

What Is it to Believe On Christ?

Sunday, June 6th, 1987

Ephesians 1:13

“In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise.”

I’m speaking today on the subject: “WHAT IS IT TO BELIEVE ON JESUS CHRIST?” We hear people say, “Believe, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.” Our Lord said in John 20:31; *“These words are written that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ and that believing you might have life through His name.”*

What is it to believe on Christ? I’ve chosen for a text a passage of Scripture from the Book of Ephesians, Chapter 1:13. Listen to this Scripture; *“In whom you trusted after you heard the Word of Truth, the Gospel of your salvation in whom also after that you believed, (you trusted and you believed), you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise.”*

I wish every one of you, I really wish this and I covet this; I covet that every one of you would prayerfully, carefully and seriously read the First Chapter of the Book of Ephesians. I don’t know of any chapter in the Bible that more glorifies God in His redemptive work than Ephesians Chapter One.

I don’t know of any chapter in the Bible that makes it clear, absolutely clear, the work of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit in redemption quite like Ephesians Chapter One. I don’t know any chapter in the Bible that makes it plainer, this truth that, *“salvation is of the Lord.”* Salvation is the work of God. It is the supernatural, powerful, mysterious, act of God. *“Salvation is of the Lord.”*

I don’t know of any chapter in the Bible that is so full of Christology; it is Christ, Christ, Christ. The Scripture says, *“He hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in Christ. He chose us in Christ. He predestinated us to the adoption of sons by Christ. He accepted us in Christ the Beloved. He redeemed us in Christ. In Christ we have forgiveness of sin.”* This is just in the first seven verses.

I want you to read this First Chapter of Ephesians. If you do nothing else as a result of this telecast, I hope you will sit down and read this First Chapter of Ephesians today. I want you to read it prayerfully, carefully and word by word. Ask the Spirit of God to open your eyes, your ears and your heart to what God is saying here.

From verses 3 through 14, there are only three complete sentences. You will be interested in this; from verse 3 through 14, there are eleven verses and three sentences. The first sentence from verses 3 through 6 shows us the Father's purpose, the Father's eternal purpose, the Father's divine purpose in redemption.

It says in verse 3: *"God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies."* What are these spiritual blessings? I'm not talking about earthly blessings such as a new car or a new house or financial success. I am talking about *"spiritual blessings in the heavenlies."*

These blessings are the blessings of grace and the blessings of mercy and the blessings of redemption. These are the blessings of eternal life, sanctification and justification. I'm talking about the blessings of being delivered from the curse of the Law, the blessings that our names are written in the Book of Life. These are the blessings with which the Father has blessed us in Christ.

The Scripture says, *"According as the Father chose us."* Who chose us? The Father chose us. *"He chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world."* That is what it says there in verse 4. Paul, in 2 Thessalonians 2:13, says; *"I thank God for you brethren, beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation."* God chose you; you did not choose Him; He chose you.

In verse 5, it says; *"According as He hath predestinated us, (predetermined, that we should be adopted into His family as sons), like Christ, to be made like Christ, to be perfectly conformed to the image of Christ."* All of this is according to His divine will, according to the will of God.

What we have here is that the Father willed to have a people, even back before the world began. The Father willed to have a people and He predetermined that every one of those people would be like Christ. Because they wouldn't choose Him, He chose them. Because they wouldn't come to Him, He came to them. Because they wouldn't seek Him, He sought them and chose them in Christ.

In Christ He gave them all that they need, all that He required and all that heaven required. That is what Paul is saying in this first sentence of verses 3, 4, 5 and 6. He is saying, "Bless the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His will, according to His Divine purpose, has chosen us and given us to Christ and blessed us and determined that we should be Sons of God." Bless God; the purpose of God is revealed clearly. Verse 6 says, *"All of this to the praise of the glory of His eternal, free grace."*

Look at verses 7 through 12: Here we see the Son's purchase. Verses 3, 4, 5 and 6 you see the Father's purpose. Look again at verse 7, *"He redeemed us through His blood in whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of our sin."*

It is by the sacrifice of Christ that we are forgiven. It is by the blood of Christ that we are redeemed. *"He was made sin for us who knew no sin that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. He was wounded for our transgressions and by His stripes we are healed."*

Peter said, *"You are not redeemed with corruptible things such as silver and gold from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers but with the precious blood of Christ, as a lamb without spot or blemish."*

So, the Son redeemed us. We were sold out to sin. We were slaves of sin. We were under the bondage of the Law. There was a price on our heads. Christ came and paid that price. He paid it to the justice of God and redeemed us. Now, we are His.

