

- 1) Introduction
 - a) Read Preface from Believe Bible
 - i) Atheist sociologist determined that the only explanation for the swift rise of Christianity in its first 3 centuries is that Christians *truly* believed.
 - b) I want faith that changes me. Changes my community. Changes our world.
 - i) If you do, too, turn to 2 Peter 1
- 2) Main Bible Text
 - a) **2 Peter 1**
 - i) The Means: Plug into the Power (Holy Spirit)
 - (1) **Vv.1-4**
 - (a) Peter proclaims the equal standing of all believers—the same knowledge, by his power
 - (i) Which grants us promises for the future, and participation in the divine nature starting now
 - (ii) And liberation from corruption
 - (iii) This is the Holy Spirit within us! Given as deposit of greater promises, so that we can participate in the divine nature and be freed from death.
 1. Given to all believers
 2. Don't believe you are less . . . or more. That's his point here
 - (b) We must be connected with the power of God through his Holy Spirit
 - (i) And that's not an impersonal data-type knowledge that connects us
 1. It is an intimate knowledge of Christ, a transforming knowledge—light in the darkness, life in the midst of death
 - ii) The Goal: Move from Think to Be (Believer to Disciple)
 - (1) **Vv.5-11**
 - (a) Peter doesn't just stop there though. We are given directions for after we gain the aforementioned knowledge. We need to move from having knowledge to being like Jesus
 - (b) We must make EVERY EFFORT to ADD to our faith, Or make hast to supplement your faith, or even supply your faith
 - (i) We can't earn our righteousness, but that doesn't mean we aren't to put effort into our life
 - (ii) Effort in this direction will keep us from being unfruitful
 - (iii) So, here's our goal: knowledge *with* virtue, self-control, godliness, love. We need to get from knowledge, through practice, to being like Jesus
 - (2) If we are not moving in that direction, it must be that you've forgotten where you'd still be without Christ
 - (a) "If you do these things you will never stumble" (v.10)=keep your eyes on the prize to avoid stumbling over whatever's in the foreground.
 - iii) The Method: Repetition, Repetition, Repetition (Partnering with the Holy Spirit through study and practice/effort)
 - (1) **Vv.12-15**

- (a) Just as Peter said to EQUAL believers 2 thousand years ago:
 - (i) “Even though you are now firmly established in the truth, as long as I have breath, I’m going to keep drilling it into you, in hopes that you remember it when I’m gone.”
 - 1. That’s a pastor!
 - (2) Recent research reveals that the number one Christian practice to catalyze spiritual growth is Bible engagement, with no close second.
 - (a) It brings out virtue and goodness and self-control, etc.
 - (b) Even if you think you know it all.
 - (c) “Repetition may seem dull. You may want to move onto something new that sounds more exciting. But we need to understand that we have not learned anything we’ve already been taught until it is coming out in our lives.”
 - iv) The Source: God’s Word—both Christ and the scriptures
 - (1) **Vv. 16-21**
 - (a) This faith we have is not something built by man
 - (i) The apostles didn’t get together and decide what doctrine would be best, to convince the most people
 - (ii) They were eyewitnesses of the Word made flesh! Jesus Christ! Who came back to life!
 - (b) V.20-21—And the scriptures are just as reliably the Word of God.
 - (i) (he’s referring to scripture—especially that which pointed to Christ, but comparing his own writing as equally inspired by the Holy Spirit)
 - (c) *We shall conform to the image of the Word of God (Christ) by studying the Word of God (the Bible)*
 - (2) Revelation. God’s message for us.
- 3) Insight
- a) This letter is from Simon Peter. He knows a little about putting his life where his beliefs are (money where his mouth is). He grew up in faith. Though he was one of the first to make the confession of Jesus Christ as the Messiah, and was truly a leader of Jesus’s chosen disciples, on Good Friday, he was too scared to admit he even knew Jesus, and truly fell. He received the Holy Spirit a few weeks later and spoke the good news to all who he had feared. And he would write before he died, secure in faith and forgiveness, “Therefore, dear friends, since you have been forewarned, be on your guard so that you may not be carried away by the error of the lawless and fall from your secure position.”
- 4) Application
- a) BELIEVE is 3 ten-week series during which we will read and engage scripture, all together as a community of faith, in small groups—Sunday School and Children’s Church classes, as families, and as individuals. We will through effort and repetition imprint scripture not just on our minds but on our life. My hope is that each of us will take time ahead of each Sunday worship celebration to prepare by reading the chapter in the Believe Bible (per age) (thinking about and praying over the reflection questions inside), and reading the Believe Storybook Bible with your children. Also, that we each will make an effort to engage in discussion with others—Sunday

School is a great opportunity—as well as to memorize the KEY scriptures. These verses are available set to music.

- b) Our mission as a church is to “partner obediently with the Holy Spirit to make disciples of Jesus.” Only the Holy Spirit can transform us into the likeness of Christ, but we partner with him; the most primary way is by knowing the Word and teaching the Word—both Christ and the scriptures—the Good News. (**2 Corinthians 3:18**) Then, we also align our lives to Christ’s example—including our thoughts and our actions (**Philippians 2:5, Proverbs 27:3**). Through Believe we hope to get closer to being like Jesus. That’s the goal of Believe, that’s the goal of our mission.
- c) We long to see “every one set free by Christ and fulfilling their potential for God’s Kingdom.” This can only happen if we are all his disciples, and we pass on what we know to every one we know. Believe is moving us in the direction of our vision. Adding to our faith. Conformity to Christ’s example is freedom from sin, from death.
- d) Our first series is on 10 KEY beliefs taught by the scriptures—so we can think like Jesus. After Christmas we will look at 10 KEY practices modeled by Jesus—so we can act like Jesus. And in the Spring, we will look at 10 KEY virtues—being like Jesus. “It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. (Galatians 5:1).” Freedom from being only natural waits for those who become “imitators of God therefore as dearly loved children,” holding to Christ’s teaching, so we will know the truth, and the truth will set us free (**John 8:31-32**). Think. Act. Be.
- e) Randy Frazee and Gallup have put together a tool for us to evaluate ourselves, to see how well our lives conform to our beliefs. It may be helpful to take this survey before and after the Believe program. It is available on Google Play as “Believe” and the Apple app store as “Believe Assessment,” or you can order a Christian Life Profile book.
- f) Resources available from the church:
 - i) -Bibles for all ages
 - ii) -Coloring books
 - iii) -CDs with verse memory songs
 - iv) -Memory verse cards for children
 - v) -Small groups for adults, teens, and preteens on Sundays at 9:30 and adults on Wednesdays at 7pm
 - vi) -the adult study guides are excellent
 - vii) -and classes for the younger children during Children’s Church
- g) Additional corresponding resources available from Zondervan include:
 - i) -Think Act Be—a written form of Randy’s Frazee’s teaching similar to the adult curriculum video teaching
 - ii) -adult memory verse cards
 - iii) Believe devotional books
 - iv) -the Christian Life Profile book
 - v) -and more