



# HOMESWORD

October 1999

...but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord. Joshua 24:15b

## Believing God

**B**elieving God is doing something because of and in accordance with something God said. Believing God is not so much what I do but why I do it. Believing God is the motive behind the action.

**I**f I am doing something because that's the way everyone else does it, I am not believing God. If I am doing something because I reasoned it out that it is the right thing to do, I am not believing God. If I am doing something because of and in accordance with what God said, either in His Word or by revelation, I am believing God.

**T**wo records in the book of Acts can illustrate this. In the book of Acts, chapter 16, Paul responds to revelation from God.

Acts 16:9-12

And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us.

And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them.

Therefore loosing from Troas,

we came with a straight course to Samothracia, and the next day to Neapolis;

And from thence to Philippi, which is the chief city of that part of Macedonia, and a colony: and we were in that city abiding certain days.

**G**od's word to Paul was for him to go to Macedonia. Paul said that the reason he went to Macedonia was because the Lord had called him to preach the gospel there. Paul had to plan the means to get there, the route, even the final destination. The doing of these activities by themselves was not believing God. He was believing God because the motive for doing these activities was because of and in accordance with what God said.

**I**n contrast to this record, in the book of Acts, chapter 20, Paul responds to something he determines.

Acts 20:16

For Paul had determined to sail by Ephesus, because he would not spend the time in Asia: for he hasted, if it were possible for him, to be at Jerusalem the day of Pentecost.

Acts 20:22

And now, behold, I go bound

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in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there:

Acts 21:4

And finding disciples, we tarried there seven days: who said to Paul through the Spirit, that he should not go up to Jerusalem.

Acts 21:10-12

And as we tarried *there* many days, there came down from Judaea a certain prophet, named Agabus.

And when he was come unto us, he took Paul's girdle, and bound his own hands and feet, and said, Thus saith the Holy Ghost, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle, and shall deliver *him* into the hands of the Gentiles.

And when we heard these things, both we, and they of that place, besought him not to go up to Jerusalem.

**P**aul said that the reason he went to Jerusalem was because he had determined. Paul had to plan the means to get there, the route, and the final destination – same activities as in chapter 16 of the book of Acts. But this time he was not believing God because his motive for doing these activities was because of and in accordance with his own determination.

**J**ust because I plan and organize and execute the plan does not mean I am believing God. Being good at planning and organizing does not mean I am good at believing God.

**T**o determine if I am believing God, I need to look at why I am doing what I am doing: is it because that is what I have always done, or because that is what I have decided was the right thing to do, or is God at work within me to will and to do of His good pleasure.

**I** can't see the motive behind what others are doing but I can know what is my motive. I can't tell by someone's actions and activities if they are believing God or not, but I know if I am believing God or not.

**A**nother man who believed God was Noah.

Genesis 6:9, 13, 14

These *are* the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man *and* perfect in his generations, *and* Noah walked with God.

And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth.

Make thee an ark of gopher wood; rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and shalt pitch it

within and without with pitch.

**Y**ou know the rest of the story.

Genesis 6:22

Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he.

**N**ow, in order for Noah to build this ark, he had to do a lot of work. The fact that Noah did a lot of work does not indicate that he believed God. The fact that Noah did all this work because God told him to indicates that he believed God. Believing God is not so much what I do but why I do it. Believing God is the motive behind the action.

**M**aybe you have not gotten specific direction from God, but all of us have God's written Word. When something God says in His Word is the motive for our actions, we are believing God. For example, let us look at some verses in the book of Ephesians.

Ephesians 4:25

Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another.

**W**hen I am tempted to lie but I decide to put away lying, and my motivation for not lying is God's Word, I am believing God.

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Ephesians 4:26

Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath:

**W**hen I am angry with someone but I refuse to stay angry with him, and my motivation for not staying angry with him is God's Word, I am believing God.

Ephesians 4:28

Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with *his* hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.

**W**hen I am tempted to steal but I decide to not steal, and my motivation for not stealing is God's Word, I am believing God.

Ephesians 4:29

Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.

**W**hen I feel like tearing someone down but I decide to speak edifying words instead, and my motivation for speaking edifying words is God's Word, I am believing God.

**I**f my motivation for not lying was because I wanted to impress someone, that is not believ-

ing God. If my motivation for not being angry is because I wanted you to like me, that is not believing God. If my motivation for not stealing was because I was afraid I might get caught, that is not believing God. If my motivation for speaking edifying words is because I needed something from you, that is not believing God. The action itself does not mean I am believing God.

**B**elieving God is doing something because of and in accordance with something God said. Believing God is not so much what I do but why I do it. Believing God is the motive behind the action.

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In God's Love,  
Ray

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The following “two-minute meditation” from HEARTLIGHT® Magazine\* was inspiring to me and I thought you might get blessed by it.

## Reckless Disregard

The glowing embers bounced off the already red-hot pavement. With a tumble of sparks, the cigarette butt bounced into the tinder-dry grass along the entrance ramp. Directly across the Interstate, a scorched area the size of a football field was a blackened reminder that such reckless disregard had already made its mark not too long ago, and not too far away.

Regardless of how one feels about smoking, most anyone would acknowledge that throwing out smoldering cigarette butts into dry grass in summer conditions is reckless disregard!

But doesn't that kind of thing happen everyday in conversations all around us? When was the last time you heard someone passing on a juicy morsel of gossip or a tantalizing tidbit of innuendo about someone else? How did you view it? What did you do when you heard it? What happened when this glowing ember tumbled into your presence and others nearby?

Deep down, we know that gossip, whether it is true or untrue,

is destructive. It sets a fire ablaze that neither the gossiper nor the one being gossiped about can control. To take part in it is to willfully wound, maim, and damage. It places in Satan's hands the fire with which he can destroy the life of someone for whom Christ died.

Let's recommit ourselves to using our words to bless, encourage, and heal. Let's never be part of starting a fire that can do untold damage to someone made in the image of God. To do so is to show reckless disregard for that person, and for God who made them!

by Phil Ware

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