Verse 9 says, *"The Son made known unto us the mystery of the Father's will."* The Scripture says, *"No man hath seen God at any time."* God is immortal, invisible and eternal. *"The only begotten Son hath revealed Him."*

People talk about seeing God in visions and in dreams; that is foolishness. The Scripture says, *"No man hath seen God at any time; the Son of God hath revealed Him. No man knoweth the Father save the Son and He to whom the Son will reveal Him."*

The disciples said, *"Show us the Father."* The Lord Jesus said, *"He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father."* Christ came to reveal the mystery of godliness, *"God manifest in the flesh."*

In verse 11, it says; *"The Son has enriched us through Him and by Him we have obtained an inheritance."* All that we lost in Adam is restored in Christ; *"In Adam all die; in Christ we are made alive."* Romans 5:19 says, *"By one man's disobedience the many were made sinners; even so, by the obedience of Christ shall many be made righteous."*

What we lost in Adam has been restored in Christ. He has enriched us. Do you see that? That is the Son's purchase. That is the Son's work in redemption. The Father Himself determined to have a people. He said, *"They will be like Christ."* He chose them and gave them to the Son.

The Son came down here and revealed the Father. He revealed the mercy of God. He revealed the free grace of God. He revealed the mystery of the Gospel. He purchased us by His blood on the cross of Calvary. He enriched us; *“Through Him we have obtained an inheritance that is reserved in heaven that is undefiled and fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you.”*

Now, look at verses 13 and 14: We have the third sentence here, now. We see the Holy Spirit’s call. I’m giving you what the Scripture teaches verse by verse. I’m not going into a cornfield like a crow, picking up a verse here and a verse there and trying to put them together. We are letting the Scripture flow just like the apostle wrote it.

He gives one sentence and points you to the Father’s purpose. He gives another sentence and points you to the Son’s purchase. He gives you another sentence and points you to the Holy Spirit’s work in calling sinners. He said, *“In whom you trusted after you heard the Word of Truth.”*

By whose voice did you hear it? You heard it by the voice of the Holy Spirit. *“It is not by might nor by power God said, but by My Spirit.”*

“Men are born not of corruptible seed but of incorruptible seed by the Word of God that liveth and abideth forever.” It is the Holy Spirit that quickens dead sinners. *“You hath He quickened who were dead in trespasses and sin.”* So, we heard the Word of Truth, but it was the voice of God’s Spirit that we heard. Christ said, *“He will take the things of Mine and show them to you.”*

Then, He said; *“After that you believed the Gospel, you were sealed in Christ by the Holy Spirit.”* How does a person get in Christ? He is baptized into Christ by the Spirit of God. *“If any man hath not the Spirit of God; he is none of His: As many as are led by the Spirit of God are the sons of God.”*

It is impossible for a person to be saved and not have the Holy Spirit. We are not seeking the Holy Spirit in His baptism because we have already been baptized into the body of Christ by the Holy Spirit. *“As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.”* All that are born of the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. *“If any man have not the Spirit of God, he is none of His.”*

I don’t want another spirit; I want the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the Holy Spirit of Truth and he is the Spirit of Christ. He is our earnest *“(Who is the earnest of our inheritance)”* until the purchased possession becomes ours.

What is earnest? Did you men ever pay earnest money? You go down and you pick out a car and you say, "I want that car but I don't have the money right now to pay for it." The man may have you pay \$200.00 earnest money and he will hold it for you. You pay him \$200.00. That \$200.00 says that it is yours. He can't sell it to any one else as long as he is holding that money. If you renege on buying it, the \$200.00 becomes his. That is earnest money.

The Holy Spirit is our earnest or token or pledge. He is the pledge of God that we are going to live with Christ. If you don't have that earnest, if God hasn't put that earnest upon you, then you are not His. That's right; He bought you and you are His. The Holy Spirit is that earnest. The Holy Spirit is that token and is that pledge.

