

Teaching for 9-26-07

Merely a Myth—or Reality?

What we believe will determine how we live out our lives. If we believe strongly enough in something, we will realign our lives to make that belief a priority. How we spend our money, our choices of entertainment, and how we order our days will all be reflections of what we believe most.

In the Hebrides Islands in the late 1940s, two elderly women staked their lives and prayers on the belief that God would send revival if they faithfully sought Him. As a result of years of praying, God moved in the heart of a pastor and his elders. These leaders also believed God's covenant promise that if they repented and truly sought Him, He would come in a powerful way and "heal their land" (2 Chronicles 7:14).

Their belief re-ordered their lives as they began meeting to pray over many weeks, several times a week and often throughout the night. Their lives began to reflect their beliefs as they spent hours laboring in prayer for revival—and in the end God responded with a mighty revival that swept the entire island.

Jesus also taught this. He said that we will be known by the fruit of our lives (Matthew 7:16). For those of us who profess belief in the Lord Jesus Christ and His Word, what do our actions say about our belief? Do we truly walk in the unwavering belief that Jesus is the same yesterday, today, and forever (Hebrews 13:8)? Scripture records many times that all were healed who came to Him. Do we live our lives embracing the truth that He is the same Healer as when He walked this earth? If so, do our lives and prayers reflect that?

Demonstrating Our Belief

Those praying in the Hebrides were confronted with Psalm 24:3-4 in one of their fervent times of prayer. "*Who may ascend to the hill of the LORD? Who may stand in his holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to an idol or swear by what is false.*" They were challenged with the truth that no one can approach God without clean hands and a pure heart. It changed their belief about prayer as they began to repent with agonizing tears and broken hearts. As they prayed from a place of repentance and belief, God began to move.

In our society today, we struggle with belief. We read God's promise in 2 Chronicles 7:14 or we read the many stories of Jesus healing the multitudes of very kind of disease—but they seem like principles for a different time and place. Like King Arthur and his knights of the round table, they make for exciting stories—but seem irrelevant in the 21st century. If we are honest, we don't live our lives with unwavering belief that everything in Scripture is true and relevant for now.

And so, without a solid belief in the reality of these truths, we begin to make our own reality. We really do not believe that without Christ we can do nothing, and so we rely more on our own human strength and understanding. We really do not believe that Jesus did nothing without consulting the Father, and so we rarely fervently pray and seek Him. It is hard for us to believe

the promise of supernatural healing found in 2 Chronicles 7:14, so we develop frenetic ministry activities to replace desperately seeking God. Could it be that we have deceived ourselves into thinking that somehow our busyness is more pleasing to God than our willingness to trust Him alone?

In more than 500 locations around the world, the transformation of society and the healing of the land are no myths. It is documented reality, and God has indeed proven Himself true to His Word. If we humble ourselves, pray, seek His face and turn from our sin—He *will* forgive and heal our land! If God has promised to keep His Word and has even proven it through miraculous signs—then do we truly walk in belief? If so, there must be some demonstrable action on our part.

Indicators That You Believe

Giving ourselves to a lifestyle of repentance is an indicator that we truly believe. If we truly believe, we will reprioritize our schedules to make time to seek God's presence in earnest, yearning, persistent, agonizing prayer. Our affections will show our love for the Lord rather than things of the world. We will live in transparency and openness, refusing to be offended when people hurt us. We will not look to outward success, but will focus instead on walking in humility and graciousness.

The ultimate issue is whether we have decided to walk as though God's Word is a myth or reality. A myth is a traditional story that may be unfounded or unverifiable. Reality means actual fact. We must honestly face inward, probe our own hearts, and determine if we believe God's Word to be myth or reality. Then we must choose to live according to what we believe!