

OPEN BIBLE CHURCH

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SERMON TITLE

I Believe

SERIES

DATE

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KEY SCRIPTURE

Jeremiah 6:16

SYNOPSIS

Society has changed dramatically, but God has not, and I still believe.

HIGHLIGHTS



☞ I Believe

Jeremiah 6:16

This is what the Lord says: “Stand at the crossroads and look; ask for the ancient paths, ask where the good way is, and walk in it, and you will find rest for your souls.”

I basically was born and raised in the church. I grew up going to church Sunday morning, Sunday night, Wednesday night and sometimes other days of the week, too. I learned about Jesus, heaven, hell, and salvation from my youngest days. I received Christ as my Lord and Savior when I was just a kid. I was baptized in the Holy Spirit when I was a teenager. I heard the call of God on my life and went to Bible College to follow his lead. I've been in pastoral ministry for more than 30 years. In all that time, a lot has changed.

Over the years many trying situations have tested my faith. I've had doubts come to the surface. I've had to wrestle through cynical thoughts and yet be careful to not fall into unbelief. In the midst of this turmoil, I wrote a song to express how I was feeling, dealing with doubts, but I ended with these words: *But when I doubt, then I reach out. I seek his face and ask for grace. I won't give up. I'll keep the faith. I won't give in. I'll run the race. I still believe. I still believe. I still believe.*

☞ I believe the Bible is God's Word.

2 Timothy 3:16-17

All **Scripture is God-breathed** and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, 17 so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

☞ 2 Peter 1:20-21

Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation. 21 For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but **men spoke from God** as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

The Bible is made up of 66 books that were written over 1,600 years (from approximately 1500 BC to AD 100) by more than 40 kings, prophets, leaders, and followers of Jesus. Before the printing press was invented, the Bible was copied by hand. It was copied very accurately, in many cases by special scribes who developed intricate methods of counting words and letters to ensure that no errors had been made.

There is abundant evidence that the Bible we have today is remarkably true to the original writings. There are multiple thousands of hand-written copies that are nearly 1,000 years old that still exist today. The text of the Bible is better preserved than the writings of Caesar, Plato, or Aristotle.

Wouldn't be cool if you received a personal letter from the Creator? Well, you have. It's contained in the bible. I still believe the Bible is God's Word.

☞ I believe there is only one true God.

Isaiah 45:5

I am the Lord, and **there is no other**; apart from me there is no God.



Many have claimed to be God, but there is only one true God. Greeks believed in many gods – gods of the sea, gods of the earth, gods of the heavens, and so on. But, the truth is, there is only one God – the creator of the heavens and earth.

He's the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last; He's beyond our comprehension; He's the future and the past; He's before time and creation; And he'll still BE when it's done; He's the One who was, the One who is, and the One who is to come. I believe there is only one true God.

☞ I believe Jesus died for our sins.

1 Corinthians 15:3

Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures

Luke 23:44-46 describes in detail the moment he died. Here's the truth. We have all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. (Romans 3:23) Every one of us has missed the mark. Because of that, we all deserve to die. (Romans 6:23) None of us is worthy of eternal life in heaven. But the gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus. All we have to do is believe and receive this great gift! I still believe Jesus died for our sins.

☞ I believe Jesus rose from the dead.

Luke was a very detailed writer, and in **Luke 24:1-6** he tells of the women going to the tomb, finding it empty and encountering two angels who declared Jesus had risen. 1 Corinthians 15:6 says he appeared to more than five hundred people at the same time, most of whom are still living (in other words, they could verify this claim)

There have been numerous prophets and teachers throughout history – some true and some false. You've heard of some: Moses, Elijah, Buddha, Mohammed, Confucius, and more. Do you know what they all have in common? They died and are still in the grave. Jesus also died, but he's no longer in the grave. He is living today, and his resurrection gives us great hope. I believe Jesus rose from the dead.

☞ I believe in heaven and hell.

Daniel 12:2

Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: **some to everlasting life**, others to shame and **everlasting contempt**.

There is an eternity ahead for all people. It can be all good or all bad. Heaven and hell are real. Hell is not a place where you will go to hang out and party with your friends.

☞ Revelation 21:8

But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars — their place will be in the **fiery lake of burning sulfur**.

Hell is real and it is a horrible place of eternal pain and torment.

Then, there's heaven. Heaven is not just floating around on fluffy clouds, playing harps.



☞ Revelation 21:4

He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be **no more death or mourning or crying or pain**, for the old order of things has passed away."

☞ Revelation 22:4-5

They will **see his face**, and his name will be on their foreheads. 5 There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign for ever and ever.

Heaven will be beyond our imaginations. The bible only gives us glimpses and uses images from the natural world to describe it. But it will be even greater than that. Heaven is real and is a place of everlasting peace and joy. I still believe in heaven and hell.

☞ I believe in salvation.

1 Thessalonians 5:9

God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ

Everyone has the option of heaven or hell. When you choose heaven, the bible calls that being "saved." Salvation cannot be earned. In pop culture, those who believe in heaven and hell, think that if you're a good person, or more-good than bad, you get to go to heaven. But, that's not what the Bible teaches.

☞ Ephesians 2:8-9

For **it is by grace you have been saved, through faith** — and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— 9 not by works, so that no one can boast

Salvation is only available because of God's mercy and grace. This gift of God is all about Jesus. Another popular belief in society is that all roads lead to heaven. "Just believe something. Be a good person. Follow your heart..." Again, the bible says something different.

☞ John 14:6

Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

Acts 4:12

Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name (*Jesus*) under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.

It's all about Jesus and what you believe about him.

Romans 10:9 says, if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. (In contrast, Mark 16:16 says, ...whoever does not believe will be condemned.)



Do you really believe? Do you believe what I've been talking about today? Do you believe Jesus died for your sins? Do you believe God raised him from the dead? Will you turn to him for salvation?

It's as easy as ABC.

A – admit you have sinned and fallen short of God's glory. You need a savior.

B – believe in Jesus. He died for you. He rose from the dead. He is the Lord of all.

C – confess that he is your Lord. Choose to live for him, obey him and follow him the rest of your days.

Would you like to be saved? Would you like to make sure you have a place in heaven rather than in hell? Would you like to live forever in peace and joy? The Bible says, "today is the day of salvation." Don't wait another day. Turn to God today!

I believe Jesus is coming soon.

John 14:2-3

2 In my Father's house are many rooms... I am going there to prepare a place for you. 3 And... **I will come back** and take you to be with me...

1 Thessalonians 4:16-17

For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 After that, we who are still alive and are left **will be caught up together with them in the clouds** to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.

Jesus said there would be many signs to indicate that his return is just around the corner. Here's a few: false Christs, war, ethnic conflict, famine, earthquakes, persecution of believers, false prophets, unequalled times of trouble, epidemic disease, and great fear. Elsewhere, the bible describes people at the time of end: greedy, abusive, prideful, ungrateful, brutal, slanderous, lovers of pleasure, and more.

We see these things all around us and they are increasing. That's exactly what Jesus predicted – it would be like labor pains – more frequent and more intense. I believe Jesus is coming soon! In fact, **he said so himself in Revelation 22:12: Behold, I am coming soon!**

I still believe. There's a modern movement, even from some Christians, that says we need to get with the times. But I still believe the truths of the Bible, though they are centuries, and some, even thousands of years old. **The Word of God is true, and God does not change.** (Hebrews 13:8; Psalm 55:19)

Hear the word of the Lord one last time:

Jeremiah 6:16

ask for the ancient paths, ask where the good way is, and walk in it, and you will find rest for your souls.