Here is something that I want you to see; I have shown you verses 3 through 6. I have shown you the Father's purpose. I've shown you verses 7 through 12, the Son's purchase. I have shown you verses 13 and 14, the Holy Spirit's call.

If you are wise and you will consider what we have just read, what the apostle said, you will note this: You will note that in the Father's Divine purpose and will, the sinner has no part. The Scripture says; "*He blessed us; He chose us; He predestinated us according to His will.*" You are not in there anywhere except as a recipient of the gift. You don't do anything. It is God that chose you. It is God that predestinated you. It is God that blessed you.

In the Son's work, in the redemptive work of the Son, the sinner has no part. The Scripture says; "*He redeemed us.*" Actually, Paul said in Hebrews; "*By Himself He redeemed us.*" He redeemed us; He enlightened us; He enriched us and He instructed us. We don't make the work of Christ's righteousness fruitful. We don't make His blood effectual; He did it all.

We sing that song:

Jesus paid it all,
All the debt I owe.
Sin has left a crimson stain,
He washed it white as snow.

Did He or didn't He? He certainly did! "*When, He by Himself purged our sins, He sat down on the right hand of God.*" He said, "*I've finished the work you gave Me to do.*" One preacher of the past said, "The royal bath in which black souls are washed white was

drawn from the veins of the Son of God. No blood of noble martyrs, works or deeds of church fathers enters that stream. The banquet of mercy is served up by one Host and that is the Lord of Glory.” You don’t have any part in it.

Hold it; hold the phone! When the Holy Spirit called, in verses 13 and 14, you heard. Do you see what I am saying? When the Gospel was preached you believed. When Christ was given in that Gospel, in a revelation, you trusted.

Isn’t that what it says in my text? The Scripture says; *“In whom you trusted after you heard the Word of Truth, the Gospel of your salvation: In whom after you believed, you were sealed with that Holy Spirit.”* You trusted, you heard and you believed!

That is what Paul is saying in Romans 10; he said, *“If thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus to be Lord and believe in thine heart that God raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved: For with the heart, (your heart), man believeth unto righteousness and with the mouth, confession is made unto salvation.”* Whose mouth, your mouth?

No one is going to be saved for you. No one is going to repent for you. No one is going to trust Christ for you. No one is going to believe on Christ for you. No one is going to commit you to Christ but you; it is a personal work, and an individual work. That is what He is saying here.

What is it to trust Christ and to believe Christ? Well; to believe Christ first of all, is to *“believe the record that God hath given concerning His Son in His Word.”* You see; the Word is the foundation of faith. A man can’t trust what he doesn’t know. He can’t trust an unrevealed Christ. He has to be revealed.

Christ is revealed in the Word of God. Listen to this in 1 John 5:10 and 11; *“He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself. He that believeth not hath made God a liar because he believeth not the record that God hath given concerning His Son and this is the record that God hath given us eternal life and this life is in His Son.”* What is this record? This record is the Word of God.

“Abraham believed God and it was counted to him for righteousness.” What did he believe? He believed God’s Word. He believed that *“God was able to perform all that He promised.”*

David believed God. What did David say? David said, *“I believed; therefore have I spoken.”*

John wrote in John 20:31; *“These things are written that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ and believing you might have life through His name.”* The Word of God is the foundation of faith.

When we trust Christ and believe Christ, we trust and believe Him as He is revealed in the Word of God. We don't trust a mystical Christ, a Christ of our imagination. We don't trust a Christ of our denomination or a Christ of our tradition; we trust the Christ of the Bible.

The more you know about the Bible, the more you know about Christ; *“to Him give all the prophets witness.”* He said to the Pharisees, *“Search the Scriptures; in them you think you have life; they are they which testify of Me.”* You see; this Bible from Genesis to Revelation is a revelation of Christ.

Here is the second question: What is it to believe on Christ? To believe Christ is to rely and to depend entirely on Him in and for all things. Paul said in 1 Corinthians 1:30; *“Of God are you in Christ.”* It is by God's appointment and by God's grace that you are in Christ; *“who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption.”* In other words; that is all we need.

Again, Paul wrote in Colossians; *“In Christ dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily and you are complete in Christ.”* It is not to trust my faith and Christ, it is to trust Christ. It is not to trust my decision and Christ; it is to trust Christ. It is not to trust my works and Christ, or my feelings and Christ or my church and Christ; it is to believe and trust Christ.

