

“You will be happy if you believe in Me”

Ever get that feeling that someone is talking about you? Jesus was doing just that in verse 29 of John 20!

John 20:24-31 (NLT)

²⁴ One of the disciples, Thomas (nicknamed the Twin), was not with the others when Jesus came.

²⁵ They told him, “We have seen the Lord!” But he replied, “I won’t believe it unless I see the nail wounds in his hands, put my fingers into them, and place my hand into the wound in his side.”

²⁶ Eight days later the disciples were together again, and this time Thomas was with them. The doors were locked; but suddenly, as before, Jesus was standing among them. “Peace be with you,” he said.

²⁷ Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here, and look at my hands. Put your hand into the wound in my side. Don’t be faithless any longer. Believe!”

²⁸ “My Lord and my God!” Thomas exclaimed.

²⁹ Then Jesus told him, “You believe because you have seen me. Blessed are those who believe without seeing me.”

³⁰ The disciples saw Jesus do many other miraculous signs in addition to the ones recorded in this book.

³¹ But these are written so that you may continue to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing in him you will have life by the power of his name.

How to Live a Blessed Life Believing in Jesus

A. Focus on Two Key Relationships.

1 John 1:7, But if we are living in the light, as God is in the light, then we have fellowship with each other, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, cleanses us from all sin.

IF (we are living in union with God) THEN (our relationships work) AND (we’re cleaned from sin).

Mark 12:28-31, One of the teachers of religious law was standing there listening to the debate. He realized that Jesus had answered well, so he asked, “Of all the commandments, which is the most important?” ²⁹ Jesus replied, “The most important commandment is this: ‘Listen, O Israel! The LORD our God is the one and

only LORD. ³⁰ And you must love the LORD your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength.' ³¹ The second is equally important: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' No other commandment is greater than these."

Most important? Love God, love people. These are the two key relationships.

ILLY: The Cross!

B. Go "all in" with Jesus.

Mark 12:30, And you must love the LORD your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength.

Most of our self-inflicted misery comes from misplaced devotion ... loaning out parts of our heart, soul, mind, and strength to that which doesn't honor Christ.

All means all. Jesus went "all in" for You, by the way: Hebrews 12:2, Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

C. Let Go of Sin.

Hebrews 12:1-2, Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us.

Sin is what ruined the Garden of Eden, and sin is what spoils our blessing. So, "throw it off."

- We're being watched. It's obvious to others whether or not we're "all in with Jesus."
- Sin EASILY entangles us. I know the shame and regret sin brings, we all do. So, we prepare. Roots that entangle on cross-country courses are spray painted bright orange so runners can avoid them. God's Word has sprayed bright orange the behaviors and attitudes that we must avoid ... but we must still "pay attention" and "run carefully."
- MAIN POINT: The race has been *marked out for us!* So, stay on the course.

The message of the Cross ... and especially of the Resurrection is that “God is making all things new again.”

Brad Paisley and Sara Evans sing a beautiful song entitled , “New Again.” A verse of this song really speaks to what it means to be a Blessed Believer in Jesus:

Whatever happens...whatever you see...
Whatever your eyes tell you has become of me
This is not... Not the end...
I am making all things new again

The fundamental blessing for the believer is that God is at work within us making us new again! In spite of what we see, our circumstances, or even our outlook on things ... God continues to weave “new life” into each of us.

SONG: New Again by Dave and Joanna.

A closing prayer ... “Dear God, may that same resurrection power that sprung Jesus from the grave work within each of us to make us new again, to enjoy the blessing of believing without seeing, as Jesus promised. In Jesus’ name, amen.”