

What It Means to Believe in Jesus

John 3:16-18

John 3:16-18 (NASB)

¹⁶ “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

¹⁷ For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him.

¹⁸ He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.”

The apostle Paul told his jailer, “**Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household**” ([Acts 16:31](#)). That Philippian man and his household had saving faith—they accepted the invitation and joined God’s family.

Saving faith has three elements: knowledge, conviction, and trust. Today, let’s look at the knowledge component. To believe in Jesus as our Savior, we need to know who He is, what He accomplished, and why it was necessary.

Who is Jesus? He is deity—God the Son. At the request of God the Father, Jesus set aside His divine rights, took on human form, and dwelled on earth ([Philippians 2:6-7](#)).

Philippians 2:6-7 (NASB)

⁶ “Who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped,

⁷ but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, *and* being made in the likeness of men.”

What did He accomplish? Jesus lived a perfect life, which qualified Him to be our substitute: He stood in our place and bore God’s judgment for our sins. His death on the cross made a way for us to be forgiven and experience peace with God.

Why did He have to die? We could not save ourselves, since our “good deeds” are all marred by our sin nature. When we accept Christ’s atoning work, we go from being God’s enemy to becoming a member of His family.

When I was saved at age 28, I understood only the simplest aspects of these basic truths. I knew I was a sinner in need of forgiveness and Jesus alone could save me. What mattered was, I truly believed—and the Lord saved me.

Knowledge without conviction and trust does not bring salvation. Even the demons understood that Jesus was the Son of God ([Luke 4:41](#)). Do you *believe* what you *know* to be true?

Luke 4:41 (NASB)

⁴¹ “Demons also were coming out of many, shouting, “You are the Son of God!” But rebuking them, He would not allow them to speak, because they knew Him to be the Christ.”