

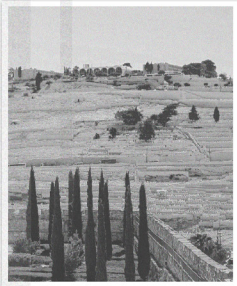


that you may

BELIEVE

The Purpose of This Book

²⁰ Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; ²¹ but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.



“THE MYSTERY OF UNBELIEF” discussion questions

1. If you're a Christian, what was your biggest impediment to becoming a Christian? How was it overcome? If you're not yet, what's the biggest obstacle giving you pause?

2. Why do people staunchly believe things that have no supporting evidence, or even things that have overwhelming evidence that disproves their belief? What does that tell you about the human condition?

3. How can one reconcile these two, seemingly contradictory biblical truths: (1 Timothy 2:4) God desires all to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth; and (John 12:39-40) Therefore they could not believe. For again Isaiah said, “[God] has blinded their eyes and hardened their heart, lest they see with their eyes, and understand with their heart, and turn, and I would heal them.”

4. John describes people's belief vs. unbelief as not merely a function of choice, but also ability. Not merely a function of intellectual assent (or agreement), but also the condition of people's hearts. How does God's hardening and softening of people's hearts challenge, impact, or alter your view of God?

5. Consider these three warnings taken from today's passage. Share which one is currently most relevant to you, and how you would like to apply it.

- a) Don't shy away from those passages about God that are hard to understand or accept. God is who he says he is; not who we think he should be.
- b) Don't take sin lightly! It always has a hardening effect on the heart, even for Christians!
- c) Don't be a timid “closet Christian” who is ashamed of his beliefs. Deepen your convictions so that you can stand firm in the midst of ridicule and opposition.

The Book of John

The Word Became Flesh

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God. ³ All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. ⁴ In him was life, and the life was the light of men. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

⁶ There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. ⁷ He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light.

⁸ The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. ⁹ He was in the world, and the world did not know him. ¹⁰ He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. ¹¹ But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God. ¹² Who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

¹³ And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. ¹⁴ (John bore witness about him, and cried out, “This was he of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me ranks before me, because he was before me.’”) ¹⁵ For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. ¹⁶ For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁷ No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known.

