

BELIEVE

Every person has some control over what they believe. Moviegoers can suspend their beliefs about reality to enjoy the emotional ride of fantasy. Psychologists discovered that most people place value on an experience based on what they invested in it instead of what they gained. Many believe something because they trust the person who advocated it.

Because people can affect what they believe, the Bible advises that people test their beliefs. John wrote, "*Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God*" (1J 4:1). Paul taught, "*Test all things; hold fast what is good*" (1 Thes 5:21).

Of course, the Bible, as well as Christian teachers, advise people to believe in God and more particularly in His Son, Jesus Christ. Joshua said, "*Choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve . . . But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord*" (Josh 24:15). John famously wrote, "*For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life*" (John 3:16).

For those unsure that belief in Jesus is good, the Bible implies that a belief can be tested to find whether it is good or not. How does someone test a belief?

Paul wrote, "*If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new*" (2 Cor 5:17). Elsewhere, he testified that a person can "*put on the new man*" (Eph 4:24). Does that really happen? Is there new life in Jesus? Anyone can test that claim.

To find out if belief in Jesus is good, undertake the following experiment. Do what Christians should do for just 30 days.

1. Begin each day with prayer, thanking God for the new day and what rest you received the previous night. Ask Him to watch over you that day and watch over those you love. At night, thank Him for the watch care.
2. Read one chapter each day in the Bible. It is easier to start in the New Testament.
3. Listen to Christian music instead of what you normally do.
4. Attend a Bible-based church on Sunday.
5. After 30 days, examine whether your life is better or worse than before.

Most people who take the test find that belief in Jesus for just 30 days made their life better. They proved that belief is good and that it can open the door to new life.

Once belief is tested, the experimenter is assured that this one promise is good. Their belief is strengthened by trust, making it easier to trust other promises in the Bible. Trust turns belief into faith. The Bible says, "*Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen*" (Heb 11:1). Those who complete the experiment gain evidence of things not seen but hoped for.

This simple experiment helps people to exercise faith in Jesus and believe that He will fulfill all His promises. Anyone can trust what He said. Their new found faith has prepared them to repent.