

“When you look at me, you see God with skin on.” John 12:37-50

How to Make Believing Easier

Do you know anyone (perhaps yourself?) who’s having a tough time with belief? This passage is for you! Jesus helps us get past some common barriers to a deeper faith in God.

A. Ask God to soften the heart.

John 12:37-41, But despite all the miraculous signs Jesus had done, most of the people still did not believe in him. ³⁸ This is exactly what Isaiah the prophet had predicted: “LORD, who has believed our message? To whom has the LORD revealed his powerful arm?” ³⁹ But the people couldn’t believe, for as Isaiah also said, ⁴⁰ “The Lord has blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts— so that their eyes cannot see, and their hearts cannot understand, and they cannot turn to me and have me heal them.” ⁴¹ Isaiah was referring to Jesus when he said this, because he saw the future and spoke of the Messiah’s glory.

- Belief itself isn’t from self-effort, it’s depends on God’s grace.
- Pray that God softens the heart so belief takes root.

B. Let go of people’s praise.

John 12:42-43, Many people did believe in him, however, including some of the Jewish leaders. But they wouldn’t admit it for fear that the Pharisees would expel them from the synagogue. ⁴³ For they loved human praise more than the praise of God.

- The more we grip human praise, the more difficult belief comes.
- The more we grip Godly praise, the less we need human praise.

C. Understand that Jesus is God ‘with skin on.’

John 12:44-45, Jesus shouted to the crowds, “If you trust me, you are trusting not only me, but also God who sent me. ⁴⁵ For when you see me, you are seeing the one who sent me.

- Ask people, “what does God look like?” and what answers would you get?
- Jesus says, “look at me ... I’m God with skin on.”

D. Know that trust turns the switch ‘on.’

John 12:46, I have come as a light to shine in this dark world, so that all who put their trust in me will no longer remain in the dark.

- Trust is the first step to a deeper belief.
- As we move forward in trust, our steps are illumined by the light of Jesus.

E. Don’t get bogged down with guilt and judgment.

John 12:47-48, I will not judge those who hear me but don’t obey me, for I have come to save the world and not to judge it. ⁴⁸ But all who reject me and my message will be judged on the day of judgment by the truth I have spoken.

- Now is the time for investigation and response ... Jesus’ purpose is to save people. But, a day is coming when Jesus will come as judge and what we do with His word will make all the difference then!
- The focus of Christ was “saving.” Be positive, hopeful, and responsive to His grace!

F. Remind yourself of belief’s destiny.

John 12:49, I don’t speak on my own authority. The Father who sent me has commanded me what to say and how to say it. ⁵⁰ And I know his commands lead to eternal life; so I say whatever the Father tells me to say.”

- The whole point of believing is to experience eternal life.
- God’s commands are there as an authoritative guide experiencing His best for you!

A closing prayer ... “Dear God, we ask You to soften our hearts, and the hearts of everyone we pray for. We want salvation more than judgment too! Deepen our belief in You. Turn ‘on’ the Light of Jesus within each of us. In Jesus’ name, amen.”