidence of His love, of His sacrifice, of His victory, of His resurrection.

c. **Do not be unbelieving, but believing:** Jesus clearly commanded Thomas to stop his unbelief and to start believing. Jesus was generous and merciful to Thomas and his unbelief, but Jesus did not praise his unbelief. Jesus wanted to move him from doubt and unbelief to *faith*.

i. Jesus did not even credit to Thomas his *prior* belief, or his belief in the prior teaching and miracles of Jesus. Because Thomas did not believe in the resurrected Jesus, Jesus considered him **unbelieving**.

ii. Often God does not condemn our doubt and He also often reveals and does remarkable things to speak to our doubt and unbelief. But doubt and unbelief are not desired conditions for the disciple of Jesus. If they are checkpoints along a path leading to faith they should be dealt with a generous love; but doubt and unbelief should never be thought of as *destinations* for the disciple.

5. ([Jhn 20:28-29](#)) Thomas responds in faith.

And Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

a. **My Lord and my God:** Thomas made an immediate transition from declared unbelief ([John 20:25](#)) to radical belief. He addressed Jesus with titles of deity, calling Him **Lord** and **God**. It is also significant that *Jesus accepted these titles*, and did not tell Thomas, "Don't call Me *that*."

i. "Sight may have made Thomas believe that Jesus was risen, but it was something other and more inward than sight that opened his lips to cry, 'My Lord and my God!'" (Maclaren)

ii. "Thomas now avows the faith which a foretime he had disclaimed. 'I will not believe,' said he, 'except-except - except.' Now he believes a great deal more than some of the other Apostles did; so he openly avows it. He was the first divine who ever taught the Deity of Christ from his wounds." (Spurgeon)

iii. "The words are not a mere exclamation of surprise. That is forbidden by [greek text]; they mean, 'Thou are my Lord and my God'. The repeated pronoun lends emphasis." (Dods)

iv. "For a Jew to call another human associate 'my Lord and my God' would be almost incredible....Thomas, in the light of the Resurrection, applied to Jesus the titles of Lord (*kyrios*) and God (*theos*), both of which were titles of deity." (Tenney)

v. "In Pliny's letter to Trajan (112 a.d.) he describes the Christians as singing hymns to Christ as God." (Dods)

vi. Thomas was honest enough to say when he didn't believe ([John 20:25](#)), but also honest enough to follow the evidence to its full meaning. Thomas wasn't given to half-unbelief or half-faith.

vii. Spurgeon considered many aspects of Thomas' declaration.

- It was a devout expression of holy wonder
- It was an expression of immeasurable delight
- It indicates a complete change of mind
- It was an enthusiastic profession of allegiance to Christ
- It was a distinct and direct act of adoration, worship

viii. "Whosoever will be saved, before all things it is necessary that he be able to unite with Thomas heartily in this creed, 'My Lord and my God.' I do not go in for all the minute distinctions of the Athanasian Creed, but I have no doubt that it was absolutely needful at the time it was written, and that it materially helped to check the evasions and tricks of the Arians. This short creed of Thomas I like much better, for it is brief, pithy, full, sententious, and it avoids those matters of detail which are the quicksands of faith." (Spurgeon)

b. **Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed:** Commentators divide over whether or not Thomas actually did as Jesus invited him, to actually touch the wounds of Jesus. That Jesus said, **because you have seen Me** and not *because you have seen and touched Me* gives some evidence to the idea that Thomas did *not* actually touch the wounds of Jesus.

c. **Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed:** There is a special promise blessing given to

those who believe. Thomas demanded to see and touch before he would believe in the resurrected Jesus. Jesus understood that the testimony of reliable witnesses was evidence enough, and there was a blessing for those who accepted that sufficient evidence.

i. "I believe He is speaking, not of a subjective faith, but of a satisfied faith. He is speaking of faith that is satisfied with what God provides and is therefore not yearning for visions, miracles, esoteric experiences or various form of success as evidence of God's favor." (Boice)

ii. "From this we learn that to believe in Jesus, on the testimony of his apostles, will put a man into the possession of the very same blessedness which they themselves enjoyed. And so has God constituted the whole economy of grace that a believer, at eighteen hundred years' distance from the time of the resurrection, suffers *no loss* because he has not seen Christ in the flesh." (Clarke)

iii. These words of Jesus are another beatitude, and promise a great blessing. Spurgeon considered some ways that this blessing would be diminished.

- When we demand for a voice, a vision, a revelation to prove our faith
- When we demand for some special circumstances to prove our faith
- When we demand for some ecstatic experience
- When we demand for an answer to every difficult question or objection
- When we demand what men think of as success in our work of Jesus
- When we demand that others support us in our faith

iv. The faith of Thomas becomes the climax of the book. Throughout the Gospel of John Jesus has triumphed over sickness, sin, evil men, death and sorrow. Now with Thomas, Jesus conquered unbelief.

6. ([Jhn 20:30-31](#)) The summary statement of the Gospel of John.

And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.

a. **Jesus did many other signs:** John admits that he presented an incomplete collection. He couldn't possibly record in writing all that Jesus said and did ([John 21:25](#)).

i. One collects everything possible about a dead prophet; it is all one has of him. But one only tells enough of a living person to introduce one's hearers to him. John trusts that a personal relationship with Jesus will reveal more to the believer.

ii. **In this book:** "That this was the original or intended conclusion of the gospel is shown by the use of the words 'in this book,' which indicate that the writer was now looking back on it as a whole." (Dods)

b. **These are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God:** Though there were **many other signs**, John selected the signs presented in His Gospel to explain Jesus and bring readers to faith in Jesus as Messiah and God. This really isn't a book about *signs* – it is a book about Jesus. The signs are helpful as they reveal Jesus.

i. The Gospel – and all of the Bible – was written so that we may believe, not that we might doubt. "There is no text in the whole Book which was intended to create doubt. Doubt is a seed self-sown, or sown by the devil, and it usually springs up with more than sufficient abundance without our care." (Spurgeon)

ii. [John 2:11](#) speaks of the *beginning of signs*, and throughout his Gospel John has listed at least seven signs.

- [John 2:1-11](#) – Water into wine
- [John 4:46-54](#) – Healing of the nobleman’s son
- [John 5:1-15](#) – Healing at the pool of Bethesda
- [John 6:1-14](#) – Feeding the 5,000
- [John 6:15-21](#) – Jesus walks on water
- [John 9:1-12](#) – Healing of the man born blind
- [John 11:1-44](#) – Lazarus raised from the dead

iii. The greatest signs of all were the death and resurrection of Jesus. Collectively, these signs give strong foundation for faith in Jesus as Messiah and God. That faith isn’t a blind leap; it is a reasonable step based on strong evidence.

iv. **The Son of God:** “The title does not, of course, imply biological descent like that of the Greco-Roman demigods; but the metaphor of sonship expresses the unity of nature, close fellowship, and unique intimacy between Jesus and the Father.” (Tenney)

c. **And that believing you may have life in His name:** John understood that faith in Jesus as Messiah and God had value beyond the honorable recognition of truth. It also carried the promise of **life in His name**. This was life that transformed John himself, and he wanted that same life and transformation for all through his Gospel account.

i. This belief isn’t complicated. Our response is as simple as ABC: *Accept, Believe, and Commit*. It isn’t always easy, but it isn’t complicated.

ii. **Life in His name:** “*Through his name* does not mean ‘through the naming of His name’, but through the power of the Person who bears the name. In the Bible the ‘name’ of God is not merely the name by which He is designated, but all that He is in Himself.” (Tasker)