Someone said, “If I am trusting and believing Christ as my righteousness, as my justification, as my sin-offering before God, then I rest in Him at all times. I rest all times in the entire weight of my soul's affairs on Him. I put everything into His hands. Christ is my Advocate and He speaks for me, intercedes for me and He represents me. Everything is in His hands.”

Looking at my sin, I see Christ as my atonement and only Christ. Looking at God's Law, I see Christ as my righteousness, my only righteousness. I'm not making up what I can't provide; He is my only righteousness. Looking at God's justice, He is my justification. Looking at death, He is my life. Looking at the grave, He is my resurrection. Looking at eternity, He is my hope.

That is what it is to trust Christ and to believe Christ. The hymn writer put it this way:

My hope is built on nothing less, (nothing more or less)
Than Jesus' blood and His righteousness.
I dare not trust the sweetest frame, (however appealing),
I holy lean on Jesus' name.

Here is the third thing: Watch carefully when I say, what is it to trust Christ? It is to receive Him, believe Him and trust Him as He is revealed in the Word. It is to believe Him, it is to receive Him and believe Him depending on Him wholly and completely for all things.

To believe Christ is to receive Him in all of His offices. A half-Christ cannot save. To believe on Christ is not to believe and receive Him as we think He is or as we have heard He is but as He has declared Himself to be. Are you with me?

Jesus Christ according to the Word of God is that Prophet which God promised in the Old Testament to reveal the Father. He is that Prophet! We do not look for another. We don't know the Father except by the Son.

He is that "Great High Priest," the one and only High Priest like Melchizedek that is mentioned five or six times in the Book of Hebrews. He is that "*King of Kings and Lord of Lords,*" like His father David, King forever. His throne is established forever. He is not going to be King; He is King. You don't make Him Lord; God made Him Lord. If you receive Christ and believe Christ, you will receive Him and believe Him as Prophet, Priest and King.

He is the Christ of creation; "*All things were made by Him; without Him was not anything made.*" You can't receive Him anymore or any less than that. He is the Eternal Surety of a better Covenant; He is the Testator of the last will and Testament. He is the Incarnate Christ, God in the flesh. He is the Sovereign Christ who quickeneth whom He will.

He is the obedient representative by whom we are declared righteous. He is the one crucified sin-offering by which He perfected all who believe. He is the risen Justifier; "*Because I live; you live.*" He is the risen, exalted King at the right hand of power "*expecting until His enemies be made His footstool.*" He is the one and only Mediator, sharing that office with no one. He is the coming Lord.

Now, I ask you; have you received Christ; have you believed on Him? You can't have half a Christ or two-thirds of a Christ or seven-eighths of a Christ. He has to be the

Christ of God as He is and not as you think He is. You can't take parts of what you want and don't want. You can't divide Christ.

He who is the Christ of creation is the coming Lord. He who is the Incarnate God is the risen Mediator; they are the same one. He turned to His disciples when 5,000 people had walked off and He said, *"Will you go away too?"* They said, *"To whom shall we go; you have the Word of life and we believe and are sure that Thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God."* Half a Christ will not save. Another gospel and another Jesus will not save; it has to be the reigning Christ.

Here is the last point: To believe Christ is to continue to believe Him and to trust Him. Now listen to me, thousands and thousands of Israelites left Egypt amid the noise and the celebration and the emotion of the great Exodus. Out of that vast number, only two entered the Promised Land that were over 20 years of age after they left Egypt. The rest of them perished, murmuring in unbelief and idolatry in the wilderness.

Thousands today make religious professions. The churches have a vast turnover every year. Isn't this true? Every year they come and they go but the Bible says, *"He that endured to the end the same shall be saved,"* nobody else.

"Christ will present us unblameable, unreprouvable, holy in His sight, only if we continue in the faith and be not moved away from the hope of the Gospel which you have heard." I guarantee you that is a fact.

"Take heed brethren, lest there be found in you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God. Christ is the Son over his house who house we are if we hold fast the confidence and rejoicing firm unto the end."

What is it to trust Christ and believe on Christ? It is to keep on trusting Him and believing on Him.